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THE ETHICS OF POWER

THE ETHICS OF POWER

OR THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

by

PHILIP LEON

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TO

MY WIFE

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THE ETHICS OF POWER

INTRODUCTION

A GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT AND UNGENTLEMANLY ABUSE

Of all the branches of Philosophy surely modern Ethics is the most bewildering to the lay reader. Wondering more and more what it is about as he reads book after book, he at last gathers this unanimous lesson from them all. Ethics is not preaching or the giving of guidance for life. The novelist, the historian, the essayist, the biographer, the poet even, may moralise, but the moral philosopher must not moralise. 'Ye shall not moralise' is the categorical imperative of *modern* Moral Philosophy to its devotees. 'We will not moralise' is their maxim. It is more than a maxim. It is a gentleman's agreement.

But if not in the life they preach or advocate, wherein do they differ from each other, since differ they assuredly do? The ancient Epicurean and the ancient Stoic, poles asunder, agreed that they differed in the mode of life they invited you to lead. Says the modern descendant of the one to the modern descendant of the other: 'You and I are in agreement in that we both lead or mean the same kind of life—the good life, the life of respectable members of a respectable community. Everyone knows what that is and there is no need to indicate it even. We differ solely in the *analysis* we give of it. The difference between us lies simply in this: I know what I am talking about and use words properly; you do not know what you are talking about or the meaning of language.'

But this is surely a strange and shocking charge to bring. For, though to analyse and to use language aright is indeed difficult, the task is not superhuman, and even minor philosophers have a more than ordinary aptitude for it.

Besides, is not this gentleman's agreement, like many another such, observed only in appearance? For, if a philosopher convinces you that goodness consists simply in voluntarily producing and consciously enjoying the maximum of 'goods' —'good' experiences (actually certain emotions and pleasures, and books, lectures and works of art, magniloquently called 'Truth and Beauty')—what else is he doing but engaging you to his view of life, a view peculiarly congenial to the Capitalist-Mechanical-Industrialist age, to which man is simply a producer and consumer, a soulless but potentially efficient machine taking in oil and fuel and turning out goods or other machines, a factory and warehouse of goods? He *is* preaching. Only, he is doing this, not frankly and openly, but insidiously, by a sleight of hand performed on a few examples of jejune imaginary actions hanging in the void, or on a few empty sentences containing the words 'right,' 'good' and 'ought.' He is pretending to a kind of mathematical or dialectic demonstration which is not at all possible in preaching or in Moral Philosophy. Further, in a monstrously tyrannical *Machtspruch* he (or a follower of another school) lays down the law that all people must mean by these words what he means and that, whatever the life they preach and whatever they say about it, they must give of it his analysis (and must therefore intend the same life as he): alike Jesus and the Pharisee; alike he who says that blaming and condemning and remorse and approving and honouring and valuing and esteeming and self-respect and the glow of the satisfied conscience and merit and worthiness have nothing to do with morality or the good life but rather belong to its opposite, and he who singles these out as specifically moral; alike he who assigns to sympathy and benevolence and the maternal impulse only the same place in the moral life as to hunger and thirst, and he who makes of these its *fons et origo*; alike he who affirms and he who denies the importance of motive to the rightness of an action.

One of the advantages of the theory here propounded which may be fittingly advertised at this point is this: It allows truth and perspicacity both in the Industrialist philosopher and in many others. It maintains that they are simply examining and championing different modes or levels of life but that they all know what they are talking about.[1] We are not compelled by it, as by other theories, to attribute bucolic simplicity and a sub-infantile ineptitude in the use of words to great intellects whose sublety has given us some of the most enjoyable hours of our life. Some of these philosophers, it is true, we may have to call knaves though not fools, but this is a compliment, resented by few even among philosophers. We may also, according to the theory of error favoured here, have to say that all fools are knaves, but we do not have to hold that all knaves are fools.

The business of Moral Philosophy, some say, is to examine, not what is meant by 'good,' 'right' and 'ought,' but what *ought* to be meant by these. True, but to carry out this task is in effect to say what life ought to be lived or what the good life is or what one ought to do and be; it is to preach.[2] And preaching ought to be frank and open. It should not be done simply by implication accompanied by the claim to apodeictic proof and by the make-believe that all men, whatever they are actually preaching and saying, mean, and are committed to, the life we have in view but which we say we are not preaching. Done so, it is still preaching, but it is also knavery.

It is also said that the function of Moral Philosophy is to inquire into the implications of the good life or of the mere possibility and idea of the good life. If this is its function it can fulfil it only by first of all preaching the good life and then by

[1] See the last chapter. According to the life preached and practised a different psychology also is, and must be, given of the self (see pp. 77–78). Analytical Psychology or the psychology of the general or standard self is of little use to Ethics.

[2] In other words, the formal treatment of Ethics can never be divorced from its material treatment.

entering upon an examination which is generally relegated to Metaphysics. Since the time of Kant another gentleman's agreement amongst philosophers has been that Ethics shall not contain any Metaphysics, at least none that is avowed and discussed.

THE BUSINESS OF ETHICS

If this latter agreement is to be kept, as it is here more or less, and if Moral Philosophy is not to be merely a branch of Analytical Psychology, discussing the nature of willing, of desiring, of emotion, etc., or a contribution to Lexicography, collecting the various uses of the words 'good,' 'right,' 'ought' and 'duty,' what is it to be? It must contain deep and far-reaching analysis, formulation and classification. These make it philosophy and distinguish it from the sermon, the novel, the play, from history, biography and aphoristic or gnomic literature. But it must also partake of these, deal with the same matters as they, and moralise like them. This makes it moral. Further, it must borrow illustrations of situations and characters from them, especially from the novel or play, drawn from which they are less controversial than when taken from life. It must analyse, but something more than sentences and examples of actions abstracted from a context. It must colligate and order observations on the life which is lived and intuitions into the life which should be lived. It must exhibit, in their right relations to each other and with their proper affinities and dissimilarities, actual and possible types of life and of character. Lastly and chiefly, it must do all this in language which is concrete, the language of literature, such as to body forth real individual situations standing out solid in a three-dimensional atmosphere of human feeling, striving and thought.

What is presented in the following pages lies far far from such a height. But it at least dreams of it from its remote depths.

INTRODUCTION

THE THEME OF THIS BOOK

It only dreams of it. For, to say nothing of the writer's poverty of equipment, here is no systematic treatise on Morality or the good life. There is little preaching other than that which consists of damning. He who asks for guidance in life and for light upon the problems of the day will hear that capitalism and communism, nationalism and internationalism, patriotism and cosmopolitanism, militarism and pacifism, democracy and autocracy, religiosity and secularism, self-realisation and self-sacrifice, selfishness and altruism, individualism and collectivism, penal severities and penal amenities, asceticism and the freedom of the senses, all the virtues even and the moral rules, are or may be bad; that goodness alone is good, and that to most of us it is uninteresting. This book has for its essential theme, not goodness, but the much more interesting and perplexing subject of evil or moral evil. It attempts to make a contribution to a comparatively neglected chapter of Moral Philosophy. It is an introduction to the latter (though, to be sure, an introduction *in medias res* with a vengeance) and as such it starts from what is better known, namely evil, which is surely much more familiar, because it is much more in evidence, than Goodness. The latter is treated here incidentally only, just as evil is in the writings of others,[1] and mainly to provide a context for the negative or critical part. On this ground indulgence is craved for any dogmatism or other shortcoming in the positive exposition. The critic is asked to bear in mind that the chief intention of the latter is simply to make clear that the analysis advanced here for the good life is meant to apply only to what is here preached as the good life. There is no pretence that it is true of what the Industrialist philosopher

[1] A notable, though still incidental, treatment of evil occurs in Kant's *First Part of the Philosophical Theory of Religion*, "On the Radical Evil in Human Nature," and in Bradley's chapter, "Selfishness and Self-Sacrifice," in his *Ethical Studies*.

calls the good life. For this *his* analysis is accepted with due appreciation of its truth, if also with exposure of knavery.

THE CHTHONIAN APPROACH

Two main reasons have determined the choice of this chthonian or Avernan approach to Morality.[1]

One is inherent in the nature of Philosophy itself. The function of the latter must always be in the main negative—it must be a criticism of life and thought. Indeed, had the positive side of the truth a stronger grip upon the writer he would perhaps not be trying to write philosophy. Besides, the Good does not need or admit of any explanation—certainly not by analysis and formulation. Rather, so we believe with Socrates and Plato, it itself is the light by which we must explain everything else.

The second reason is practical and temporary. If we could and if we did present the positive side of the good or moral life as here conceived, most readers—certainly those with the writer's own cultural antecedents—would at the best respectfully dismiss it as the religious or spiritual or mystical life which goes beyond good and evil and therefore beyond morality (a beyond which, in the writer's opinion, is the perilous land of nonsense). Yet the negative or critical side of this same life or truth is, so it seems to us, accepted by these same readers. They accept it unconsciously and inevitably, as they accept the air. So pervasive, so ubiquitous is it, if not in our life, at least in our literature. It is it which has given the latter, especially its most negative branch, satire, a range undreamt of by Antiquity: a measure of the difference between us and the ancients is to be found in the laughter awakened in the callowest and most 'unspiritual' undergraduates by Euripides' self-complacent Alcestis—a model, surely, of womanhood to

[1] It may be that in life also we reach Heaven each by passing through his separate hell.

her creator and his contemporaries—and also in the amusement provoked in all of us by the solemnity and seriousness and pompousness with which they treated the simplest virtues, by the fuss they made about their noble men. It is it also which makes us, especially in the post-War period, chary of using the words 'good,' 'right,' 'ought,' duty,' 'moral' and their opposites, lest we should be accused of pompousness, smugness, self-complacence, pharisaism, hypocrisy, Victorianism —all these being cardinal sins in our eyes. Where others were wont to see good men and demigods stalking over the earth in their shining battalions, we see something quite different. We do not believe that goodness is natural, easy or plentiful. We may not want it, but we are certainly dissatisfied with anything which claims to be, but is not, it. Where others were wont to be self-confident and self-gratulatory, we are critical. To such as us then, if not an interest in goodness, at any rate intellectual curiosity should make welcome an inquiry, such as is attempted here, into the origin of our criticism and universal dissatisfaction.

Further, in the nightmare of the War and in the worse awakening of the Peace, evil, and evil in shapes that would have been called monstrous by the ancients and by the Victorians also, has been and is facing us everywhere. Many try to make our flesh creep by talking of the decay of civilisation threatened by the next war. Few remark that it has already set in. If it always begins, as it did in the case of the collapse of the Græco-Roman civilisation, with a false simplification, which is a brutalisation and barbarisation, of ideas—economic, political, educational and, above all, ethical—then the decay is already galloping, certainly over the major part of the Continent. If we are to arrest it we must at least study its source, evil.

EVIL AND MADNESS

The interest of evil, the interest which has actuated the writing of this book, is this: Just as morality does not spring or evolve from biological desire (the desire for existence, the instinct for self-preservation), so neither does immorality or evil, or at least the major and more important part thereof; it is not incidental to the struggle for existence or the conditions of existence. In not being biological, morality and its quasi-contrary (there is no real contrary) are alike: hence they are most often confused under one and the same name 'morality,' not least of all by writers on Moral Philosophy, and this confusion it is which lends colour to the cynical remark that if it were not for man's moralities, for his idealisms and religions and 'oughts,' three-quarters of the evil in the world would not exist. Hence the necessity for a concrete, detailed, and therefore inevitably lengthy, exposition of the various forms of evil, especially of those which are hidden under the appearance of good.

The root of evil, to put it roughly, is madness. Madness, it may be, is at the bottom of the physical universe also; but certainly Man is the mad or irrational animal *par excellence*: *Homo Insipiens sive Insaniens*. Madness is at the heart of all his civilisation. If man's proper study is man, then his proper university is the lunatic asylum, and his proper science and art is Psychiatry or the healing of souls. This is the message of this book; it is also the peculiar message and truth of our age; it is not for nothing that contemporary imaginative literature is becoming more and more a branch of Psychopathology.

Exaggeration this? The writer has throughout had to give crude and extreme cases for the sake of brevity, stilling his own doubts by the reminder that, after all, the world is full of crude and extreme people. But whatever may be the case with the world in general, *here* the moral, like the physical, climate

is now, as usual, a temperate mixture of foul and fair, while tropical storms of hatred and vindictiveness, which figure so much in these pages, have always been well-nigh unknown phenomena; and under this climate, returning after a fairly lengthy interval to resume his writing from about the end of the fifth chapter, the author began to feel more and more sceptically amused on glancing through what he had already written. Then came the Nazi 'revolution' in Germany, the country of a people whose singular characteristic it always seems to be that it not merely goes to extremes in deeds but, what is more illuminating for our thesis, expresses committed or even merely intended or desired extremes, in *words*, in no mealy-mouthed, diplomatic and degenerate way. In a few days even what had here been advanced modestly as a mythological description, as a hint of possibilities which it might be instructive to imagine, was made to appear, like the war-caricature representations of Germany, an anæmic understatement of facts. Thenceforth it became the author's task—not an easy one—to try to write up to the actuality of what human beings think, say and do.

Put more moderately and less crudely, the theory is this: At one pole there is sanctity or sanity or the genuinely moral life; at the other, insanity, the triumphant extreme of egotism —of pride, conceit, ambition, the lust for power. Between the two lie many different limbos of methodical madnesses or insane sanities which are all the civilisations and all the savageries that have ever been.

However expressed, this theory does amount to an assertion that all men are more or less, or in different ways, mad. And yet it would seem to imply the claim that one man at least, the author, like the Stoic sage, is the exception to the general indictment. It allows, alas, no such exception, at least none that is gratifying, but if any, only such as proves the rule. Whatever in the theory is false must, according to its own

hypothesis of error in such matters, come from the author's own conceit, vanity, madness. On the other hand, whatever in it is true, does not, indeed, come from him, not even in the historical sense, but is verified or exemplified in him. For if he is asked for sure instances, since characters in fiction are not enough and since about the dead it is perhaps not right and certainly not easy, while about the living it is libellous and dangerous, to say anything *nisi bonum*, he must reply: *De me fabula.* A treatise on Ethics, like a novel, play or poem, is, of course, inevitably a personal exposure. Its victim can only hope that it will also prove a personal catharsis which, like that of tragedy, may help to cure others besides himself.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOOD, RELIGION AND METAPHYSICS

But healing it can bring to none if it remains merely negative or critical. Confession, the making conscious the unconscious, the medicine of self-knowledge recommended alike by the Delphic oracle and the modern psycho-analyst, may by itself be worse than useless. It may lead us, not indeed to have no motive and to do nothing—for this is impossible—but to avow no motive, to pretend to take none seriously, to drive everything deeper down into the unconscious than it was before—lest we be proved by ourselves to ourselves still egotistic, still vain and conceited even after our confession. It may even goad us into asserting ourselves against all truth and rendering ourselves perfectly inaccessible to it in that more than ordinary madness which is technically termed insanity. If Psychiatry is really to be man's proper science and art—that is, if it is to be architectonic or the science of sciences—it must be more than diagnostic. It must be Gnostic. Like Plato's ideal of Dialectic, it must be the knowledge of the Good.

Such a science a complete Ethics should be. And even an introduction to it, such as this book is, must to some extent

indicate the Good, and the true morality or genuinely moral life in which the Good is embodied.

Lest there be readers whose respectable philosophic conscience may become alarmed at the prospect of their being made to receive, instead of gold straight from the mint of Pure Reason, the base metal of religious dogma, be it here advertised that the writer is a simple, ignorant heathen, echoing the Bible merely as he echoes Plato, with no intention to support any theology; one who was reared in allegiance only to ' Free Thought,' Materialism, and various kinds of Naturalistic and Eudæmonistic ethics, and who has freed himself from all these, including the ' freedom ' of ' Free Thought,' because he sought for an explanation, not of Goodness, about which these claimed to know so much, but of evil, which they seem to think an unimportant mistake needing no explanation.

Is the morality here espoused derived from Metaphysics? If the latter is Plato's Dialectic, the Knowledge of the Good, then from such Knowledge, that is, from moral insight, it has been derived in so far as it is true. If by Metaphysics is meant the philosophy about the Whole or the Universe, then whatever here is false is connected with it, but only through belonging to the same wide realm of fantasy. For such Metaphysics is mythology, there being no Whole or Universe (no actual concrete order).

ARIADNE'S THREAD

The method of exposition here followed will strike many as peculiar. A subject is taken up, formulated superficially or mysteriously and then dropped, to be resumed much later in a more thorough or clearer treatment, or simply from a different point of view. Often the most important thing about it is given not in its own section but as an *obiter dictum* (unsought it came) under another topic. His own self-love flatteringly whispers to the author that this is a Platonic meandering, the natural,

unconstrained movement of thought. But many ungentle readers, with their own habits of thought, may find all this a confounded and confounding nuisance. Such are asked to bear with what was inevitable—inevitable in a presentation which is not of a theory ready-made but is itself the theory in the making. The following guidance is offered to them. The first two chapters, rather academic and taken up largely with formulations, they might omit, reading only the section entitled "Truisms or Postulates." They may then read the "Testimonies to Egotism" and the third chapter, which contains the core of the book. (For unexplained terms they may follow up the references given in the Index.) The fourth and fifth chapters give examples of egotism; they set forth the matter of which the third chapter claims to be the formulation. It must, however, be said that the writer thinks the order he has followed as vital to his argument as is its order to that of a play or novel; for the only 'proof' he has consciously attempted consists of cumulative description—not to say cumulative abuse. (Is any other proof possible in Ethics or preaching?)

This, it may be objected, is no proof; to offer it solely or chiefly is to try to cure one ill by an opposite ill, to substitute for the excess of mere argumentation which afflicts most ethical treatises an excess of description or documentation over argumentation, to offer something which, since it does not prove anything, is a documentation of nothing. But even supposing that this objection is just, the task attempted here, that of supplying a kind of moral phenomenology or a survey of the field of moral phenomena, will be a useful and necessary if a humble one, so long as the general affliction of Moral Philosophy is what it is—namely, extreme abstractness. Such a survey at the very least enables a reader to realise concretely what it is he is being invited to adopt. Actually it can do more than that. It offers him a kind of proof. He is given here a collection of judgments on character, and such judgments are surely

ethical if any are. If he accepts them as true he thereby accepts as true the ethics from which they spring—namely, those of personality or of personal relationships. On the other hand, he has but to try to apply to these judgments utilitarian (or industrialist) ethics, and he will see that these ethics are false, or no ethics. If he calls by the name of goodness that which is expressed in personal relationships, seeing how different in kind this goodness is from everything else, he will refuse that name to anything else. The description may further persuade him that the whole domain of the so-called 'values' is a branch not, as many will have it, of Metaphysics or of Mysticism, but of Psychology, or even, as is here suggested, of Psychopathology. If, however, he is a convinced utilitarian (to keep to one class of possible opponents) he will say that the judgments here collected are either false or not ethical (irrelevant to Moral Philosophy). In that case they will certainly not be a proof of anything to him. But then neither will argumentation avail, with its ultimate aim of bringing home to him the charge of self-contradiction, for the simple reason that a utilitarian (or even a hedonist) need not contradict himself. To sum up and to repeat: an ethical treatise can be no more than a presentation of a mode of life. The presentation may be formal and abstract or material and concrete. We have preferred the material exposition, giving the formal treatment more by implication.

Whether proved or not our thesis, very briefly, is as follows: Appetition, or biological striving or the desire for processes or experiences as such in oneself and in others, yields the egoistic life or egoism, which includes altruism or alteregoism; he who leads this life is the egoist. Ambition is the desire for position (or relations), and for processes or experiences only as symbols of this. It seeks for the following: soleness or allness (both in effect nothingness), difference or separation, identity, supremacy, superiority, equality. It makes the egotistic life or egotism and

the egotist. The moral desire or *nisus* is for right structures or situations (union, at-oneness, communication) embodying or expressing Goodness, and for processes only as ingredients in these. It makes the genuinely moral life and man or the good man.[1] These three desires are all primary and underived. The genuinely moral life includes egoism as its matter but excludes egotism altogether. Egotism borrows contents both from egoism and from genuine morality.

The title is chosen to mark the relevance of the book to the moment of writing. The book itself does not advocate the Ethics of Power. It is a criticism of such Ethics.[2]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In an age when one wakes every morning trepidant of being hit by the Newest Ethics, Newest Physics or Metaphysics, the New Psychology, The New Man, The New Woman, The New Boy, The New Girl, all hurtling through the atmosphere, many will be glad to learn that here is no claim to novelty. There being no such claim, it might seem superfluous to mention here specially ' authorities,' particularly as there is no lack of names in the text. But, partly for the reader's enlightenment who might desire to ' place ' the present theory, partly to rebut by anticipation a possible charge against it of novelty and paradox, it may be useful to bring together the names of those writers who have chiefly helped to formulate its thought and with whom it has the closest affinities in one respect or another. These are, among the classics: the writers of the Bible, Plato, Tauler (*The Following of Christ*), La Rochefoucauld, Hobbes, Bishop Butler, Kant, Vladimir Soloviev; among

[1] There is no intention to revive the ' moral sense ' theory. All that is meant is that when we seek morality we do not seek simply processes or experiences, and do not seek at all our own position. We have tried to guard against Philosophy's disease of *substantivitis*, by the plastic use of language and by varying our phraseology, but this could not be done always.

[2] See p. 216.

contemporaries: T. A. Bowhay, H. W. B. Joseph, E. F. Carritt, W. D. Ross, Lossky, Croce, Bergson, Adler, F. Künkel. A most heterogeneous team, these, to be sure! They all differ from each other and our theory differs differently from each of them. A discussion of these differences would make a large book by itself, more interesting, however, to the writer than to the reader.

The chiefest debt to one person is acknowledged in the dedication.

Thanks are due and gratefully given to a colleague, Mr H. J. R. Lane, for the stimulation of argument and for help in the proof-reading.

TRUISMS OR POSTULATES

CONCRETENESS

Ethics must be concrete. It has to deal with concrete, three-dimensional attitudes, cognitive—affective—conative, or made up of thinking, feeling and striving or desiring, which generally culminate in a physical externalisation or the production of a change in the physical world (to start with, some movement or change in the agent's own body). Generally only the externalisation, or the whole *not without* the externalisation, is called an action. But it is the whole attitude which is the action, the orientation or turning of the personality in this or that direction. Each of its ' dimensions ' is a phase of the action, and has as much right to be called the action as any other phase. A mere desire or impulse is an incomplete action, one truncated of its two later and very important phases, willing or choosing and externalisation. The action is the agent acting.

Much confusion is caused in Ethics, especially in discussions about the freedom of the will, by calling the earlier phase (the ' motive '—*i.e.* a desire or thought) the cause of the later. The relation between them is that of phases in the growth or development of one and the same thing, rather than that of causality. Each phase is the action or the agent.

Hence, not only he who takes, but also he who covets, his neighbour's house, wife, servant, maid, ox or ass, or anything that is his, does wrong; also he who thinks it is right to take them. This follows from the definition of an action. Or rather the definition follows from this moral intuition. We may have to say that all men are sinners. But all men *are* sinners. There may be degrees of sin, of merit or demerit and of blaming. But then there are also degrees of completeness in action, to which they may refer. Merit, demerit and blaming, and degrees

in them are not the affair of true morality, whose concern with sin is the healing of it.

ORGANIC BELONGING

Each phase of the action belongs to the whole organically; it is what it is, only in that whole; a phase 'similar' to it in another whole is really different. Hence, when we say, for example, that the genuinely moral man does not blame or condemn anyone or anything, we have in view the whole concrete attitude and action which is: thinking the sinner bad and his act wrong, turning away in spirit from him or it and knocking him on the head or taking some other drastic step. No doubt the moral man, like the egotist, thinks the wrong wrong. But the thinking of the one is not really similar to that of the other, belonging as it does to a different organic whole. By itself it is a mere abstraction about which not much may be said that is significant.

MORAL PHILOSOPHY IS PREACHING. (*Cf.* pp. 194-195.)

Writing on Ethics is always preaching, even when it seems to be merely analysis or definition. We have just been preaching in defining an action. In what follows, when we analyse or define the objectivity of moral action we shall be preaching: 'Lose thyself' or 'Be not self-centred.' Much later, in analysing or defining the genuinely moral man's attitude towards the wrong or bad, we shall be preaching: 'Love thine enemy, though he be *The* Enemy or the Devil.' In discussing the nature of moral evil we shall be preaching this and that 'Thou-shalt-not.' True, a formulation in Moral Philosophy may be an attempt to co-ordinate many preachings or moral precepts or intuitions, and while these may be right, the formulation may be wrong. But generally it is safe to assume that when people disagree about the formulation they disagree about the moral intuitions of which it is the formulation.

PREACHING IS MORAL PHILOSOPHY

What proof or demonstration is available to the preacher? Only the description or analysis in all its dimensions of the attitude he recommends or of that which he calls evil. (Preaching is Moral Philosophy.) He can describe one attitude (the egotist's) until it becomes clear that it is akin to madness or, when allowed to develop to its extreme, is madness. But if the egotist says: 'Why not be mad? I want to be,' there is no answer save further description. Even more unanswerable is he when he says: '*Il ne faut pas être bête.* Why go to extremes? I will have a bit of sanity and a bit of insanity.' Most unanswerably of all he may assert: 'Your description of the genuinely moral attitude and man applies exactly to mine and me. *Ecce Homo!*'

PSYCHOLOGISM

A person expresses himself in many attitudes: for example, in the combative attitude, in assertiveness or submissiveness, in anger or envy, hatred, ambition, etc. One species of Psychology makes a selection of a number of attitudes and attributes each to a separate impulse or instinct. Its ideal then is a laboratory in which, by fusing in a crucible two or three instincts, it may show the rest as compounds of these; or else it is a stud-farm on which by coupling two of them it may by the result show many of the others as their offspring. Lacking such a laboratory or farm, we must be content with mere description. We are aiming at a philosophic account—description of the identity underlying differences—when we call many attitudes 'expressions of egotism,' by which we mean simply that they are all egotistic. Philosophy is neither Chemical Tables nor Debrett but just description.

There may be a reliable laboratory instrument which will show us without distortion the inside of animals' and children's

minds. Possessing it, we might save ourselves the trouble of looking into our own minds and say that, since we were once animals and children, our minds must be like theirs. Those who lack this instrument must be content with introspection into their own minds—the introspection used by the novelist and dramatist—and say that animals' and children's minds probably work analogously to our own. This is what we are doing here when we hypothetically attribute to them and even to physical nature egotistic tendencies. Once more we are merely describing.

RATIONALISM

Of most men we have to say that they believe and do not believe. 'A self-contradictory statement!' exclaims the rationalist. 'No. A true description of a self-contradictory state of mind,' must be the retort. Our business is to describe truly and not to show the irrational as rational, as do countless people in mistaken deference to the Laws of Thought. Nor should we, through the same deference and through the fear of sounding absurd, hesitate to describe the absurd as absurd. Most of our conduct springs from an attitude which is a peculiar combination of judging (or thinking or believing) and of willing, wherein the believing is not really believing. We believe that black is white; but we do not really believe, but are unwilling to admit that it is not white; also we will that it be white, and we will to make it white, while not admitting that it is not already white. Such a state must be described by saying that *we will that black is white* (not that it *be* or become white, which would imply admitting that it is not white). In allowing ourselves this freedom we are vindicating the rights of true description against a misinterpretation and misapplication of Logic.

Bearing the above truisms in mind, we may now proceed *in medias res.*

CHAPTER I

EGOISM AND MORALITY

I. Self-Love the Source of Evil. (*Cf.* pp. 81-82 and Chapter VIII.)

The Origin of Evil the Starting-Point of Ethics

'Why should we be good or moral or do good?' is a question sometimes asked as a means of getting from the beginning right at the centre of the subject-matter which it is the business of Ethics to study. It is in effect, if not in so many words, the question which sets Plato's *Republic* in motion and which preserves the unity of its extraordinarily rich variety. It is certainly one which is calculated to startle and to hold the attention, and, if it really does plunge us *in medias res*, it should form the ideal starting-point of the method we seek here—which is to try to work from the centre to the circumference. But what answer can there be to it? Surely only '*Faute de mieux*,' or 'Because it is the best thing to be or to do,' or 'We should because we should'—all different expressions of one and the same tautology. But a tautology is no answer. Indeed, there can be no answer to what is not a proper question. We may ask, and we may be told, why we should or ought to do a particular action, and the answer will consist either in exhibiting more clearly the nature of this action or in bringing forward something else which we ought to do and which entails the doing of the action under discussion. But we cannot ask, or at least we cannot be told, why there should be a 'should' or 'ought' at all. The 'ought' is ultimate and cannot be resolved into anything else. But so to resolve it is what the question invites us to do. We can only pretend to comply with

its invitation and retort with something which does not really answer it but which instead sets forth the various things which are good or come under 'ought,' demonstrates the ultimateness of the latter, and, above all, shows its metaphysical implications. This in effect is what the *Republic* does. The question, in fact, is too drastic. It brings us neither to the beginning nor to the middle of our subject but to the end.

'Why are we bad or do evil?' is, on the other hand, a really searching and promising question. It will make us face at the beginning that which most ethical theories do not face even at the end, although, or perhaps because, it constitutes the real problem to be solved and the real test of the adequacy of any moral theory, just as the problem of error is that over which most theories of truth come to grief. "There is a problem of Evil, but no problem of good," it has been said with truth amply borne out by the engrossing preoccupation of all ordinary talk as well as of the major part of literature. Man's favourite study is Man—his character, his motives, his peculiarities, but our talk about our fellow-men is certainly not embarrassingly or monotonously eulogistic, whatever may be the case with epitaphs, official or edifying biographies or chairmanship oratory. We are preoccupied, if not always with the evil, at any rate predominantly with the imperfections or shortcomings, of our fellows. And however much we have been trained by experience to look upon evil or imperfection as general, and to take it for granted, we yet often cannot help repeating that question which we have asked with such passion and pain when first the world of hard reality impinged upon that of our ideals: 'Why are the evil and imperfection there?' On the other hand, when we believe a man and his actions to be honest or just or righteous, we do not ask why he is what he is or acts as he does, unless we harbour a suspicion that the goodness is not real but only apparent. Thus, the question proposed here has, in the first instance, the merit of being

taken from ordinary life. Secondly, it does not fail to bring us to the centre of our subject. In saying what is evil and whence it springs we shall not be able to avoid stating for the sake of the contrast, if only briefly and dogmatically and by implication or allusion, what we think is goodness.

The evil and good we are concerned with are those which are manifested or actualised in a man's or personality's living, in character energising in conduct—specifically 'moral' evil and good, as they are generally called. Whether there is any other, and, if there is, how it is related to the 'moral' kind, are questions belonging to the circumference of the subject.

MAN NOT GOOD BY NATURE

"Every action and choice, it seems, aims at some good," Aristotle says at the beginning of his *Ethics*. That man is by nature good and seeks good we have been bewitched into believing by Rousseau and by the Romantic School largely deriving from him. That he becomes and must become better and better inevitably, as it were, and by a law of nature, is the pious and inspiriting contribution wrested by some from the nineteenth-century generalisation of the theory of Evolution. Such beliefs we can hold only if we either simply identify the good with that which we aim at or evolve towards—and Aristotle, indeed, in the very next sentence goes on to approve of the definition of the good as that at which all things aim—or if we blind ourselves by a simple sophism which attributes the all too evident and undeniable evil of man to kings and priests, to Civilisation or Religion or the Capitalistic System, as though, forsooth, these were external and accidental to humanity and not parts or products of it. What is in truth natural to man is the desire to think well of himself. It is this desire, rather than experience and reflection, which is father to those beliefs and which protects them against every assault

from fact or theory, jealously and even furiously. In our own day however, partly in reaction against the faith of Romanticism, partly owing to the researches of Psycho-analysis, but largely through the lesson of the Great War and its dire *sequelæ* of widespread, wholesale and fatally facile atrocities, we are once more reverting to the old belief in the original sin of man. Indeed our imaginative literature, outdoing in horrors any fire-and-brimstone preacher of old, and surpassing in copious scholarship of vice the instruction with which the priest has at all times been prepared for his office in the confessional, seems obsessed, not merely with the sin, but even with the monstrosity, of mankind.

EVIL NOT SOUGHT DIRECTLY

Yet, readily receptive as we have grown to accusations against our kind, we cannot think that any man can pursue evil directly and because it is evil, as he can pursue good directly and because it is good. The idea of evil as co-ordinate with good, at least in respect of the possibility of forming a direct and positive object of a quest, presents grave metaphysical difficulties. Evil cannot be self-subsistent, or a principle or a substance,[1] as good can, we feel inclined to say, risking the calling up of long-since laid ghosts of old, troublesome notions and unmanageable controversies. But to engage at once in metaphysics, and that too in obsolete metaphysics, is truly too formidable a task. These, when they were not idle scholastic or theological vapourings, were based on experience. It is to the latter that we should attend. We must concentrate on the psychological difficulties: Try to envisage evil as a positive, direct object, and you find nothing there. We are then tempted to fall into the facile optimism which regards evil as merely negative, as something not real, or as the

[1] *Cf.* Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III. vii. and xv.; and Augustine, *Confessions*, VII. xii. and xvi.

simply not good enough. But this optimism our experience, showing us monstrous evil as the commonest and most potent factor in life, refutes or condemns as a juggling with words.

We must ask what is meant by " pursuing evil directly and because it is evil." When, from a sense of duty, a man performs an action which is to him irksome or unpleasant, he does not choose the action directly, which he dislikes, but he does it because of the goodness which consists in the performance of duty. It is this goodness which he directly chooses. When, on the other hand, another man, from sadistic lust, delights in inflicting death or physical or mental suffering on his fellow-men, what he chooses directly is his action or his experience of it, which he likes because of its special quality (the feeling of enhanced vitality or power, the slightly harrowing and repelling yet fascinating excitement) just as another likes taking alcohol or drugs. The fact that it is evil, however, certainly does not work on him as an inducement. The evil, in so far as he acknowledges it, he accepts indirectly, we may say.[1] But rarely will he acknowledge it. On the contrary, his sadism will so work upon his mind that he fortifies himself with the fantasy (to say ' belief ' or ' conviction ' would be to misrepresent) that his action is not only just but obligatory and even meritorious. This is certainly the case with those who in times of revolution come forward as zealous devotees of a cause and whose service consists in acting as executioners. But even ordinary criminals or bullies, we should find, sustain themselves with some obscure or perverted justification or glorification. At the very least, evil as applied to their particular actions has lost its sense for them. It is the same with that more subtle form of evil, the ingratitude which bites the hand that feeds just because it is the hand that feeds, a reaction which by its paradoxical nature has drawn comments from writers

[1] It is " beside his intention," according to Aquinas, *op. cit.*, III. iv.

of all periods.[1] Here, it would seem, we have an instance of the operation of a taste for very crookedness. But, in truth, we have no such thing. The ingrate is not in love with crookedness or evil; but the hand that feeds is as wounding to his pride as the hand that strikes: his imagination soon identifies the one with the other, and he retaliates accordingly. These examples would seem to show that men, so far from choosing evil as evil and simply because it is evil, choose evil actions in spite of their evil, and in so far as they see the latter try to disguise it to themselves under the appearance of the good.

But that the opposite is the fact our primitive indignation cries out loudly each time we are roused by some exceptionally revolting dastardliness. And it is this indignation which makes popular melodrama with its villain, whose peculiarity is that his motives and expressed attitude to his own conduct are not possible for any agent but are merely the embodiment of the spectator's condemnation. Such a villain is undoubtedly Iago, albeit his creator is no ordinary melodramatist. Only (and it is in this that the great poet asserts himself over the panderer to popular taste), Iago is incredible merely in his talk ('I am a villain, I am a horrible, horrible villain'), which seems to be intended to make the flesh of the groundlings creep. His motives are credible and convincing enough. For these are: cupidity, ambition, envy, vindictiveness and the ingratitude we have spoken of, and not love for evil because it is evil. Still, what is primitive and popular is not to be despised. It generally distorts an important truth. There *is* evil remotely like the melodramatic conception of it, we shall see. Only, we shall also find it not at all melodramatic and not occurring necessarily in characters of a monstrosity that strikes the critic in the eye, but often in subtle, devious forms not easily discernible from the highest good.[2] Meanwhile we must say that action

[1] *Cf.* Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chap. xi.

[2] See below, pp. 248-249.

for the sake of evil does not exist.[1] Nor is this intended for a merely empirical statement. It is not meant simply that such action is not found in human experience; we mean that it is altogether inconceivable. Conceivable, though not human, we allow it to be, when we call it devilish, as does Kant.[2] Those who know something of the Devil because they know the dark caverns of the human heart, the mystics, speak differently of him. The Devil, we are assured by Tauler or whoever is the author of that penetrating fourteenth-century treatise, *The Following of Christ*, " hateth sin naturally." [3]

MAN LOVES, NOT EVIL, BUT HIMSELF

Why then does man (or the Devil) do evil? Not because he loves evil, but because he loves himself.

Self-love is not much invoked as a principle of explanation in modern writings. But it is the favourite principle of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers. It is the theme of La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes*. It occurs in Hobbes (as desire for security and power), in Spinoza, in Kant, above all in Bishop Butler who, as is done here, insists that evil is never done for the sake of evil (" Robbery and murder is never from the love of injustice or cruelty ") and that " Vice in general consists in having an unreasonable and too great regard to ourselves, in comparison of others." [4]

EGOISTIC AND EGOTISTIC SELF-LOVE

What however does ' self-love ' mean? If it has not been kept as a technical term, the reason is that it has proved difficult to keep it unambiguous. Henry Sidgwick [5] points out the many interpretations which both it and the connected

[1] *Cf.* Bradley, *Ethical Studies* (2nd edition), pp. 305-306.
[2] *Op. cit.*, iii.
[3] § 163.
[4] Sermon X.
[5] *The Methods of Ethics*, I. vii. § 1.

terms 'egoism' and 'self-realisation' admit. The life of pleasure, of contemplation, of action, of duty,[1] has each in turn been pointed out as the one to which it prompts us. "For all our impulses, high and low, sensual and moral alike, are so far similarly related to the self, that—except when two or more impulses come into conscious conflict—we tend to identify ourselves with each as it arises." Before examining its use in any philosophic system, it will be well to try to track it in common speech. Two distinct meanings, two different kinds of self-love, will at once emerge.

A selfish or self-indulgent man, it will be agreed, loves himself. True, his selfishness does not consist merely in his loving himself but in his excessive self-love which excludes, or relegates to a subordinate position, love for anyone else. But self-love he assuredly has to a marked extent. Such a character is Tito Melema in George Eliot's *Romola*: one "who made almost every one fond of him, for he was young, and clever and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind"; "who, at first, never thought of anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared for nothing else so much as his own safety, he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds—such as make men infamous. He denied his father, and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him, that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous." Of a different kind is the self-love of the man who is self-complacent, self-satisfied, self-important, self-conscious, self-centred, smug, ambitious, proud, vain, pompous, conceited, fond of praise, of flattery and of worship; self-willed, obstinate, fond of having his own way, defiant, touchy; also perhaps envious or jealous, malignant or vindictive and unforgiving, at least when not all goes well for his self-love. One who possesses all or most of these attributes is Willoughby Patterne in Meredith's *The Egoist*.

[1] *Cf.* Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, IX. viii.

That 'self-love' is of all terms the one most applicable to what is the centre and inner unity of such a character may be seen from the numerous intercalatory essays in which Meredith characteristically delights to play, like a cat with a captured mouse, with his own creation, and which, like the whole novel, strike one as amplified variations on La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes*, the theme of which, as we have already said, is self-love, or, what to their author is the same thing, man. Yet how different is the self-love of a Tito from that of a Willoughby, however much they may occur together compounded in different proportions in each one of us, is evident partly from the fact that to Tito belongs none of the Willoughby characteristics (which reflection on life as well as on the novel shows to have a common origin and to hang together even though some may be absent in one and others in another). He is free from coxcombry, vanity, self-conceit, self-gratulation, pride, presumption, defiance; little apt to claim credit for himself but ready to give it to others; incapable of anger, resentment and rancour; little ambitious for reputation, distinction, position or power, except for the sake of the advantages to be reaped from them, and in the case of political power, because of the opportunity afforded for the exercise of adroitness. Indeed in all these respects he may be said not to know what it is to have a self or to desire self-assertion or to be self-conscious. But most clearly may the difference between him and Willoughby be realised from this: His self-love, unless limited in degree or differently moulded, must always express itself in external actions closely similar to those actually attributed to him in *Romola*; a Willoughby on the other hand, entirely unchanged in his self-love, but placed in a different environment, under the rule of a different fashion and ideas from those obtaining in the world which is his in the novel, we can easily see leading a life externally the opposite of the easy and ample one which is his in *The Egoist*. We can see

him as a self-mortifying anchorite (like the stylite Paphnuce, in Anatole France's *Thaïs*), or renouncing wealth, ease and worldly position to become, as a 'humble' pastor, the chosen prophet, a leader of the people "in the ways of God" (as does the detestable curate in Selma Lagerlöf's *Charlotte Löwenskold*). He might even lay down his life, provided that thus only could he stand well with himself and others, regard himself and be regarded as superior or supreme, as the pattern or exemplar of his world. We have indeed different terms for the self-love of a Tito and for that of a Willoughby. The first we denote by the English name, while for the second, or at least for a common aspect of it, vanity, we tend to confine the borrowed word *amour-propre*.

We shall call the first egoistic self-love or egoism, and the second egotistic self-love or egotism.[1]

II. First Formulation of Egoistic Self-Love

Hedonistic psychology and ethics

Butler, the most useful philosophic writer to examine on the subject of self-love because he has most to say about it, does not make the distinction here put forward. The sifting of what he says will, however, contribute most to the definition of egoistic self-love, which is the one that will engage us in this chapter and the next. According to him a man's self-love is his "general desire of his own happiness," or is the source from which this desire proceeds.[2] By happiness he means the same as others mean by pleasure. At least he calls it enjoyment, satisfaction, a sum-total made up of particular enjoyments.[3] Only the

[1] It is unfortunate that Meredith, who does not make our distinction except by implication through his portraiture, calls Willoughby *The Egoist*. The distinction between the two terms here made has some support from common usage, though in this too they are confused. (See Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* under *Pride*.)

[2] Sermon XI. [3] *Ib.*

actions of self-love, he urges, should be called interested.[1] But mankind, he objects against Hobbes and others, is not wholly governed by self-love nor do all actions proceed from it. There are other motives: friendship, compassion, gratitude, abhorrence of the base and liking what is fair and just, the appetites of sense, resentment, revenge, hatred, curiosity, ambition, a variety of particular affections, passions and appetites to particular external objects. These are not love to ourselves but movements to something external: to honour, power, the harm or good of another. While self-love never seeks anything external for the sake of the thing, but only as a means of happiness or good, particular affections rest in the external things themselves, having these is their end, in this consists their gratification, no matter whether it be or be not, upon the whole, our interest or happiness. That they are *towards external things themselves*, distinct from the *pleasure arising from them*, is manifested from hence: that there could be no enjoyment or delight from one thing more than another, from eating food more than from swallowing a stone, if there were not an affection or appetite to one thing more than another. Without these passions and their gratification there could not be happiness, for which self-love would in vain long, making us only miserable. For it itself neither is nor yields happiness, nor does it provide us with any particular appetite or passion or constitute *this* or *that* to be our interest. Self-love can work only by adopting, using, combining, regulating these particular affections, passions and appetites.[2]

In his treatment of these Butler makes what has become the established objection against Hedonistic Psychology, which holds that all our motives are at bottom desire for pleasure. It may be doubted whether this theory, in spite of the pedantic

[1] Preface.

[2] All the material words in the above summary are Butler's own, and are taken from the Preface and Sermon XI.

elaborations it has been given, has ever been more than a distortion of a harmless expression current in ordinary speech. Of anything (wealth, reading, hunting, swimming) which has become the object of a settled pursuit on our part, we say that we take pleasure in it or that it pleases us. We mean by this that we like having this or that object, or rather the exercising of ourselves in this or that activity (or the disporting of ourselves in this or that passivity), and also that this exercising normally produces in us pleasure, generally consequent upon our previous desire for the activity (or passivity) itself. We may mean also that the anticipation of this exercising is also an anticipation of this pleasure, or is accompanied by such an anticipation, which may sometimes itself also be pleasant. But first and uncaused by the pleasure or by the idea of the pleasure comes the liking, desiring, tendency, capacity, craving or need for the activity (or passivity) itself. We certainly do not mean that we like, desire, crave, need or pursue pleasure only. If we meant this, we should say that we take pleasure only in pleasure or that only pleasure pleases us, when the nonsense or falsity of the theory would at once be patent. It is, indeed, possible to desire and pursue pleasure itself (or experiences merely because of, and in proportion to, their proved pleasantness), whether consequent upon a non-hedonistic desire or not. Thus, I may desire and pursue the pleasure of eating; but in that case the pleasure is the sole element of the experience which I desire, while the rest is, as it were, merely the ore or gross matter in which the sought-for gold is encrusted; whereas when I am merely hungry it is the whole experience of eating that I want. Further, the pursuit of the pleasures of the table may lead me to desire to be hungry and to stimulate hunger in order to have the pleasure of satisfying it, a thing which is of course utterly alien to the natural craving for nutrition. Again, the hungry man can be satisfied only by being fed, but to the hedonist any pleasure equal to that of eating will serve as a

substitute for it. It may, however, be doubted whether the choice of pleasures by a purely quantitative estimation does or can play in any life the large part assigned to it by Hedonistic Psychology or Ethics. Even the professed hedonist, we find, pursues sublety or rarity or complexity or violence, or some other quality, rather than mere quantity, of pleasure; and many things originally devised simply as means to pleasure—for example, many amusements—come to be pursued as symbols of distinction or of power or even as social duties, so that many a life filled by them which to the innocent outsider seems a life of mere pleasure and arouses his indignation (as does, for example, the life of the 'idle rich') is by the initiate himself felt to be a burdensome slavery.

But although he denies that particular passions seek pleasure, Butler repeatedly maintains that self-love is for pleasure only. His position is therefore that of many Hedonistic philosophers, who hold not, indeed, that every impulse is for pleasure, but that the desire for the latter is the only motive which can (or, some say, which should) influence us, as regulators of the whole scheme or system of our life, in allowing as part of that scheme the fulfilment of this or that impulse. "Let it be allowed," he writes, "though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good, as such; yet, that when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit, till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness, or at least not contrary to it."[1] We will not inquire whether only the pursuit of happiness is justifiable nor stop to wonder at the peculiarity of Butler's system, in which Conscience, the *supreme* regulator of life, authoritatively enjoins actions without any consideration of our happiness, but in which we must also justify even our obedience to Conscience, apparently, before the tribunal of self-love, another regulator, by the plea of happiness. Hedonistic

[1] Sermon XI. and Dissertation II.

Ethics has been discussed and refuted often enough to the satisfaction of most and even *ad nauseam.* We may content ourselves with asking whether in fact self-love, any more than a particular passion, is a desire for pleasure only. The selfish man, we have said, possesses a superabundance of self-love. But he does not pursue pleasure only. We may say he does only what it pleases him to do and just because it pleases him. But this, as we have seen, means merely that he does what he likes doing. It does not tell us what it is he likes or desires or pursues. It is true that Tito, who has been given as an example of the selfish man, is by the author herself, writing as she did under the influence of the Utilitarian or Hedonistic philosophy, continually characterised in the terms of that philosophy, which he is also made on more than one occasion to profess; and that in ordinary language he might rightly be described as, to a certain extent at least, a pleasure-loving nature. Yet he was not the true Hedonist as conceived by the Hedonistic philosopher. Had he been that, he would assuredly have practised some self-discipline and self-searching, such, for example, as is recommended by Epicurus; and, in accordance with the latter's precept, he would have curbed, for the sake of the maximum of happiness, his desire for gain, and would not have succumbed to his love of exercising his adroitness in the slippery game of political intrigue; or else, for the same end of the greatest possible happiness, he might have experimented with all sorts of experiences in order to discover which were the pleasantest. The aim of his selfishness may more accurately be said to have been to fill his life with those experiences he liked most and to exclude from it those he disliked. In the end George Eliot herself sums him up rather as a negative Hedonist, one who "tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant," while positively he "cared for nothing else so much as his own safety," which is of course not the same as pleasure. But even if we admit his selfishness to be wholly

pleasure-seeking, it is after all of one kind only; and there are many kinds. The devotion to a life of study of the old scholar Middleton in Meredith's *The Egoist* and his desire for the freedom necessary to it from domestic responsibility and worries constituted selfishness; for they nearly led him into blindly wrecking his young daughter's life. Yet devotion to scholarship can scarcely be called devotion to pleasure.[1]

SELF-LOVE AND PARTICULAR PASSIONS. (*Cf.* pp. 76-80.)

But if egoistic self-love is not necessarily directed upon pleasure only, any more than are particular impulses or 'passions,' then equally with these it deserves the title 'disinterested' or 'interested,' as used by Butler. From them it is distinguished only by being 'general' while they are 'particular.' Self-love implies, if not always calculation, some policy followed unconsciously at least. It seeks an object, or a system of objects, commensurate with, or adequate to, a whole life; it seeks a life made up of the fulfilments of many particular impulses or needs, the *rôle* of each being assigned to it with some sense of the whole. The egoist in general is one who seeks his own life or experience with this or that accent or flavour or colour.

'INTERESTED' AND 'DISINTERESTED.'—APPETITION

What, however, does Butler mean by calling all particular affections, passions and appetites, or the actions prompted by them, 'disinterested'? Primarily, he means that they are not for pleasure, and this is the technical meaning the word has assumed with many philosophers. But because he thinks that self-love is always love for pleasure, he declares that these "particular passions," etc., are not love to ourselves or akin to it, but "movements to somewhat external," that

[1] We are throughout dealing with egoistic self-love only. But the argument about pleasure applies equally, if not more, to egotistic self-love. The egotistic desire to be supreme is certainly not a desire for pleasure only.

they " rest in the external things themselves as their ends," that they are affections to these things, that they are love for these in themselves or for their own sake like the love of goodness or of virtue or of God.[1] By ' disinterested ' he does mean then what that word conveys in its ordinary use. But in this sense surely most of the impulses, tendencies, urges, desires or strivings, which make up our nature, are ' interested ' because, however much they refer to a world of objects which is not ourselves, they do not take us out of ourselves but only try to bring this world into ourselves, grasp after it in order to fill us. To speak more concretely, the lion's hunger after the lamb (his desire to eat the lamb) is not a disinterested love of the lion for the lamb, but rather a very interested love of the lion for the lion, and its fulfilment consists not in the lion's resting in the lamb but in the lamb's resting in the lion! In what sense can my hunger and thirst be said to be disinterested or to " rest " in " external objects," in food and water themselves, or to be affections to these? Such language might perhaps be appropriate if these appetites led me to desire and strive simply that food and water shall be, and if the mere existence of food and water without regard to their contribution to my own life were their ultimate end. But when I am hungry or thirsty I do not even desire or seek simply the eating of food or the drinking of water, let alone the bare existence of food and water. I desire and seek *my* eating of food or drinking of water—that is, a constituent of *my* life or experience—and only in this and not in " somewhat external " does my hunger or thirst " rest " or find its fulfilment. These appetites are not for pleasure, because they seek (make for) the whole experience and not merely the pleasantness of it, but they are for the self's experience and not for something external to the self.

Them and other appetites we shall call APPETITIONS. By the same name we shall denote all explicit or conscious desires or

[1] This is made quite clear towards the end of the Preface and in Sermon XIII.

dim (unconscious) [1] conations, strivings, makings-for, impulses, urges, tendencies, 'hormic drives,' the goal or fulfilment of which is an element (or the quality of an element) in the self's life, whether this element be a process which is an experience ('conscious' or 'unconscious')—*e.g.* a feeling, emotion, intellectual activity—or simply a physical or physiological process. Since it is for lived processes, appetition may also be called biological desire. Since it is for an expansion or maintenance of the subject's life, it may be called subjective. It may also be called egoistic, for it is like egoistic self-love, which seeks, we have said, the self's life, and which differs from an appetition merely as the general from the particular.

We have countless appetitions: for eating and drinking, for breathing, for sex experience; for bodily exercises of all sorts, such as walking, running, leaping, climbing, swimming; for productive or constructive psycho-physical activities; for mental activities—practical planning or organising and scientific or philosophic pursuits.[2] These appetitions are present either in habits acquired by the individual or in those racial habits which are innate in him as instincts. The activities or passivities which are their ends, together with others which are means to these, make up the major part of our living.

APPETITION SUBJECTIVE

Is it quite true to say that all these are appetitions, to say, that is, that they are all of them strivings after our own

[1] The difficult and often arbitrary distinction between 'conscious' and 'unconscious' is not important for our purpose. Hence, we may sometimes use 'desire' for the most unconscious urge or 'making-for' or hormic drive, and sometimes synonymously with 'conation.'

In what follows some ideas and terms are adapted from O. Stapledon's *A Modern Theory of Ethics*, L. A. Reid's *A Study in Æsthetics* and W. Stern's *Person und Sache* (3 vols.). The adaptation does not, however, claim to be an interpretation.

[2] The appetition for cognitive or intellectual exercise with or without incidental reference to truth must be distinguished from the objective desire for truth itself, truth not being simply a quality of an activity or process. See p. 286.

processes, referring, indeed, to a world which is not ourselves, but only in order to bring it into ourselves? After all, the end of the constructive impulse is not simply my constructing but a building or some other structure, a contribution to the world which is not myself, and the end of the sex impulse is not only a process in my body but also a process in the body of another, that of my mate, and the production of a new living being and ultimately the propagation of the race. In some sense, it would seem, there is here disinterestedness and objectivity. Yet, if we admit this, we see ourselves forced to the admission that the real end of the impulse to breathe is a transmutation of the air and that the lion hungers to contribute something to the too placid lamb, to give him leonine energy. Nevertheless, it is important to be clear that appetition, egoism, does involve some giving as well as taking, some admission of, and coming to terms with, the not-self, in a way in which, we shall see, egotism does not. Egoism, as used here, is by no means synonymous with selfishness. Yet even selfishness, of some kinds at least, as when, for example, it consists of a passion for mathematics, may no less appropriately be called an enslavement of the self by the not-self and a giving up of the self to the not-self, than a self-seeking. The essence of an appetition or of egoism, however, is this: however much its remote or ultimate and not-known end may be the not-self, that end is inseparable from an activity or passivity of the self or subject, and fulfilment or rest is attained only in the end thus inseparably bound to the process. The fact that (or my knowledge of the fact that) there are buildings in existence or that construction goes on, or that children are born and the race is propagated, does not satisfy or fulfil *my* constructive or sex impulse. On the other hand, the sex appetition can attain fulfilment in the process divorced from the ultimate end, though not in the latter divorced from the process.

III. Objective Desire. The Moral 'Nisus'

OBJECTIVE DESIRE NOT FOR PROCESS

What would be a purely objective, disinterested desire? To bring out uncompromisingly all the implications of a theory, an absurd instance is the best. Such a one has already been suggested: the desire that water should be. This would not be a desire for my contemplating the water or for my drinking it, swimming in it, sailing or rowing on it, or using it for the purpose of irrigating the land and thus ultimately producing food for me to eat. Were it for any of these it would be an appetition or subservient to an appetition. Further, it would not of course be a desire for my activity of bringing the water into existence, though, of course, I might naturally be led to desire, or at least to consent to, such an activity in the service of my primary objective desire. But the latter itself would not be for any process lived by me at all. Moreover—and this is of great importance for the development of the theory—it would not be for a process lived by anyone. Still, it would be for a process, since water itself may be looked upon as a process or a plurality of processes. Now, since it may be the case that a desire for any process *quâ* process is always an extension of a desire for my process, or at least akin to it, and therefore, like it, subjective, we must choose as an instance of objective desire one which is not for process at all. Such would be the desire that 2+2 should be equal to 6, an ultimate and independent desire and not subservient to, we will say, my desire to make my accounts come out right or to have my assets made miraculously adequate to my liabilities. A desire really objective, though apparently for processes, would be the desire that there should be two processes, if the desire were really for *twoness*, and for processes only because without there being processes *twoness* could not be actualised. Such a desire would be for the actualisation or embodiment of *twoness* or

duality. (Duality is not a quality of processes or of anything else.)

The object of an objective desire is naturally expressed by a noun clause: for example, "I desire that 2+2 be equal to 6," or "I desire that there shall be two." The object of an appetition is naturally expressed by a noun or an infinitive: for example, "I desire exercise or food," or "I desire to walk or to eat."

Where can we find a real objective desire?

THE MORAL 'NISUS' OBJECTIVE

The desire for moral rightness or that the right be done or that one do one's duty is one which refers, indeed, to processes and experiences, but is not itself a desire simply or directly for process. For rightness is not a process nor a quality of process like delicacy, violence, brevity. We do, indeed, speak, in philosophy at least, of a right action—*e.g.* of keeping one's promise—as though the rightness were a quality of an activity. But perhaps ordinary language is more significant here when it speaks not of a right action but of the person (who is not a process) being right in keeping his promise, or when it says that it is right that he should keep his promise. This significance is perhaps best brought out by saying that there is rightness always in respect of a whole individual *situation* completed in a certain way, and wrongness in respect of a situation not completed in a certain way, or violated. A situation is constituted by persons or subjects, by their attitudes to each other, and by their activities and passivities (thoughts, emotions, deeds), the latter being of course processes. Thus, processes do come in, and there is no rightness without them. But the persons or subjects and their attitudes are not processes. Nor is the whole situation a process, least of all is it that process called experience (which must be lived by someone). For it may be constituted by the processes lived by one person and

by the processes lived by another person, and the two sets are not together a process lived by a third. Indeed each set, consisting of processes every one of which is lived by one and the same person, is not itself, as a set, a process lived by that person, or a process at all. Hence the rightness holding in respect of a situation in which, apparently at least, only one person is involved in isolation (as, for example, in the observance of the so-called self-regarding duty of cultivating my faculties) is also not a quality of a process. It holds in respect of the *facts* that I have these faculties and that, having them, I exercise and develop them in many processes. It holds, that is to say, in respect of a whole complex which involves, indeed, many processes, but is not any one of them or another process besides them.

RIGHTNESS OF A SITUATION

For a fairly simple yet poignant situation we may go once more to *Romola*. The only hope (one he had cherished most strongly and unintermittently) left to the blind old scholar Bardo at the end of his rather frustrated life was that after his death his library would be preserved undivided under his own name in one and the same public institution. This for him was equivalent to posthumous glory, posterity, after-life. Placing absolute trust in his daughter Romola and in her husband, Tito, he bequeathed his library and the realisation of his ambition to them. Romola made this realisation her life's aim while Tito meanly and treacherously sold and dispersed the collection in order to have the money for himself. If we want to show wherein consists the rightness on the one hand and the wrongness on the other, we cannot point to a single process or even to what is called an act. We must point to the whole situation: to Bardo, Tito and Romola, persons and not processes; to many sets of processes at different times on the part of each of them; to Bardo's trusting, an attitude rather than a process

though it led to, or expressed itself in, processes; to the meaning the preservation of the library had for Bardo, a meaning involving psychological processes on his part but itself not a process; to the acceptance of the trust by Romola and Tito, an attitude; to Bardo's being dead and helpless, a fact rather than a process; to Romola's attempts to secure the dead man's wish by entreating many persons, an attitude and a set of processes, the set not being itself a process; to Tito's motives, thoughts and signing of legal documents effecting the sale, a complex of physical and psychical processes but itself not a process. It is in respect of the whole situation that the rightness on the one side and the wrongness on the other hold.

MORAL TERMINOLOGY

When speaking strictly, we shall say that rightness holds, or is, in respect of structure or form, the latter being of a whole situation in which is embodied or expressed Goodness or the Good, while wrongness holds of a situation which contradicts such a structure (briefly, Tito's simply not doing anything to secure the housing of the library undivided in one public institution), or is directly opposite and contrary to it (briefly, Tito's actual dispersion of the library). When speaking briefly, as we have just been doing in the parentheses, we select the climax of the situation, what is called a person's action or act consisting of his attitude—*i.e.* a complex of thoughts, motives, intentions, feelings, decisions—and of a complex of physical processes or movements; and we say that the rightness or wrongness belongs to it, that this action is right and moral or wrong and immoral (Romola's endeavouring to realise her father's wish, Tito's sale of the library), it being well understood that the action is right or wrong only in virtue of its connections with, or place in, a larger context (Tito's action was not wrong simply as the selling of a library). Strictly and

Platonically speaking, Goodness or the Good alone is good. Derivatively we may call good a person in so far as he is directed upon embodying Goodness in rightness; we may also call good his direction or attitude, his will, motives, intentions, thoughts. When referring to other so-called intrinsic or non-instrumental goods (pleasure or happiness, skill, intellectual activity, health, the virtues) we shall speak of ' good,' ' a good ' or ' goods,' in inverted commas. The life dedicated to expressing or embodying Goodness in rightness we shall call the moral life or the objective life for the Good. It may be that the life of no merely human individual is, taken as a whole, such a life. But individual moments, actions or situations in some and perhaps in all lives, or phases at least of such moments, actions or situations, are objective or moral or directed purely to the embodying of Goodness. Certainly every person, *quâ* person, has some insight into Goodness and the *nisus* to embody it, an insight and *nisus* more or less obstructed and suppressed by stronger or weaker, permanent or intermittent self-love, egoistic or egotistic. When highly positive, this intuition-*nisus* constitutes inspiration. Generally it is predominantly negative, a sense of the wrong, of what one ought not to do. It is then what is ordinarily meant by ' conscience,' chiefly negative, critical, prohibitive. We shall speak of moral intuition, moral or objective desire, *nisus* or conation.

MORAL ' NISUS ' AND APPETITION

The moral desire is the desire that the right be done or that Goodness be embodied in a certain situation. It does not always involve, and is never identical with, desire (that is, appetition) for any or for all the processes entering into the situation.[1] The first duty which we are shown as confronting Tito was that of

[1] The whole situation is not a process. But a desire for the whole situation considered simply as a collection of the processes (*i.e.*, as all the processes), and not as a unity with a certain significance, is appetitional or desire for process. See below, p. 76, note 2.

trying to find his foster-father and to ransom him from captivity. He desired that right be done but he did not desire the experiences or processes involved: the spending of his money and being reduced once more to poverty, the risk of capture, the company of his rather dour foster-father; and that is why he did not do his duty. Had his desire for the right been strong enough to make him do his duty, this still need not have involved his desiring any of these experiences. On the other hand, had he set out to release his foster-father, simply prompted by a desire for any of these, acting, say, from a love of adventure or because he could not live without his foster-father, he would not have been engaged in solving a moral problem, and the source of his conduct would have been an appetition and not an objective desire. Not of course that the mere presence or co-operation of the love for adventure or of the yearning for being in his foster-father's company would have been inconsistent with the desire for the right. But this latter desire, in however latent or merely implicit a form, would have had to be regulative of the others for us to be able to say that his conduct was purely moral—that is, that it sprang from an objective desire.

My desire that the right be done generally does have, or should have, reference to situations involving some doing on my part, some process of mine. (When I busy myself solely or chiefly about my neighbour's duties I can be certain that there is something wrong with me.) But this does not mean that my moral desire is after all a desire for a process of mine, and that moral, like every other, action springs from an appetition, though the latter be only a desire for *my* doing of the right. My desire is that the situation in respect of which rightness holds should be. The knowledge that the situation involves a doing on *my* part, so far from being *the* motive to action, is generally a check to it, as it was in the case of Tito. Goodness and rightness, not being processes or qualities of processes, are

not things which any self can have at all, or have more than, or instead of, another self. Hence there can be no competition or grasping with respect to them. I cannot desire *my* rightness or goodness rather than my neighbour's as I can desire *my* eating rather than his, because, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as *my* goodness or rightness. Of rightness, it is true, there can be more or less in our world according as my neighbour or I do, or fail to do, what we severally ought to do. In desiring rightness as such, we as a consequence also desire each other's required processes. But *my* share I myself must do while his falls to him only. As soon as the notion of competition emerges we can be sure that it is no longer a question of rightness or goodness. Hence, when Aristotle tells us that the good man tries to secure for himself the major part of the right or the honourable,[1] this more than anything else makes us suspect that the Aristotelian good life is a life of egoistic, or else of egotistic, self-love. Indeed he makes the above statement while trying to show that the good man is the true self-lover; only, he imagines that his use of the word self-love is different from the ordinary one or that only the good man can really love himself.

QUASI-MORALITY. (See pp. 72-73, 79-80, 212-213.)

Moral or objective action must be carefully distinguished from action springing simply from a virtuous habit. A virtuous habit is like any other habit. A habit is like an instinct (which is an inherited habit). It is also like a complex or fixation (to use the terms of Psycho-analysis). It is, or it involves, a settled appetition for a process (a reaction) of a certain type in response to a stimulus or occasion of a certain type. The process is sought as a process and as an end in itself, an end satisfying the appetition.

Habits or complexes or fixations are all the virtues which

[1] *Eth. Nic.*, 1168*b* and 1169*a*.

consist in the observation of general rules for action: always keeping one's promise, always telling the truth, always paying one's debts, always giving money to needy individuals or charitable institutions, never taking any intoxicant or never taking any beyond a certain point, never telling a lie, never taking what is my neighbour's (negative habits these last). When an action of mine is simply a result of any of these habits, I am no more being objective than when I eat simply because I am hungry or do anything simply because I am used to doing it; I am not concerned with an individual situation because of its individual rightness but merely with a process of mine, just as when hungry I am concerned with *my* eating. It is only when goodness and rightness are improperly used of actions of this sort that I can be said to be striving after *my* rightness or goodness rather than my neighbour's. Not of course that 'virtuous' habits are to be condemned (it is not suggested that the young George Washington of nursery fame ought to have been sent to a reformatory), or that they are useless and have no place in the objective life. But, like all appetitions, each must be controlled, checked or allowed to run its course, by inspiration springing from living insight into Goodness and into the individual case. Such inspiring insight cannot of course itself be a habit. We may here appeal to common consciousness. When anyone is concerned to justify or commend any particular action of his he rightly feels the objectivity or pure morality of his attitude impugned by any allegation that he acts as he does simply because he has been trained to act so. He will either deny that he has been so trained or will maintain that his acquired habit is controlled and informed by individual insight.

Virtuous action may however be connected with morality in so far as virtue is ultimately a derivative from morality. To mark its connection with morality proper we shall call conduct springing from virtuous habits 'popular morality.' In this we

shall adapt Plato who distinguishes between philosophic virtue or virtue proper which springs from insight into and inspiration from the Form of the Good, and popular virtue. The latter, briefly, includes, according to him, conduct not inspired by insight yet resembling outwardly conduct so inspired; it springs either from instinct or from habits established by the philosopher (who has insight) in agents who themselves do not possess it.[1]

OBJECTIVE = MORAL?

Can we say that all and only objective desire and conduct inspired by it are moral, and that all and only moral desire and conduct are objective? We can say this. But it will be useful to say also that all appetition and appetitional action subservient to objective desire and action (*e.g.* my desire to eat and my eating in order to be able to do the right) are themselves objective and moral. On the other hand it is important to state that all apparently objective desire in the service of appetition is itself appetitional. Thus, my desire that my room have three windows is apparently not for a process of mine or for a process at all, and therefore not an appetition. But I cannot really desire this as an end in itself. I desire it because I desire to have plenty of air to breathe or a good light to see by or more varied scenery to look upon. The expression, 'I desire that my room have three windows' is really a brachylogy for all these appetitions.

Further, we must carefully distinguish the objective moral desire from a quasi-objective desire which is not at all moral. Thus, I can desire that *I* be the supreme being or the law of the universe, as an end in itself and not for the sake of anything else. This is a desire for a situation and a position and not for a process of myself or of anyone else. Therefore, it is not an appetition, and in this respect it is objective, like the

[1] See Appendix I. in Archer Hind's edition of the *Phaedo*.

moral desire. But because, unlike the latter, it always refers essentially to the self (though not to the self's processes), it is only quasi-objective. Later we shall show it to be the essence of the second kind of self-love, egotism. We may call it an *ambition*, in contrast to an *appetition*.

CHAPTER II

ALTRUISM AND SOCIALITY

I. Second Formulation of Egoistic Self-Love: Altruism or Alteregoism

THE USUAL CONTRAST BETWEEN EGOISM AND ALTRUISM

Our terminology has been vacillating, shifting and growing along with our thought. On the one hand we defined appetition as desire for our own processes or experiences. On the other hand we said that non-appetitional, objective or moral desire was for no process or experience as such, whether belonging to oneself or to someone else. Thus, we might have shown that Tito's desire for rightness (the rightness holding, briefly, in respect of the ransoming of his foster-father), even had it been strong enough to lead to action, need not have involved, and would certainly not have been identical with, desire on his part even for his foster-father's processes (*e.g.* his enjoyment of his freedom), just as it need not have involved desire for his own processes. We may now be more definite and more extreme. We will say that appetition is any desire for any process lived or not lived, belonging to oneself or to another self or to no self (though the vast majority of appetitions are for processes lived by oneself), while objective moral desire is essentially for no process at all as process, but for the rightness which holds in respect of a situation. We must also re-define egoistic self-love and say that it is not only the love for the processes forming one's own life but also the love for the processes forming another self's life. Only the narrower egoism is love for one's own life only; it is what is ordinarily called selfishness. The wider egoism includes love for others' processes also.

'Egoism' has, then, become a technical term (that is, its

ordinary meaning has been extended) and a very paradoxical one. For we are using it to cover what ordinarily goes under the name of altruism. Our ' moral objective life ' is far from being identical with the altruistic life, with living for others or sacrificing oneself for others.

' Altruism,' ' the altruistic impulses,' ' sympathy,' ' benevolence,' are, as generally understood, question-begging and unsatisfactory terms. They are commonly used for conduct (and the sources of such conduct) seeking ' the good of others.' Now, the seeking of the good (in the sense in which that expression can be used) is of course, we have agreed, moral and objective. Were we then to derive the moral or objective life, as some have done, from altruism (or the altruistic impulses, or sympathy, or benevolence) in this sense, or to base it on, or identify it with, such altruism, we should only be deriving the moral life from itself; we should be basing it on, or identifying it with, itself. But only the Good or Goodness, we have said, is good, and it does not belong either to myself or to others. We should not therefore speak at all of seeking ' the good of others ' and of seeking ' one's own good,' and contrast the two. Further, as will become plain later, we cannot seek the Good—that is, seek to bring it about—for it already is; we can only seek to embody or express it. Again, the usual contrast between egoism and altruism is a double-barrelled one. For it is not merely a contrast between interest in oneself and interest in others, but it assumes in addition that, while the former interest is not necessarily good or concerned with the good, the latter is.

To avoid these errors and confusions we will use ' altruism ' (as also ' the altruistic impulses,' ' sympathy,' ' benevolence ') for the mere seeking of, or concernment with, others' processes or experiences.[1] Moreover, we must try to find and to analyse

[1] That is, such processes (or the means for them—*e.g.* wealth) as the agent imagines these others like, or will some time like, to have. Hatred, resentment, vindictiveness, malice, which seek processes in others such as the agent imagines they will not like, come under egotistic self-love.

instances of such concernment not in a life already inspired by insight into Goodness, in which they will of course partake of the objectivity of the desire for rightness informing the whole. It may, however, be that only in such a life is our interest in others' processes very deep or not closely dependent on the interest in our own processes. And here, it may be, it is a by-product of our love not for processes but for Goodness. We love our fellow-men because of our own and their love of Goodness and because of the goodness (in the derivative sense) or the potentiality for it in them. In other and in religious terms, we can love our fellow-men properly only in God and by loving God. If that is so, altruism, the love for or interest in others, in any deep sense, so far from being prior to the moral life as its origin, is derived from this life or is a moment in it. Aristotle, who in the treatment of this subject is at his most pedestrian, would seem to bear out the truth of this. Mentioning one definition of the friend as the man who " wishes his friend to be and to live for that friend's own sake," he maintains that friendship properly so-called can subsist only between good men—that is, men who primarily love not each other but the right.[1]

EGOISM AND ALTRUISM CONTINUOUS

Objective desire or conation is really different in kind from desire or conation for one's own processes. But altruism in itself—considered as mere interest in, and desire for, processes in others—is not different in kind from the desire for one's own processes which we have called the narrowly egoistic desire. It is closely dependent on, or associated with, the latter. It is not cut off from it as with an axe, for the simple reason that one self is not so cut off from another self. Selves as subjects, it may be, are distinct but not separate, like the different aspects of one and the same truth. In this capacity,

[1] *Op. cit.*, especially 1156*b* 6, and ff.

however, we are apt to banish them as metaphysical entities while we fix our attention on the obvious separateness of processes. My sensation or emotion or thinking, it would seem, is separate from yours, just as is my body from yours. The obviousness indeed is due to the separation in space of bodies and to the fact that we tend to imagine the self as tacked on to, or as residing in, or owning, its body. And yet, another's will, expressed in a sudden sharp command, may work on my body, produce the desired movement, as immediately (that is, without my arresting the *fiat* and then releasing it to my own organism) as it does on his own, the only difference lying in the need for words for its operation on me. That is, my body is owned for the nonce by his self as directly almost as his own. Even the word or any other bodily go-between, it would seem, is not necessary. For if it is true that without verbal suggestion the hypnotist's sensations can sometimes be transferred to the patient, and if there is any truth in the theory of direct thought-transference, we have here instances of the partial interpenetration of minds even as processes, both affective and cognitive. But apart from such abnormal and perhaps dubious cases, anyone may on occasions when he is off his guard find himself thinking, saying or doing certain things for no other reason than that, as he afterwards discovers, someone else in the same room has been having certain thoughts or desires, these having migrated, as it were, from one to the other, or operated in one and the other, without the help of any expression as an intermediary. When we find ourselves thus open and exposed to other selves, we pull ourselves up and re-establish our separateness by an act of will. This would seem to show that the separateness is not a matter of course and absolute but made and maintained by a special though normally permanent and unnoticed act. Since selves are not separate, my desire then for another self's processes is not separate, or different in kind, from my desire for my own processes; so that we ought

not to call the one objective and the other subjective. In short, I love my neighbour as myself; he is my other self or *alter ego*. If my love for myself is egoism, then my love for him is *alteregoism*. It is an extension of egoism but not something to be contrasted with it.

In thus calling altruism *alteregoism* or extended egoism, close as we are to Hobbes, La Rochefoucauld and others of their way of thinking, we are not liable to the censure which Butler directs against these. For we are not identifying the extended egoism with the narrow egoism (selfishness) *tout court*, as he says they do. We are merely insisting on the continuity between them and on their generic identity in contrast to the generic difference of the objective life from both. In this Butler is with us. For he describes benevolence (our 'altruism') as simply one amongst the many particular passions which self-love has to use.[1] "Towards particular persons," he says, "it may be to a degree of weakness, and so be blameable," and he no more identifies it with the moral life (with virtue) than he does self-love [2] or than we identify altruism with the objective or moral life.

SELFISH ALTRUISM

There is one altruistic impulse from the working of which, since it is the chief, even though it be not (as some rather strangely maintain that it is) the source, of all altruistic impulses, we shall learn the nature and operation of all altruism. This is the parental (primarily the maternal) instinct with its accompanying "tender emotion" and protective impulse. "From this emotion," we are told, "and its impulse to cherish and protect spring generosity, gratitude, love, pity, true benevolence, and altruistic conduct of every kind; in it they have their main and absolutely essential root without which they would not be." [3] In contrast to this high praise we may recall

[1] Sermon XI. [2] Preface.

[3] W. McDougall, *Social Psychology*, p. 61 (21st edition).

the accusation which has been brought against parents as the child's worst scourges by educators of the young at all times and more recently by psycho-analysts tracing diseases of the soul to their origin in infancy, and we must, pursuant to the caution given earlier on, study the impulse, not in some Cornelia, but preferably in a foolish and feckless woman who is yet undeniably maternal—in other words, in a 'fond' mother.

In a mother's love for her child (and what is said of this love can be applied with the necessary changes to love for a friend, wife or parent) we must mark off, and put down to the account of narrow egoism, all desire for processes in the child which is inseparable from desire for her own activities in bringing these about—for her own cherishing, protecting, nurturing or moulding the child—or from desire for her own contemplation of the processes sought for the child. For egoism even of the narrow kind, we have said, does involve some giving, and the essence of the egoistic desire we have defined as consisting in the fact that, though it may be a desire for an end which is the not-self (a building, flowers, a garden, as in this case the child's growth and health), that end is desired only in inseparable union with the self's own processes (constructing, planting, seeing, in this case mothering and watching the child). Narrowly egoistic is also the mother's desire for her own passivities at the hands of the child: for being kissed and, later, cherished, protected and, in general, loved in return. In other words, the maternal instinct is simply an instinct like any other, an inherited habit involving certain appetitions. Secondly, a large slice of the maternal sentiment, as in general of the protective attitude in all its forms, must be put down to egotism, the second kind of self-love with which we shall deal later, the desire for one's own superiority over another, a superiority which is most unmistakably enjoyed in relation to worshipping a child,[1] and in moulding it after one's own mind

[1] Pp. 135-136.

and in one's own image. It is the biggest egotists who are fondest of the *rôle* of protectors. Undoubtedly the parental relationship is infected through and through with this egoism and egotism. We become aware of them and struggle against them in this form as in all other forms as we grow up into the objective life. But the attempt to struggle against them does not come from the parental instinct itself. In many cases the attempt is never made. Then there is wrong manifold: the warping and stunting of the child, the forcing of it into the parent's image, its enslavement, the refusal to cut loose the apron-strings even when the offspring is mature (this especially holds between mothers and daughters), parental tyranny and libertinage of the " tender emotion " rampant, friction, distress and calamity.

UNSELFISH ALTRUISM

Thus, even if there is anything else beside this egoism and egotism in the mere parental love, it is dependent on, and closely associated with, these. Still, something there is other than these, directing them into this particular channel (for they might exercise themselves in other ways and on other objects than the child), and to a limited extent existing apart from them, at least in some persons, and that in a life which is not necessarily objective. This something it is which works in those mothers who, as Aristotle points out,[1] when it is necessary, give their children up to be reared by others, content that the children should prosper and submitting to the necessity of not doing anything themselves to them and of not receiving anything from them. This also it is which makes it possible for one man to wish to another that which he knows himself unable to procure him, and to rejoice in it, though bestowed by a third person.[2] It is this alone which is altruism proper and which we wish to explain as being nevertheless only *alteregoism*

[1] *Eth. Nic.*, 1159*a* 29 ff.

[2] Butler, Sermon I.

—that is, generically the same as egoism, continuous with it or an extension of it. (It is the existence of this that Hobbes, La Rochefoucauld, Bain and some others would seem to deny or to misinterpret.)

It is continuous with it because the other self or his life, viewed as a system of process-fulfilments of his impulses or needs (the only sense in which the self here is in question) which I alteregoistically desire to be maintained by myself or others, is continuous with my own self as a system of process-fulfilments of my impulses or needs which I egoistically desire to be maintained by myself or others. And just as the separation of selves *quâ* systems of processes is probably effected largely through the body as an instrument (though by a special act), so the continuity here is primarily bodily. This is of course obvious in the case of the parental relationship and, more generally, of all blood-relationship. As is his own tooth or hair to him, so is his child to the parent, Aristotle suggests. He loves his child as he loves himself; the only otherness between them, brought about by what separation there is, is that his child is his *other* self.[1] Brothers because of their common descent are in a sense the same being existing in separate beings. The same unity, though in a feeble form, subsists between all blood-kindred. Both here and where this bond is absent an important form of continuity is that which is constituted by local contiguity (the bond between me and my neighbours, my fellow-townsmen or countrymen) and by familiar intercourse. Community of pursuits (as for example between colleagues), since the self is one not only with the processes it seeks but also with the external objects bound to those processes, helps to unite the self with other selves who are one with these same objects, where it does not create conflict as it does in the struggle for food. Community of appetitions or of tastes, which is the factor most potent for making one self continuous with another, for

[1] *Eth. Nic.*, 1161*b* 27 f.

extending egoism into alteregoism, is also the clearest proof that the extension is only just an extension: I can indeed desire processes in another just as I can in myself, but most often and most easily I shall desire in him only those processes which I desire in myself: hunting, drinking, climbing, philosophising [1]; while with regard to anything else, howsoever much it be to him a passion, I may preserve my uncoöperating isolation.

OBJECTIVE LIFE UNIVERSAL

In altruism or alteregoism there is, then, not an abolition of barriers but only a moving of them further on so as to enclose a wider territory, after which they are as effective as ever. It is then a case of *égoïsme à deux, à trois, à quatre*; or the delimitation is not numerical but based on this or that affinity or connection. In the objective life, on the other hand, there is no favouritism; it is not my special liking or sympathy for this person or for that which determines what, for the sake of the right, it is incumbent upon me to do to others or to seek for others; for special duties to special persons are very different from favouritism or conduct prompted by peculiar liking. Nor is there any limitation. There is, instead, real universality, in the sense that any right action of mine refers to, is consilient with, claims and has support from (in virtue of expressing the same spirit or Goodness as they express), all right actions, actual or possible, of any beings in Heaven or on earth, in this or in any other actual or possible world. Yet this universality is not to be interpreted quantitatively as an expansion of the self to embrace or adopt the appetitions of more and more others for more and more processes. The universal love

[1] It is not only the 'higher' tastes, as some moralists would have it, that may unite men, but any tastes. The drunkard likes to see others drink, and the glutton to see them eat. If some drunkards and gluttons are solitary, exclusive and jealous in their pursuit, so are many artists, philosophers and scientists in theirs.

animating this life is, not for all processes of all beings (for all humanity and for all nature) directly, but for Goodness, a universal individual; it seeks directly not these processes as such, mine or others; but rather, taking them for granted, it is in a sense a detachment from them, and is an attachment to, or a seeking after, the rightness which is an expression of Goodness and which may be established in these or in those processes as its material, so to speak, just as beauty may be expressed in wood or in stone, in sound or in colour. On the other hand, the widest humanitarianism, heedful of every human being and including even kindness to animals, seeking the greatest happiness of the greatest number, aiming at widespread health, wealth, comfort, prosperity, peace and lack of friction, trying to secure also intellectual and artistic culture—even such humanitarianism pursuing these things as the be-all and end-all of life is limited and bound, merely appetitional like egoism, and like egoism amoral or even immoral. For all humanitarianism must be based on sympathy for humanity, which means limitation to those appetitions common to the greatest number, which again generally means sympathy for the greatest ease or sloth of the greatest number. (Hence Ibsen in his *Brand* lashes so fiercely those who would "make of man a mere humanitarian.") Altruism of a narrower compass at any rate, it is clear, even quite ordinary moral consciousness can declare immoral. For indeed, love for my child or for my wife, no less than love for myself, may lead me into baseness, treachery, lying, oppression and wrong of all kinds.

To sum up, my desire for any process of myself or conduct issuing therefrom is not moral or objective. My desire for a process or experience in another self, or my desire that another should have a certain experience or process, together with the conduct it inspires, though apparently objective or moral, is not really so. For the other's desire for a process in himself

is no more objective or moral than my desire for a process in myself. But my desire for a process in him—in other words, altruism, sympathy, benevolence—means simply my desiring with his desire or my needing with his need. Since we are not inquiring very deeply into the meaning of self or prying too closely into the difficulties of that concept, we may content ourselves with saying that altruism or *alteregoism* consists in the adoption by one self of another, in his adopting that other self's needs, strivings or desires so as to need with his needs, strive with his strivings and desire with his desires, and in his acting so as to fulfil these needs, strivings or desires of this his other self or *alter ego*.

II. Third Formulation of Egoistic Self-Love: Sociality.[1]

(*Cf.* pp. 138-147, 174-179.)

Society in the Individual

With a like unconcern as to its ultimate validity we may use the notion of the collective self [2] for the group or community, both the larger one which is the primitive tribe or modern nation and the smaller ones, the class or family or trade-union. The individual's altruism consists not merely in his oneness with other individuals but also in his oneness with the collective self, in his leading the social life. This latter altruism ought

[1] This treatment, limited to the egoistic aspect of society, is merely preliminary. The social life cannot be understood, just as it cannot be enforced, apart from egotism. Hence its full consideration comes under the topic of egotism. The social or general will or desire is far more egotistic than biological. It is not so much for processes or life as for supremacy or victory involving generally destruction.

[2] The most thoroughgoing application of this notion is to be found in the personalistic philosophy of William Stern and N. O. Lossky, according to which the individual ego is already a collective person, a society of societies of which the ultimate individual (if the latter designation stands for an *ens reale* at all and not merely for a limiting notion) is the electron or a being more rudimentary still. The nation is a collective person of which the individual human being is the electron. See, for a discussion of the difference between the two writers, the author's review of Lossky's *Freedom of Will*, in *Mind*, xli. 163.

perhaps to be called prior to the other. For free, plastic relationship of the individual to any other individual he fancies (perhaps we ought to say to himself even) is something comparatively late, to be found in advanced societies only; the primitive individual is related always only generically and officially, as it were, and in a stereotyped way—as occupying a certain station, or as being a definite organ or function, in the whole body politic—to another such organ or function: to a father or son, mother or mother-in-law, priest, chief, colleague, the relationship being prescribed and strictly regulated by the tribe (in the way of custom) instead of being a free interplay between individuals as individuals. Just as the life of the organism is present in each part, so the life of the collective self is immanent in each individual. It operates in him first through his very basic and general appetition (the herd instinct) for living at least in the company of other human beings. All his appetitions become more or less specified and fixed into a form bearing a general resemblance to that of the appetitions of fellow-members of his group, through a common traditional training and through living with these; thus his very general gregarious need becomes specified, while still remaining comparatively general, into a need for the company of fellow-members of the same group. One of the main constituents of the outer body, as it were, of this common life or spirit is a common language (by which must be understood also a common dialect—*e.g.* American English, Australian English—as well as class-slang); how closely the latter unites individuals, while separating them from those of another speech, we realise when we have learned to think and feel spontaneously in a foreign language—we seem then to have jumped from an old, into a new, self. This social need, both in its less and in its more specific form, links the individual to his fellows almost by a kind of anastomosis, to use a vigorous phrase of Bergson's, so that when he is isolated for long (especially if it is from

all human beings) he becomes ill or mad, or dies. Only the mentally richer individuals can long withstand the ill effects of utter solitariness; and they can do so because they are already rich with the collective life in their minds and in formed character and habits, so that the outward support of other individuals is not so urgently necessary to them as to others. But each one dreads to be cut off entirely from every collective whole (the rebel and the criminal as a rule, like the cancer cell, work against the larger body not in isolation but in a more or less loosely knit smaller body); and this fear of 'being sent to Coventry' will secure conformity over and above the more general and automatic conformity. This latter is a more or less fluid and plastic fixation, as it were, which is one with the individual's life and seldom consciously distinguished from it; upon this as a general background are erected more specific fixations in the form of laws or general rules or habits of acting in ways of a certain type in response to occasions of a certain type. These laws are either the written laws of the land, enforced where necessary by the threat of the loss of liberty, property or life; or the unwritten laws enforced where necessary by public opinion with its weapon of ostracism or 'Coventry'—the laws which are the customs or conventions of a society or a class and which in smaller matters and with more fleeting authority rule as fashion prescribing all taste. Normally the social machinery works smoothly, silently and unnoticed, like health; its driving power is then collective egoism. But in times of crisis, when the co-operation of all to one end is necessary, or is thought to be necessary, the noise of the wheels begins to make itself heard, in journalistic and other propaganda (mass-suggestion), in exhortation and admonition, in furious condemnation and frantic praise, when the world for our imagination becomes a simple affair of black and white, peopled by monstrous villains on the one side and egregious heroes on the other. In such crises egoism (established habits

or appetitions) is not enough. Collective egotism, which will be considered later, comes on the scene.

Together all these fixations form a general theme upon which the individual's system of appetitions is a slight variation. In this way the collective self may be said to be immanent in the individual, or to occupy him; he wills and desires with the general will or desire; and what he wills or desires at this level of collective egoism is ultimately reducible to experiences or processes, desired for themselves, in himself or in unspecified others of the same group.

SOCIALITY AND MORALITY

But if this is so, then the individual's social altruism, his life for society or his willing with the general will, is no more objective and moral than is the other kind of altruism. It differs from the latter only in being *égoïsme de la tribu* or *de la nation* or *de la famille* or *de la classe* instead of *égoïsme à deux* or *à trois*. If it has any morality, which it may have in so far as the fixations have remotely come from living insight into Goodness (for *sometimes* at least *vox populi* may repeat by rote what was once uttered by *Vox Dei*), this can only be of the kind we have called popular morality.

It is true of course that this popular or social morality often claims, and is by many acknowledged, to be the only kind of morality, and that its laws are given out and accepted as final categorical imperatives, while their infringement (often, be it noted, even in small matters, in matters of fashion) is attended by acute shame, compunction, remorse, sentiments which are said to be specifically moral (falsely, we think, for they are perhaps rather specifically social). But here again we must appeal to moral insight. We do not think that a man is acting morally who does a thing simply because all do it, or even because all deem it right, even though his action may actually be the one demanded by a right situation, just as we do not

consider that a man is thinking truly who thinks the earth to be round simply because all say and think this, even though the earth as a matter of fact is round. Nor can we seriously believe that the collective self always wills and prescribes the right, if only because of the fact that two collective wills often conflict so that they cannot both be right. It is true also that though sociality is not morality, morality is social, in the sense that we have duties to our society as well as to individuals, and that if we have insight into Goodness, we have insight not only into what is right for individuals to do but also into what is right for society to do (what should be done collectively or on a national scale). But morality generally means willing not with the actual general will but against it. (As for the so-called ideal general will, this belongs, if anywhere, to Heaven and not to any actual society; it means simply what is right or what Goodness demands.) Morality may even mean willing to destroy one's own society as an independent and sovereign organised whole (as it meant to a certain extent to those who willed the union of England and Scotland, and as it means to those who will the union of all States into a World-State), which is, of course, not the same as willing the destruction of the individuals.

In a deeper sense also morality is social. For every moral act, we have said, is universal, claims, and has, support from all right actions actual or possible of any beings in Heaven or on earth, in this or in any other actual or possible world. It thus refers to a society, not indeed to modern Britain or France or Germany, but to the Kingdom of Heaven or to the righteous universe of which the Stoics partly at least were thinking when they declared the wise man to be a citizen of the Cosmos acting according to its laws.

It is no doubt such a *Civitas Dei*, including all the dead and the unborn, all the past and the future, that lurks in the minds of those many modern philosophers who identify the right

with what is willed or desired by the social (or standard) will or desire. Yet it is precisely as a protest against such metaphysical entities that they advance their theory, professing, apparently, to give us instead of such an entity something solidly existential and actual with a local earthly habitation and a name.[1] Or rather not with a name; for they do not tell us whether the will is of Britain or France or Germany as any of these exists here and now, or, worse still, of some savage tribe whose ways, to adapt the words of Hobbes, are nasty, brutish and mean, and whose desire is for such ways. Mr Bertrand Russell, one of these philosophers, after saying that 'good' (what we call 'moral') "comes to apply to things desired by the whole of a social group," touchingly sums up the good (*i.e.* the moral) life as "one inspired by love and guided by knowledge."[2] But surely he does not mean that this life is desired by the British public; for he does not think highly of the latter, and if he perhaps thinks more highly of China and of Soviet Russia, he does not rank them so high as to wish us to understand that when he says this is the good (or moral) life, he means simply that it is desired by them.

Instead of wandering with such thinkers neither on earth nor in Heaven but in a Limbo, let us say that the general will is the will of an actual group expressed in its actual laws, customs, institutions, tendencies, and that the individual wills and lives socially when he wills and lives in accordance with these. Instead of talking vaguely about his willing the preservation of society we must speak of his willing the preservation of these, of the actual ways of his actual community, even if

[1] In *The Good Will* Professor H. J. Paton (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.), for whom the good will is that which wills the life of a society, more or less admits that this society must be a kind of *Civitas Dei*. But this latter he shyly treats of as half mythological and he says we must consider the existing society (which?), although he admits (p. 254) that the good man may have to will to smash it!

[2] *An Outline of Philosophy* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.), chap. xxii.

the latter be the troll-society of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, and if loyalty to it means making an incision in his eyes and pulling on blinkers so as to see a cow as a beautiful maid and a sow as a beautiful dancer. Then we shall have no temptation to identify sociality with morality or objectivity. Aristotle in the *Politics* makes a very sound distinction between the perfect ideal community ruled for the highest goodness and that ruled for the common good (that is, common advantage or those processes which all want). Only the life of the former, we must say, would be objective, for it would be dedicated to Goodness; the individual serving it would be acting objectively, for he would be leading the objective life for the Good. The life of the second community, on the other hand, is appetitional (when it is not egotistic), and the individual whose morality is simply loyalty to that life is living appetitionally or egoistically even though his egoism be of the extended or national kind.

EGOISM AND SELFISHNESS

Egoistic self-love, then, in its widest form is a love for oneself and also for one's other self or *alter ego*, whether the latter be an individual or a collective self. This love, we have said, means a love or desire for processes or experiences in oneself and in others, and also for the objects inseparable from those processes.

Selfishness is egoism in its narrow form. It is love or desire for one's own processes only. It does not exclude, but rather it includes, love for the objects which are bound up with those processes and which may be called the terminal objects of appetition: the selfish man may love lamb (his own eating of it), or flowers (his own seeing or growing of them), or science (his own researching or even his own communicating of the results of his research). It may also include love for persons, again as terminal objects of one's own processes. The mother's

love for her child, in so far as it is merely a love for her own cherishing, protecting, nurturing, moulding, or contemplating of the child, is purely selfish, we have said. Selfish is also the philanthropy or the love for one's fellow-men which is simply a love for one's own relieving of their suffering or for one's own ministering to their pleasure. Undoubtedly we should speak of selfishness in all these cases if anyone were misled by any of these 'loves' into acting otherwise than he should act, into eating lamb, growing flowers, relieving suffering or ministering to pleasure, when he ought to be doing not this but something else; how selfish, disastrous and wrong parental love may be we have already seen. We should hesitate to apply the term 'selfish' only to desire for processes in others irrespective of one's own bringing these about. This, perhaps, is as accurate a definition as we can get of a term of common speech.

III. The Egoistic Life

ITS ORGANISATION

Egoistic self-love (we shall use this term for the wide love of self, and 'selfishness' for the narrow) is distinguished from an appetition as the general from the particular, we have said.[1] An appetition is for a particular process, while self-love is for many processes or for a system of processes[2]; it presides over a system of appetitions. These are not all of the same order. Some are simple and occasional or periodic, and their fulfilments or satisfactions are momentary or brief; such, for example, is

[1] See p. 45.

[2] This looks as though self-love, like the desire for rightness, is not for process, for we have said that a system, complex or set of processes is not a process. But in the case of self-love the system has no significance beyond the processes themselves; the desire for the system is simply the desire for *all* the processes and not for one only. The desire for rightness, on the other hand, is not a desire for any of the processes or for all of them but simply for the rightness which holds in respect of the situation in which they enter, or for the situation only because of the rightness. *Cf.* p. 53, note, and pp. 81-82.

thirst. Others are complex, with complex ends or fulfilments, which are realised in many fulfilments of other appetitions, and which therefore constitute a large part of the whole system of processes which is the self's life; or they are threads, as it were, running right through the whole texture. A complex appetition, therefore, unifies and regulates many simple appetitions. Complex is the appetition for health or asceticism regulating all the appetites; or the appetition, native or acquired, for a certain quality in all our experiences: for moderation or temperance, or intensity, or delicacy and fineness; or the appetition which is love for one's family or class or country; or that which is philanthropy or humanitarianism. What is here called a complex appetition corresponds roughly to what the older moralists like Butler termed 'a passion' and to the conative aspect of what modern psychologists name 'a sentiment.'[1] Often the processes (together with, sometimes, their terminal or inseparable objects) which fulfil appetitions are called 'good' or 'goods'; then the more complex or pervasive or enduring are said to be better or greater or higher goods than the simpler or briefer or more superficial. This description of them will have to be considered later.

THE EGOISTIC WILL

How does one appetition prevail over another? Often the simpler wins, especially when strengthened by the immediate physical presence of its terminal object (food or drink), which, being simple, can more easily than the complex engross consciousness by occupying the most potent form of cognition —namely, perception. But sometimes, on the other hand, the self intervenes with its power of extended attention, of looking before and after, of uniting the vast past and vaster future against the pin-point of the present; then the more complex appetition wins, because it is now stronger, because its more

[1] *Cf.* McDougall, *op. cit.*

complex and pervasive object is, so to speak, a larger army holding a larger extent of the battlefield of consciousness.[1]

It has been made a reproach against many psychologies (such as is notably Freud's, in the applied sphere) that they treat the self as merely a battlefield of various impulses. But who that has done any introspection on his own self would quarrel with these elaborations of a very just metaphor, if only they did not, with pseudo-scientific pretentiousness, claim to be accounts of what *every* self or life must *all the time* be? Certainly self-examination convinces us that the Adlerian psychology,[2] which goes to the opposite extreme and would have it that all action proceeds from the self as a unity, is false (though only in the same respect as the others—in the claim to universal validity). Such unity is present only in the egotistic life on the one hand, and in the objective life on the other. In the egoistic life the self is a battlefield which, however, is also a chorus influencing the protagonist appetitions, reconciling them or supporting one against the other (for that matter, a literal terrain even has, through its topographical peculiarities, a considerable *say* in the battle). It intervenes as attention and discrimination, to decide what, in the long run, when everything has been taken into account, it really likes most. For to live egoistically (however magnificent, impressive and admired the manifestations of some egoism may be) is, after all, to do simply whatever one likes doing most and to do anything else merely for the sake of that. But this description, it might be objected, applies to any doing whatsoever[3]; for we do the right even only because we like doing the right. We have, however, sufficiently shown that a moral desire, which inspires right doing, is not primarily a desire for any doing (process)

[1] Compare the account given of volition by McDougall, *op. cit.*, chap. ix. It may be accepted as true, but only of a certain kind of life.

[2] Clearer than Adler is F. Künkel, in *Vitale Dialektik*, pp. 39 ff., and *Einführung in die Charakterkunde*, pp. 142 ff.

[3] *Cf.* Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p. 274 (2nd edition).

whatsoever, while egoistic desire or appetition is always for some doing or suffering as such.

EGOISTIC IDEALS

The intervenient self is that self which loves the self (including the *alter ego*) as processes; it is identical with the self-love which presides over and regulates, but also essentially serves, the appetitions. (Of course every individual is also a subject, 'an immortal soul,' far wider than such a self; but in the egoistic life, in so far as any life is merely this, the subject manifests itself only as such a self.) It may favour or serve now this, now that appetition, as it comes up, without any particular order: now that for drinking or music, now that for the simple, stern or ascetic life, or for the *dolce far niente* life, or at times the appetition for political or for philosophic activity; so it is that the 'democratic man' of Plato's *Republic* [1] lives. Or else more or less permanent preference and rule may be assigned to one or more appetitions, simple or complex.

Thus, the egoistic life can be of every sort and shape, according to the appetition—whether this be the sex passion or the love of learning or philanthropy or something else—or the combination of appetitions (and the possible combinations are many) to which is granted sovereignty. Where there is any order in a life (and there is some kind of order even in the life of the 'democratic man,' if it be only that of democracy or of a bazaar, as Plato calls it, or of 'first come first served') there is a constitution; the constitution of a particular life is expressed in its 'ideal' or 'rule of life.' This will include all those fixations or rules from which we have said springs popular or social morality,[2] which is certainly not to be denied to the egoistic life. Of 'ideals' or 'rules of life' there is a great variety: 'the maximum of pleasure,' the maximum of activity, the harmonious development of all one's faculties, self-sacrifice

[1] *Republic*, 561*c* and *d*.

[2] See pp. 55-57, 72-73.

or mortification, ' altruism,' the Epicurean, Stoic or Buddhistic calm, to name only a few notable ones. Wherever there is an ideal or rule of life, the life is egoistic, if it is not egotistic. Only for the objective life seeking to express Goodness in rightness can there be no ideal or rule of life. Goodness is not expressible in a formula; and for acting rightly—that is, strictly speaking, for acting uniquely in each situation—there can be no rule any more than there can be one for producing original thought or art.

About egoistic lives are essentially all those Ethics which speak or think of goodness as merely a quality of experiences or processes; which speak of *my* good, *your* good, society's good, and not of *the* Good; or think of the good as that which can be possessed or enjoyed by the individual or the community; or define it as simply that which is desired by, or which satisfies, the whole or the chief part of the individual or of society, and do not emphasise the fact that the primary condition of even making an approach to the objective life is a transcendence (though not necessarily an abolition) of the stage of desiring one's own life, or society's, or the ' universe's', life.

AN EGOIST: GOETHE

An example of an egoistic life on a magnificent scale is the life of that Olympian Tito Melema, Goethe. This is how his friend, Schiller, writes of him: " I believe in fact that he is an egoist to an extraordinary degree. He possesses the talent of captivating people and of binding them to him by little attentions as well as great ones, but he always keeps himself free; he makes his existence known by kindly actions, but only as a god, without giving anything of himself. This seems to me a consistent and well-planned line of action, entirely calculated to afford the highest enjoyment of self-love." [1] No better

[1] J. G. Robertson, *The Life and Work of Goethe*, p. 174. Very likely Goethe was not at all the kind of man we here describe (it is very difficult and perilous to judge anyone). The Goethe here given may be considered an imaginary character imagined for the illustration.

verification than his biography could be found for our contention that egoism can include interest in a world (how vast is this world in the case of Goethe!) and altruism to persons. These Goethe's life possessed in abundance; and they were perhaps more generous and less calculated than Schiller, rather peevishly, implies. But objective, in the sense here given to the term, it certainly was not. Goethe did not desire the right but a life of processes, rich, varied, abundant and harmonious, not for himself only but alteregoistically for others also; and he had an ideal or ideals. Had Goethe been objective he would perhaps not have used 'the eternal feminine,' simply as a means to draw him onwards, to 'heaven'; he might have felt it his duty to be drawn down to 'earth' by it, even if it meant sacrificing many of the 'goods' (works of genius) which his keeping himself free produced; or else, if, instead of his vast capacities in him working simply as so many appetitions, he had felt his use of them to be a duty and a vocation, he might have deemed it also his duty to cut out 'the eternal feminine' from his life altogether rather than use persons simply as food, however ambrosial the food might be and however ungross and unphysical his eating of it. Or rather—for we cannot judge any man simply by what he does but only by the whole spirit of him—we could only tell what duty would have presented itself to Goethe, if we were ourselves, not only Goethe with all his genius and in his circumstances, but Goethe regenerate. For duty speaks to each man, if not from himself as the source or author, through himself only, as the mouthpiece.

EGOISM AND EVIL

The question with which this chapter began was: Whence evil, at any rate in the sense of moral evil or wrong? The answer has already been given in the course of the exposition and need here be resumed only. Wrongness holds in respect of

a situation; but it does not spring from a desire for wrongness. It arises partly at least (for egotism has yet to be considered) from egoism. The wrongdoer desires some of the processes entering into that situation in respect of which there is wrongness; at the worst he desires the whole situation, but only as a collection of processes; he desires, that is, all the processes, but not a unity of processes which is other than a process and has significance as other than a process. Tito Melema did not desire the wrongness of any of his various treacheries, but only his own comfort and safety; the wrongness, especially in the early stages when he was still sensitive, he loathed, desiring, on the contrary, rightness.[1]

Just as the desire for rightness is not identical with the desire for any process as such, and just as no process as such is right, so the desire for any process is not a desire for wrongness (any more than it is for rightness), and no process and no appetition for it is in itself wrong.[2] Rightness or wrongness comes about when one pursues or does not pursue a process (or satisfies an appetition) in the way in which, at the time when, and to the extent to which, one ought to pursue it, to use Aristotelian language; or, in our own terminology, they hold in respect of situations. Not my eating, or my desire to eat, is wrong, but my snatching their food from the mouths of the weak and defenceless to eat it myself.

PLATO'S CLASSIFICATION

We began our discussion on egoistic self-love with the consideration of a classic moralist, Bishop Butler. It is fitting that in ending it we should link it on to an older classic, Plato. The latter divides the soul into three parts, each the source of

[1] Cyril Burt (in *The Young Delinquent*) trying to find a working theory of crime (one species of wrongness) decides that there is no such thing as a criminal instinct (an appetition for crime) but that the sources of crime are the instincts which are also the sources of all conduct.

[2] Hatred, cruelty, malice and perversions will be discussed under egotism.

different desires and capable of forming a special character, life and ideal, according to its relative strength and prominence in comparison with the other two. The first, the 'philosophic' part, has special sensitiveness for, and attains to inspiring insight into, the Form of the Good. This sensitiveness and insight correspond to our insight into, and love for, Goodness and Rightness. The third, the appetitional part, is the source of all the appetitions, this term being used primarily for the appetites and all desires for bodily pleasures or processes. If we extend the meaning of appetition to cover desires for all processes and not merely for the bodily ones, we may say that Plato's 'appetitional part of the soul' corresponds to our 'egoistic self-love.' Some of this extension is to be found in the *Republic* itself, where the eminently appetitional 'democratic man' is said to have 'appetitions' not only for bodily processes but also for philosophic or political activity, while even the philosopher's desire for contemplation is called an appetition and is implicitly recognised as capable, like any other appetition, of leading to indulgence and to neglect of duty (in his case the duty of leaving contemplation and going down into the cave to enlighten the dwellers in darkness).[1]

[1] *Republic*, 561*c-d*, 485*d*, 519*c-e*.

TESTIMONIES TO EGOISM

(*a*) "Dieu a permis, pour punir l'homme du péché originel, qu'il se fît un bien de son amour-propre pour en être tourmenté dans toutes les actions des a vie" (La Rochefoucauld, *Maxime* 494, folio 310).

". . . il [l'amour-propre] rend les hommes idolâtres d'eux-mêmes et les rendroit les tyrans des autres si la fortune leur en donnoit les moyens.

". . . D'où l'on pourroit conclure assez vraisemblablement que c'est par lui-même que ses désirs sont allumés, plutôt que par la beauté et par le mérite de ses objets; que son goût est le prix qui les relève et le fard qui les embellit; c'est après lui-même qu'il court et qu'il suit son gré lorsqu'il suit les choses qui sont à son gré. Il est tous les contraires, il est impérieux et obéissant, sincère et dissimulé, miséricordieux et cruel, timide et audacieux; il a de différentes inclinations, selon la diversité des tempéraments qui le tournent et le dévouent tantôt à la gloire, tantôt aux richesses et tantôt aux plaisirs" (*Id.*, 1, Pensées tirées des premières éditions).

(*b*) "The capacities belonging to his (Man's) Humanity may be brought under the generic title of *comparative*, though physical, self-love (which requires reason), namely, estimating oneself as happy or unhappy only in comparison with others. From this is derived the inclination *to obtain worth in the opinion of others*, and primarily only that of *equality*: to allow no one a superiority over oneself, joined with a constant apprehension that others might strive to attain it, and from this there ultimately arises an unjust desire to gain superiority for ourselves over others. On this, namely, on *jealousy* and *rivalry*, the

greatest vices may be grafted, secret and open hostilities against all whom we look upon as not belonging to us. . . .

"The vices that are grafted on this inclination may therefore be called vices of *culture*, and in their highest degree of malignancy (in which they are merely the idea of a maximum of badness surpassing humanity), *ex gr.* in *envy*, in *ingratitude*, *malice*, etc., are called *devilish vices*" (Kant, *op. cit.*, Abbott's translation, 1873).

"But we see by the complacency with which conquerors extol their achievements (massacre, unsparing butchery, etc.) that it is only their own superiority and the destruction they can effect without any other object in which they properly take satisfaction" (*Ibid.*, iii., in the first footnote).

(*c*) "I . . . thought to myself, that as the stars are, so are the Snobs:—the more you gaze upon these luminaries, the more you behold—now nebulously congregated—now faintly distinguished—now brightly defined—until they twinkle off in endless blazes, and fade into the immeasurable darkness. I am but as a child playing on the sea-shore. Some telescopic philosopher will arise one day, some great Snobonomer, to find the laws of the great science which we are now merely playing with, and to define, and settle, and classify that which is at present but vague theory, and loose though elegant assertion" (Thackeray, *The Book of Snobs*, chapter xxiii.).

CHAPTER III

EGOTISM IN ITSELF

I. EGOTISM DISTINGUISHED FROM EGOISM (*Cf.* pp. 37-40, 157-168.) AND FROM MORALITY (*Cf.* Chapter VII. and pp. 293-295.)

PLATO'S DEFINITION

The second part of the soul Plato calls spirit or the spirited or irascible element. From it springs the love for victory or superiority—and for the acknowledgments of this: honour, office, privilege, position, reputation, prestige. From it come also anger, ill temper and stubbornness, the disposition to use violence, and envy or jealousy.

With "parts of the soul" we are not here concerned. But with the love of the self's position, supremacy or superiority we are. For it is identical with that which will here be called egotistic self-love.

Like Plato,[1] though in our own way, we must show first its generic difference from morality and from every and any appetition. Its relations and resemblances to either are very close and the treatment of them will require separate chapters. But without at least a glance at the difference we cannot begin.

AMBITION DIFFERENT FROM APPETITION

The man who desires to become a millionaire in order to be able to live luxuriously or to exercise his faculties and satisfy his tastes is cherishing an *appetition*, and money is for him a means in the service of this; he wants it for the experiences or processes it will procure. Your true egotist, on the other hand, with, maybe, ascetic tastes which need but little wealth, desires

[1] *Republic*, especially 439*e*-442*b*, 581*a*, 586*c-d*.

to become a millionaire merely in order to be *worth* a million —that is, more than most people; to be higher than most, to be one of few. His desire is an *ambition*; money or the having of it is for him a symbol, a measure, an expression of a certain position; the experiences to be procured by money are also desired simply as symbols of his position. Office, authority, and position in the social sense may also be sought merely as a means in the furtherance of an appetition, in the furtherance, for example, of the desire for comfort, or of the desire to enjoy the exercise of one's organising or administrative capacities; in that case one's elevation above others and the submission of other wills to oneself are merely incidental or instrumental, or even irrelevant and insignificant. For the egotist, on the other hand, his own supremacy above other persons is of primary significance, and office, authority, prestige and the doing of anything are sought as symbols or acknowledgements of this supremacy; he may have no organising or administrative capacities to exercise, and the exercise of such functions he may dislike in itself.

AMBITION INDIFFERENT TO APPETITION

In so far as any human being is a pure egotist—and approximately pure cases of egotism are more common perhaps than of anything else—he pursues experiences or processes never as such but always as invested with this symbolism. He pursues also those processes or activities which are instrumental to bringing about the desired position or which are this bringing about. Further, he pursues such processes or experiences as are epiphenomenal to the position when established: for example, he desires his own and others' experiencing or awareness or acknowledging of that position. If he cannot establish the position he may even, by a kind of tampering with the truth, be content with a certain experience—namely, his and others' imagining or thinking that the position is established—as a

substitute for the position itself. But the seeking for any of these processes, symbolic, instrumental, epiphenomenal or substitutional, presupposes the seeking for position itself. It is this seeking which is primary. By it we describe the egotist. We say that he never seeks processes or experiences as ends in themselves. We may imagine him even desiring a position that *ex hypothesi* shall, when attained, exclude all processes or experiences, even his own awareness of the position—desiring the annihilation of the whole world including himself, merely so that the position may for ever be that he has triumphed over others or that others have not triumphed over him.

Examples of extreme egotistic indifference to appetition are not wanting.

"I possessed nothing," writes Papini [1] of his own would-be-divine ambition and pride—"neither preferences, purposes, nor dreams. My one love was the love of power; my one purpose, the possession of power; my one dream, power; my loftiest dream, power. But *after* power—what? I was empty; I felt myself terrifyingly empty, like a well that seems abysmal merely because it reflects the far-off depths of the sky. . . . *What to do!* One thing would be as good as another for exercising my strength. . . . To destroy a people or create a new species is the same to such a one. To bestow happiness upon the indigent or cast the reveller down into all the horrors of evil and misery are one and the same thing viewed from that height."

On this "height" is also Meredith's Willoughby Patterne, who engages in numerous activities not because his nature craves for any of these things in themselves but because they are symbols of distinction, and who in the case of his unique wine cares, not for the drinking of it, but for the *fact* (or position), and for the acknowledgment of the fact, that he has something which no one else has. One admixture of mere appetition

[1] *A Man—Finished* (translated by M. P. Agnetti), pp. 237-238.

(desire for an experience as such) there is, however, in his pure egotism: he desires Clara Middleton partly at least as a man desires a woman and not merely because the winning of her would raise him above her other wooers; and *hinc illæ lacrimæ*, the conflict which is both his tragedy and the comedy of the book. But this appetition is in the end expelled from his system when it really threatens to assail his godlikeness.

AMBITION OPPOSED TO APPETITION

For ambition is not merely indifferent to mere appetition; it can also be its ruthless opponent. "La vanité nous fait faire plus de choses contre notre goût [*i.e.* appetition] que la raison," says La Rochefoucauld.[1] In the pursuit of the "ideal of superiority" the agent may even, according to Adler, try to vanquish ruthlessly as obstacles or "compulsions" the most basic vital appetitions, the impulses for nourishment, for normal urination and defecation, for sleep, for sex.[2] Finally, the despotism of ambition over appetition (over the desire for life-processes) is most extreme and most apparent when, from pride, vanity, stubbornness, resentment or hatred, or in general from the desire to assert, or at least to save, his supremacy or self-esteem, the egotist risks, or throws away, his own life. Indeed he may, from the same ambitious motives, even take his own life, for suicide can be a violent, if paradoxical, form of self-assertion.[3]

EGOTISTIC AND MORAL ASCETICISM

In his readiness to part with his life, in his asceticism, and in his general attitude to his appetitions, the supreme egotist presents a disconcertingly deceptive resemblance to the good or moral man. Like the latter's moral striving, the former's

[1] *Maximes*, cccclxvii.

[2] *Individual Psychology* (translated by P. Radin), pp. 26-27.

[3] *Cf. op. cit.*, pp. 244 and 254, and Bradley, *Ethical Studies* (2nd edition), p. 306, note 1.

ambition is different from, and can be opposed to, appetition. But moral desire or striving, while it is not dependent upon the having or the satisfying of this or that appetition, so that even the renunciation of so fundamental an appetition as the sex instinct if made resolutely and in the right spirit need not mean a mutilation of life, yet presupposes the having of *some* appetitions or aversions: if a man is to exercise morality he must at least *really* desire that which he renounces, and the suffering he takes on himself must be real suffering (*i.e.* disliked) even when it is illuminated by joy (the joy being certainly not in the suffering but in something else). Goodness can no more be expressed without some appetitions and aversions in themselves non-moral than can beauty without wood or stone or pigments or words. Asceticism or the checking of appetition can, indeed, be no more than incidental to morality. Whenever it becomes an independent ideal we can be sure that the inspiration is rather from egotism than from morality proper; already Socrates remarked upon the vanity of Antisthenes, the founder of the earliest European ascetic ethics, and some Christian ascetics were well aware that practices like theirs might be inspired by the Devil or spiritual pride,[1] while the people which has always been most alive to morality has known of asceticism, as of idolatry, only as a foreign infection.[2] On the other hand, ambition does not presuppose, and indeed, in so far as it engrosses the whole of a man, it does not tolerate, appetition or anything other than itself. The egotist's is essentially that emptiness, that absence of "preferences, purposes, dreams," which Papini describes in himself all the more convincingly because, in that book at least, he has no censure for his state but exhibits it as an inconvenient, but nevertheless admirable, sublimity.[3] We need but look at any treatment of

[1] Tauler, *The Following of Christ.*
[2] Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, under *Asceticism.*
[3] His attitude has changed considerably in his later books, notably in *Gog.*

an egotistic trait in a living character in any drama or novel, and we shall find it an elaboration of the common and easily understood saying that pride, vanity, conceit, jealousy, envy, resentment, hatred (all forms of egotism), ' eat up ' or ' devour ' a man—that is, leave no room for anything else in him. The passion for righteousness or goodness also, it is true, if it is to live at all in a man, must be sovereign and not merely co-ordinate with appetitions; but while it may control, order, or direct these, it never abolishes or swallows them up; no man is ' eaten up ' by the love of righteousness; the only thing that is ' eaten up,' devoured, or abolished by it is the devouring dragon, ambition or egotism. Thus, the latter, outwardly resembling the moral *nisus* so much, and, like it, objective in the important and never-to-be-forgotten sense that it is not simply for experience, is yet at bottom its opposite, certainly more its opposite than is appetition. All appetition, we have said, is egoism, and all egoism is egoism even when it is altruism or alteregoism, and it is therefore subjective. But even selfishness, we have also said, even mere greed for food or craving for drink or bare lust (we will here say), is in a sense a reaching out for, or an enslavement to, the not-self, as compared with egotism, which never allows even the shortest excursion from the self. In this, common reflection and common speech bear us out: it is not a Tito who would be described as self-centred; rather would one say that he has no self to be centred about; but a Willoughby could without fear of contradiction be declared to be nothing but self-centred.

II. The Characteristics of Egotism in general

Its nihilism

It is to its emptiness that we must once more return, if we would find the fundamental *differentia* of egotism which marks it off alike from egoism (appetition) and from the moral *nisus*.

The egotist not merely does not desire experience simply; in some fundamental, perhaps a metaphysical, sense we must say that he desires nothing, or nothingness: he loves himself only, and that self is a nothing, a void, an emptiness. It is of egotism —of ambition, pride, conceit, jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, hatred—that all moralising satirists, before and after Juvenal, have thought when, in different language and with different illustrations, they have dilated on one and the same theme: the nothingness, the vanity of vanities, of man's desires and aims, when by 'nothingness' they have meant to denote something deeper than the transitoriness of the objects of these aims and desires.

But in what sense does he pursue nothing? And how does a rational creature come, with such solemnity and earnestness, with so much pomp and circumstance, with such an ado and such an expenditure of energy, of cleverness, of ability, and sometimes with such terrifying destructiveness, to chase after —nothing?

THE INDETERMINATE SUBJECT

Every individual is a subject who can adopt, and in a sense identify himself with, but who (for that very reason indeed) is not identical with, some or all of his appetitions (which are, or which include, his inborn capacities or dispositions and inherited or acquired habits): he is not identical with them because he can stand over against each and say: 'I am not this, I will not be this, I will change or expel this.' How he can dissociate himself from, stand over against, and oppose, all of them or that in which they are summed, the instinct for self-preservation, we have just seen in considering ambitious suicide. His adopting, or identifying himself with, this or that is his determining himself as this or that. But the self-determining subject is himself indeterminate before he has determined himself as this or that. And even after he has become determined

as this or that capacity, disposition, habit, he goes on being this only so long as he does not strongly determine not to be it. It is in this way that the vital organic functions, such as breathing or the beating of the heart, go on, with a seemingly absolute, but really only precarious or tolerated, autonomy; if the subject so determines they cease, either momentarily, to be resumed again, or permanently and he dies.[1] Hence, even when a new determination seems to develop not directly from the subject himself but from some already established determination of him, it still springs from the primordial subject, through whose permission, in some sense, alone it is that the established determination persists so as to become the ground of the new development. Hence we may say that the ground of every determination is the subject, himself indeterminate.

But to be indeterminate, to be neither this nor that, is to be, in a sense, nothing. Not, of course, absolute nothing:

> " For never proved shall be that Not-Being is.
> From this enquiry keep thy mind alway." [2]

The indeterminate subject [3] must be conceived as a potentiality of anything and everything, and a potentiality which is a real power. Still, as not being anything in particular, he may be said to be nothing.

ABSOLUTISING THE INDETERMINATE SUBJECT

Now, the egoist loves whatever he has appetitions for, he loves himself determined as this or that experience or process, while the good man, although he too has appetitions, loves,

[1] Some savages are said to be able to die at will in a short time. But anyone can die at will (without inflicting violence on himself) though it generally takes time. Doctors are often heard to complain of certain patients that they die because they have not the will to live.

[2] Parmenides, Fragment 7.

[3] The notion of the indeterminate or " qualityless " subject is argued for (convincingly in our opinion) in Lossky's *Freedom of Will.* We adduce no arguments because it is used here, like the previous notions of the individual and the collective self, merely for descriptive purposes.

above all, Goodness. The egotist, on the other hand, loves neither Goodness nor himself determined as, or identified with, this or that experience or process. What then does he love? He loves just himself: not his eating or drinking or thinking or artistic activity (or himself *quâ* eating, drinking, etc.), for to do this would be to love eating or drinking or thinking or artistic activity even in others to a certain extent (as we have seen), which the mere egotist never does. He loves his bare undetermined self, his nothingness. This self, he will have it, is the Absolute or All. The position which *par excellence* he loves, or is concerned about, is his being the Absolute or the All, or vulgarly speaking, ' It.'

THE URANIAN EGOTIST

Already we seem to have got into the region of myth. And in a myth,[1] Platonically, we may continue to exhibit the facts.

The egotist *in excelsis* or in his Heaven is ' aware ' only of himself, and of himself as being exclusively and inclusively all reality or being or existence—the All or the Absolute. He is not conscious of, he does not acknowledge or accept, or come to terms with, or identify himself with, any determination. For to do so, since every determination is also a limitation, would be at once to acknowledge limitation of himself and the existence over against himself of the not-self or a world. Further, every determination is by means of a universal or a quality which others may also share; to accept one is therefore to acknowledge oneself common. Neither of these things will the egotist do. Now, such an attitude of mere pride or conceit, it may be objected, can have no desiring or conative aspect

[1] A concrete shorthand substitute for a very lengthy abstract analysis. Of a myth about the soul and its after-life Plato makes Socrates say: " To insist strongly that the truth is exactly this does not befit an intelligent man. But he should insist that if it is not this it is something like this " (*Phaedo*, 114*d*). He also holds that the myth is the appropriate description for whatever, being irrational, is not susceptible of rational explanation.

in it—for what, with such a consciousness, can the egotist ever desire?—and therefore should not be called love. But there is in it some conation, the *nisus* to maintain that consciousness unchanged, to resist every desiring, doing or thinking which might be *lèse-majesté* to it, to resist in fact all reality, since all reality is against it. And this is what egotistic self-love is in its extreme form or pure essence: indeterminate potentiality solidified or petrified into absolute obstruction, resistance, opposition, negation. The pure or Uranian egotist is too proud to be anything.

THE EARTHLY EGOTIST

What of the fallen or earthly egotist? In other words, how does the myth apply to actuality?

Before answering we must make the myth itself less, or perhaps more, mythical at least in one detail. It is mythical in the extreme to speak of the egotist as aware of himself and yet successfully resisting awareness of the not-self. If he excludes the latter awareness he thereby excludes also the former. We must speak of the pure egotistic impulse more negatively, and say that it is the impulse *not* to know oneself as not the Absolute, and therefore the impulse not to know either oneself or the not-self. We must conceive of it as the resistance to all truth.[1]

The egotist on earth, the egotist whom we know in so far as we know ourselves, is a being of a determinate kind, with determinate instincts, impulses, needs, capacities, tendencies, talents, and with a determinate place in a determinate society. With these determinations or limitations he must come to terms, he must be aware of them, know and acknowledge them; he must therefore acknowledge that he is not the Absolute. This is the necessity imposed by his fall.

[1] Those who speak of the electron, or whatever is the ultimate merely physical or material individual, as psychoidal or potentially conscious but resisting consciousness or awareness perform a picturing analogous to ours. *Cf.* Lossky, *The World as an Organic Whole.*

THE EGOTIST'S LIE. (See pp. 125-133, 251-264.)

Come to terms with them, yes! But if we say he must know or acknowledge the truth, we do not know, or rather we refuse to know, our egotist—that is, ourselves.

The egotist can ' think ' or ' believe,' or rather imagine and tell himself and others, that he, either determinate or indeterminate, is the Absolute; or that black is white, if this assertion also is necessary as a support for the other. Since this thinking or believing is not really thinking or believing—it is not a purely theoretic attitude but an affair of the will, a lie and deception—and since his state is partly that of willing to be the Absolute without however admitting that he is not already the Absolute, we shall describe his attitude by coining a form of speech and saying, not that he thinks, but that *he wills that he is the Absolute or that black is white.*

This lie is at the bottom of all egotists. But in some it is much more concealed (even from themselves), less operative, and more tempered by the admission of the truth, than in others. It is most intemperate and outspoken in the madman. The differences in the tempering of it and in the shifts adopted either to conceal it or to make it seem true constitute the main differences between one egotist and another. A description of them is always very difficult, and, since it is a description of the methods of what is essentially madness, is apt to seem mad itself.

The first postulate of this lie is that any *part* of reality is the Absolute or all there is—embracing reality or the All. Even the assertion that there is the Absolute is a lie. Goodness is not the Absolute, and if God is Goodness, God also is not the Absolute. Nor is there a real Whole or Order consisting of all that has been, is and will be—which is what is sometimes meant by the Absolute. If by it is meant merely Being as such, then this is quite an empty, meaningless notion.

The second postulate is that the egotist himself is the part of reality which is the Absolute. The third is that the rest of reality is not real reality and therefore has nothing in common with himself.

IDENTIFICATION IN LAUDING. (See pp. 104-106, 108, 160-164.)

The Uranian's absolutising consists of absolute separation or exclusion, and the absolute refusal to identify himself with anything. The earthly egotist does his absolutising and works out these postulates partly by separation, partly by identification.

I identify myself with a person or a group of persons or a thing or a class of things (a friend, a country, a social class, virtues, qualities, talents, rules of action or principles) when—to use our new-coined expression—I will that I am that other-than-I or that it is I. I adopt or choose it as mine or myself. I assert or declare myself as it. It is what I 'stand for' or represent.

Identification takes place in all laudatory attitudes: worshipping, venerating or reverencing, approving, respecting, praising, honouring, valuing, esteeming, prizing, admiring. Each of these attitudes—the same applies also to each of the opposite or culpatory attitudes—is three-dimensional: it consists not merely of judging but also of feeling or emotion and of action or a tendency to act (it is a cognitive-affective-conative self-direction of the personality); in this lies the whole point of the following discussion. If you remove the emotional or the conative (or active) aspect from an attitude, it is no longer laudatory (or culpatory). For example, I am not in any way valuing, prizing, honouring, esteeming, or doing the opposite of any of these, when without any emotion or conation I merely judge that this man has much virtue and talent or vice or more of these than another man. In such a case I am no more valuing or disvaluing than I am when I judge that this mountain is very high or higher than another or that

$2+2=4$; I am merely estimating or appraising but not esteeming or praising. By 'identification' and 'separation' we mean to denote particularly the respective affective-conative aspects of the laudatory and culpatory attitudes.

Actually I am I, and I am not identical even with a manifestation or expression of myself. Identification, therefore, is always a fiction; it is part of the egotistic lie. The fact that lends colour to the fiction may be that the object wherewith identification is willed or pretended is descended from me (my child); associated with me (my friend); that of which I am a member (my country); something which has been, is, may be, or which I will to be, 'mine' (an act, practice, talent, quality, virtue); someone whom I will to be an image or copy of myself (a pupil, a child, a *protégé*). The important thing, however, is not the fact but the fiction. It is important that the more of an egotist a man is the more are these attitudes describable as forms of identification, and that the less there is this identification the less are these attitudes what is ordinarily described by the terms 'valuing,' 'honouring,' etc. When complete objectivity has been attained with no reference to (or concernment with) the self, nothing is left that can be described by them: these attitudes (considered, that is, as concrete organic wholes cognitive-affective-conative, or attitudes of thinking, feeling, willing, directing) vanish and are replaced by something quite different.

An example of identification is the honouring of a person who is 'one of us.' The more we think of him as not merely 'one of us' but as ourselves or as what we 'really' are, the more freely, spontaneously and unstintedly do we honour him. The more we thus honour him, the more do we feel that he is 'really' ourselves. The more clear we are that he is he and we are we, and the less concerned we are with ourselves, the less is there of anything that may be called honouring, praising, esteeming—in short, 'respecting of persons.' Instead,

there is something quite different, which we shall call true communion or communication or intimacy or at-oneness.

An example of identification with what is not a person is the so-called endopathy or *empathy* or *Einfühlung* whereby, in the contemplation of a mountain whose might strikes us with awe (a laudatory attitude),[1] we feel we are its might and its might is we. Remove that feeling, and you have no awe or elation or exaltation or glorification left, but only either the purely objective æsthetic attitude, which (in our opinion) has little to do with that feeling but is a getting away from the self, or else the purely objective measuring attitude which is an estimating but not an esteeming.

LAUDING IS EGOTISTIC AND IMPERSONAL. (See pp. 153, 199-200.)

By an intelligible extension of the meaning of 'loving,' laudatory attitudes may all be called forms of loving. Since they are also forms of identification, they are forms of self-loving.

The second example, however, reminds us that this loving is essentially impersonal. These attitudes, like their opposites, are towards generic qualities or attributes (*e.g.* virtues), actions, relations, powers, positions, etc., and to persons or groups of persons only as the owners or bearers of these. The admired writer is identified with his admired writing,[2] the honoured athlete with his athletic prowess, the decorated hero with his valorous action, the respected noble or senator or magistrate with his rank or office, the awe-inspiring millionaire with his millions, the reverend old man or father or priest with his age,

[1] The peculiarity of awe is that identification meets with difficulties owing to the object's immensity. It is effected largely through 'negative self-feeling' or submission or servile egotism. But even here it may be effected positively and directly. Longinus (*On the Sublime*, vii.) says that the sublime (the awe-inspiring) fills us with pride and vaunting as though we ourselves were the authors of it (even in the works of others).

[2] It is this identification that makes possible the one previously mentioned. All identification (as also separation) proceeds *via* the generic. I identify (fictionally, of course) myself with the writer or with the honest man by identifying myself with writing or honesty with which I identify him.

paternity or the Cloth, the respectable honest man with his honesty, the loved Frenchman with his being a Frenchman and an ally (so that any Frenchman will do in the absence of an official representative), and the hated German with his being an enemy (so that any German will do to wreak vengeance on); in each of these everything is irrelevant save the attribute in question and that only in its generic bearing. Individuality or personality and personal relationship have nothing to do with the matter. Men have worshipped stocks and stones, we honour the flag, and the French, a logical nation, have given logical expression to honouring by awarding the Legion of Honour to carrier-pigeons for distinguished service in the Great War.[1] There is no need to think that there is in these cases an imaginative personalisation of the objects. The fact is rather that any laudatory attitude is impersonal. It is not more absurd towards objects or animals than towards persons; if anything it is more absurd towards these; for, if we realise its true nature and also the nature of personality (which precludes identification) and of the right relationship between persons, we see that any form of laudation is as inapplicable to persons as is the attribution of greenness or squareness.

SEPARATION IN BLAMING. (See pp. 103-105, 109-112, 138-147, 152-154, 194.)

Separation is effected in culpatory attitudes—all of them forms of hating—namely, in: blaming, condemning, contemning, scorning, despising, ridiculing, disapproving, disvaluing, degrading, anger, vindictiveness, etc. I separate myself from another when I will that the other (person or thing) has nothing in common with me or with that with which I identify myself, does not really exist or exists simply in a different and irrelevant universe. Separation, like identification, is of course based on

[1] E. T. Woodhall, *Spies of the Great War*, p. 159. Speaking of a particular pigeon's achievement the writer says: "To my mind, such a feat ranks with the highest human endeavour."

a fiction. The fact behind this fiction may be simply that the other is strange and unfamiliar to me or simply other than I or than what I will is I. The different is set up as the opposite or contrary: *hostis* in Latin originally meant both stranger and enemy. Here again what is important is that the fiction is significant to the egotist. It may be enacted or expressed merely in seeking or emphasising differences from the other for the sake of difference. If it is a case of condemning a person it may express itself in banishment from the community (fictionally regarded as the sole real world); in inflicting death (regarded, fictionally perhaps, as annihilation or non-existence); in a look or gesture or form of words; in that 'forgiveness' which consists in 'returning good,' indeed, to the culprit but yet regarding ourselves as eternally and peculiarly of a different world from him; or in the mere inoperative cherishing of the vague thought: 'He is not one of us; he doesn't count.' But always the attitude is the same—a turning away in spirit, a raising of a barrier or wall. Substitute for this turning away and this barricading a turning to, or a seeking of communion, and an attempt to remove all barriers; and you have nothing left that can be called culpatory—that is, if you insist upon regarding an attitude as what we have defined it—namely, not merely a 'thinking' but an orientation of the personality.

Like the laudatory, the culpatory attitude is impersonal. The person blamed, scorned or in any way disesteemed is identified with his attribute—his sin or disqualification (his having cheated or murdered, his dropping his *h*'s or not wearing the right clothes, his not being of one's own class or nation, etc.).

Further, since an act once it has been committed always remains committed, 'Once a sinner always a sinner' is the egotist's maxim. At any rate he has no desire for any reform which will not mean merely a cessation of his being harmed by

the offender but will also entail an alteration in the relation between himself and the offender. A hell of the eternally damned to minister to his beatitude and glorification is his ideal. Do away with that maxim and that ideal (but do away with them in every even the most vestigial, symbolic, shadowy or purely fantastic form), and, again, there is nothing left that can be called culpatory.

PRAISE AND BLAME ABSOLUTISE. (See pp. 191-192.)

We understand fully the nature of the laudatory and of the culpatory attitude only when we realise that they are opposite but complementary forms of absolutising. The first is towards a universe which we will is ourselves and fully, properly, really or solely real: we laud (esteem, prize, value, honour, etc.) an object (thing, or person *quâ* bearer of the thing or quality) when we will that it is a constituent or member of this world. The second is towards a universe which we will is not really real, a world of *nullities* or *nonentities* (not-beings)—to borrow from the scorner the most significant words of his vocabulary. We will that the object condemned or contemned—and in this consists the condemning or contemning—belongs to a universe utterly different from, and irrelevant to, ours, one which is not really real, the world of Outer Darkness; which means partly 'thinking' that the object already does belong to such a universe, partly treating it as if it belonged there, partly willing and taking care that it do belong there—by banishing or destroying it, which is fictionally taken as equivalent to sending it into a universe of non-being. When we call the first universe 'good' and the second 'evil,' as we usually do, we say that the one is the world of Reality and the other the world of Appearance (Appearance, however, being taken as equivalent to Not-Being or *Non-ens*); or we do our saying not in words but only in deeds—that is, in attitudes which may or may not reach the stage of physical externalisation.

PRAISE AND BLAME TRANSCENDED. (See pp. 190-205.)

Substitute for this dichotomising attitude one in which we recognise that both what we think good and what we think evil are equally real and alike have the claim on us of all reality—acknowledged, in practice and not merely in thought, by the saint and the artist—the claim to sympathetic and penetrative insight and consideration from us, and to constructive treatment:—substitute this attitude, and you have gone beyond praise and blame, approving and condemning. There is still left the thinking that good is good and right is right, and that evil is evil and wrong is wrong. But the emotion and action or direction which accompany the thinking in the two new attitudes differentiate them entirely, as concrete organic wholes, from laudation on the one hand and condemnation on the other, and also differentiate the difference between them from the difference between laudation and condemnation. In this transcending, however, we do not, as some say we do, transcend the distinction between good and evil and thus transcend morality. On the contrary, we first come to true morality. For laudatory and culpatory attitudes cannot deal with, or be inspired by, real goodness. They have to do only with what is generic and allows of measurement, comparison, grading and ranking—at the best, with virtues and general rules derived from, but not identical with, morality. True morality and goodness has to do with individuality—with individual persons communicating with each other in individual ways by embodying Goodness in individual situations, and individuality cannot allow measurement, comparison, grading and ranking.

THE OPERATION OF THE ABSOLUTISING

The absolutising dichotomy is, of course, a mere fiction or lie. But it works in diverse ways and terrible.

The identification operates: in positing various fixations—that is, in absolutising universal ' moral rules ' or ' oughts ' or conventions or codes—and in forming political or ' moral ' or religious or artistic fanaticisms and neurotic compulsions; in cupidity and all the sins of ' attachment,' when we ' set our hearts ' upon an object or ' sell our souls ' to or for it as that which must be got at any price and sacrifice and by any means because it is ' the thing ' or the sole reality. The individual—the same applies to society, only more—insists that a particular attainment or achievemnt, the possession of a particular thing, the carrying out of a particular principle, is what he stands for, what he identifies himself with, what does, or must, constitute his real self and the whole of reality. This absolutising, be it noted, has little to do with biological desire and biological necessity; the object is sought as glorious, great, estimable—in short, as a prize. This question will be treated at some length in the discussion on the relation between ambition and appetition.

The separation works complementarily in relegating all that is not the ideal, but especially all that contradicts it, into the world of Outer Darkness—in fixing prejudices, tabus, this and that universal thou-shalt-not and various antipathies, resistances and neurotic inhibitions that have little to do with biological aversions. It may express itself in the vaguely comforting and apparently harmless assurance that your own little world with your own position in it is the only one that really matters or counts, though why such self-immurement should be considered harmless is hard to say. It may also manifest itself in treating other persons, and whole classes and nations, as though they did not exist, or in destroying them—thus drastically affirming, or making good, the willing that they do not exist. It expresses itself in persecution and resisting the new and the more, the new truth or the new good (because to acknowledge them would be to acknowledge that one's world

is not yet the All). It blocks up the way of the imagination and of sympathy. It generates every form of strife.

ABSOLUTISING THE DETERMINATE SELF

In thus setting up a world which he wills is himself and the sole reality or the Absolute, the earthly egotist, like the Uranian, still loves himself or his position, the position being that of soleness or the Absolute. Only, unlike the other, he absolutises, not his indeterminate self, but a determinate self—a collection of determinate attributes which he wills are himself. His absolutising we may call *the absolutising of the determinate self.* The difference between the two is, or rather should be, vast. It carries with it in the second case consciousness or acknowledgment of the not-self. But only up to a point, for this knowledge is on the one hand vitiated by identification, and on the other hand truncated by the separation and the refusal to know or acknowledge non-entities. (What we despise, condemn or hate or scorn we never know as the artist knows it; nor do we know that wherewith we would identify ourselves: the egotistic lover who would 'fuse' with the beloved as really his *alter ego* does not know, or want to know, the beloved.)

LAUDING CONFERS LAUDABILITY. (See pp. 160-165.)

In having described this absolutising with its identification or lauding and its separation or condemnation we have thereby described, on the one hand, laudability: that is, worshipfulness, venerability, respectability, nobility, esteemability, admirability, value, glory, merit, greatness, the high or the supreme—in short, the 'egotistic good or right' as we shall call it to distinguish it from Goodness and the moral right; we have also described, on the other hand, culpability: all that is opposite to the above and which we shall call 'the egotistic evil or wrong.' An object (quality, relation, person, etc.) is laudable (esteemable, admirable, good, right, etc.) because I

laud it—that is, because I will that it is I or I am it and that it belongs to the real world which is I. It is then of course universally or objectively laudable or good because I am the Universe or all that matters. If you argue against me—and the egotistic world is pre-eminently the world of argument or strife—that it is damnable (bad, base, low, despicable, etc.), you are willing that I and that wherewith I identify myself belong to the world of Outer Darkness. You are trying to thrust me there, and to assert your willing over mine. The ultimate argument in such a controversy is that of the stick —the *argumentum baculinum*—amongst the drastic, or a sneer or smile amongst softer natures.

But some real objectivity based on unreal agreement there is or may be. Generally we do our willing collectively: in families, cliques, coteries, clans, nations. Thus, a certain collectivity wills that riding and shooting or trying to save life is 'the thing' or the Absolute.[1] Its members then take the absoluteness or 'value' of riding, etc., for granted or as a *datum*, and do not argue about it. But they can argue, and argue objectively, amongst each other whether a certain activity is really that of trying to save life, or really is riding or shooting or more *efficient* or less efficient riding or shooting. Thus there arises ranking or grading, with the notions of higher and lower, superior and supreme, and with *competition*—a very important item for egotists, for it is another means of separation, this time between members who are held or brought together by identification (each identifying himself with the group). There arise *intermundia* between the real universe and the unreal, or an absolute within an absolute. The highest degree of that which is prized or lauded or absolutised becomes the *absolutissimum* or the really real real. Speaking generally, the *absolutissimum* is that which the collectivity wills that it itself

[1] We shall call the Absolute or part of it 'the ideal,' 'idol,' or 'the symbol,' to denote its fictional character.

is (certain qualities, ways of life, modes of acting, in the highest degree; those who have them constitute the collectivity *par excellence*); it is the idol of the tribe, the tribe itself or that which the tribe wills it itself is.

In this grading there can be real objectivity. But even here fact is never safe from the fiction of the egotist (whether the individual or the tribe); that is fact which he wills is fact. Even a tribe may, having absolutised riding or shooting, fix, from various causes, on very inferior riding and shooting as supreme, and reject the superior.

Between the largest groups there is very little objectivity, as there is no more comprehensive group fixing the *absolutissimum*. When one tries to demonstrate the absoluteness of its absolute to the other (to spread its civilisation or *Kultur*) or when a discussion arises as to right and wrong, the syllogism or proof —the only logical one in the absolutising attitude—is barked forth by the machine-gun. The proof *is* logical, for argument about value is fundamentally argument about power.

FIXING THE ABSOLUTE. (See pp. 163-168, 172-183.)

Speaking most generally and also circularly, we may say that the sole 'objective' characteristic an object need possess to fit it for absolutising or prizing is that it shall lend itself to the operations of identification and separation (including grading)—*i.e.* to absolutising. It must not appear to the absolutiser himself so unattainable and so remote from him that he himself must say that it is fantastic to speak of it as already his or himself. On the other hand it must be such as to allow of distinction or separation or grading between persons: it must be difficult or rare—to be a prize it must be an apple of discord. But this 'objectivity' is very relative to the subjectivity of the egotist or absolutiser (individual or group).

Appetition or biological desire has some (but only some) influence on the absolutising. Since we have many appetitions

in common, a kind of objectivity or common ground is thus provided for absolutising or fighting.[1] Roughly speaking, that which is most generally prized or absolutised is *power* (or whatever is connected with it): the power to thwart or to bend other wills by satisfying or thwarting appetition, but above all, the direct power of will over will without the use of an intermediary, the 'power of personality.' But power, we shall see, is position, or is defined by position.

Again roughly speaking, it is society which fixes the general plan of the absolute of which each member works out a variation for himself—a variation which may sometimes be a contradiction (*e.g.* in the case of the criminal or the rebel). With its laws and conventions it assigns to each his minimum position (his rights); the pressure of egotism against egotism which makes up society's life establishes for each his actual maximum position. The first each will fight for with tooth and nail. The second each will amplify to supremacy, omnipotence or sole and whole reality, with fiction: *on vainc comme on peut*, but each one does win victory, and each needs fiction as a weapon—from Alexander the Great to his meanest slave; for each claims to be a god, or rather *the* god, or rather the Absolute —that is, an impossibility, or fictional entity.

To understand how an individual's ideal or absolute came to be what is, we must look at his own history and also at that of his immediate circle and of his society. Though he identifies himself with this ideal or wills that he is it, it is generally far from being himself in the ordinary sense of those words: most often it is the 'Man in the moon' or what is not in the moon or anywhere else—our ambitions and ideals and idealisations of ourselves are notoriously romantic and fantastical. Nor is the law of its being to be found always in his own nature; indeed, aiming at complete autonomy, the egotist generally reaches complete heteronomy.[2] He is not therefore by himself

[1] See pp. 163-168.

[2] See pp. 134-135.

responsible for his ideal (law-abidingness or criminality). What he is responsible for is having an ideal, idol or absolute at all—that is, for being an egotist.[1]

THE MILITANCY OF EARTHLY EGOTISM. (See pp. 145-147, 154-155, 172, 187, 237-239.)

Of the egotist as we first imagined him we might have said that, if there are many of him, each sleeps in his separate Nirvana quietly and peacefully, conscious of only himself as the All. As we re-imagined him we must say that each is in a fortress resisting the assaults of all consciousness. The earthly egotist is fallen because he has succumbed to the assault, because he has eaten of the tree of knowledge, because he has acknowledged the not-self and must have some kind of communication. His communication is WAR. He is the setter up, and the taker of, sides—the partisan. The separation with its baculine arguments is obviously war: the other or stranger or *xenos* is made into the enemy or *hostis*[2]; each egotist wills that he himself is, or shall be, the Absolute and that the other is, or shall be, *non-ens*. The war is modified by the identification, one egotist identifying himself with the other by their both identifying themselves with the tribe or with a common idol or ideal; but within the tribe there is grading and competition and strife, which is only limited as to its expressions (there must be no killing, or breaking the law), and indeed, we shall show that the life of the tribe is best described as a mutual equilibration of many egotisms which is always a kind of war; besides, both between tribe and tribe and within the tribe itself, as also within the family and between one individual and another (loving husband and loving wife), the identification is itself a kind of war—compulsory uniformity, forceful moulding of the other in one's own image, the imposition of the ideal by

[1] See pp. 264-266.

[2] The difference in respect of egotism between the Greeks and the Romans is summed up in the difference between *xenos* and *hostis*.

force of one sort or another, proselytising by the sword. War (strife of every conceivable kind) is not incidental to egotism: it is its very life, it *is* egotism; peace it is that is incidental to it and artificial and unreal. The egotist is the divider and *imperator*; every one of his assertions is a declaration of war.

INTESTINAL WAR

Worse still, there is war within himself (he is, in fact, war). This also comes from having eaten of the tree of knowledge. He has admitted within himself an objective standard for objective grading. Everyone, and therefore himself also, knows what the *absolutissimum* is (highest riding or shooting, winning most scalps, 'playing the game,' telling the truth, giving money to the needy). The *vox populi* within himself, which is also *Vox Dei* (since the tribe is the idol) and with which he identifies himself as his 'real or higher self,' tells him objectively what his actual position is and how far he is from the *absolutissimum* which he wills he is; worse still, it tells him how far in some action he has fallen below his own actual position to a further remove from the *absolutissimum* or Grace. There operate, then, within him both identification and separation. To himself he is really the *absolutissimum* (the ideal, the perfect rider or scalper, God, the Categorical Imperative, the Moral Law, Perfection, his country, etc.); for this, he will have it, is his 'real self'—hence his elation, his feeling of superiority; but in some unreal way which is nevertheless, alas, still a way, he, or his 'inferior or lower or unreal self,' belongs to the world of Outer Darkness—hence his dejection and abjectness, his humiliation and feeling of inferiority. If he has fallen from Grace, though he is still identical with the ideal, this ideal or his 'higher self' would cast him forth into the outer world: there is ceaseless war between his 'higher' and 'lower' self (both of them set up by himself), to which expiation by a rite or reparation or punishment—fictionally supposed to undo the

deed and therefore eagerly welcomed sometimes by the egotistic culprit—brings only a truce, for this fiction will not hold out against the other fiction: 'Once a sinner always a sinner.' The positions or phases of this intestinal war are the self-culpatory attitudes: self-condemnation, humiliation, self-submission, abjectness, the 'inferiority feeling,' shame, repining, remorse or the feeling of guilt.

THE WAR OF THE OPPOSITES

Further, there is war within each attitude, since each contains within it, or brings about, or is, its opposite: hence war is peace and peace is war. This is the war of the opposites. It also is due to the knowledge admitted within: indeed, the primal cause of all war is the war between the two primal opposites, fact or truth and fiction—the truth being within the fiction. This war it is, as we have just seen, which makes the 'superiority feeling' involve the 'inferiority feeling' and, in general, self-laudation bring with it self-condemnation; but it also turns self-condemnation into self-laudation (for the egotist can be mightily pleased with himself for condemning himself and love himself for hating himself—does he not show his admirable superiority by condemning himself?). This also makes the loving (in the extended sense here given it) of others also the hating of them: the lover loves the beloved, strong in the fiction that she is his *alter ego*, but at moments he realises the truth that she is her own ego and then he hates her. Similarly, having decreed that a certain quality is admirable, we admire the owner and identify ourselves with him, but at moments we realise he is himself and a rival, and that the quality is his, and then we are envious and ready to damn him in order to save our position; let him but carry the quality to a degree that we must recognise as unattainable to ourselves so that the game of identification cannot be played, and out go he and his quality into the World of Darkness, as monstrous, queer,

new-fangled, exaggerated, not the real thing, etc. But hating is also a kind of loving, an attraction or fascination: we love to have our enemy be with us always and remain always an enemy, so that we may go on triumphing over him, aggrandising ourselves over against him; we love to have our condemned sinners, who must continue as sinners, and if there are none about we proceed to make or to invent them—indeed, the *raison d'être* of our neighbour is that he be a sinner so that we may thank God that we are not as he; we cherish and treasure the World of Darkness because it alone gives meaning to our World of Light. We become entirely dependent upon the regard or hatred or opposition of those from whom we would separate ourselves; our would-be autonomy becomes complete heteronomy. All of which means that laudation or identification and condemnation or separation (considered as concrete emotional attitudes) are each simply a form of opposition or war, and complementary to each other, like obverse and reverse but less distinct than these.

Since egotism is war and since, as we shall see later, it may be speculatively surmised to be at the base not only of the human but also of the physical universe, we may say with Heraclitus: " War is the father of all, of all the king; and some he has appointed gods, others men; some he has made slaves, others kings." [1]

NIHILISM OF THE EARTHLY EGOTIST

In all this we seem to have got away from the definition of egotism with which we started by looking at the Uranian egotist: we called it a love of nothingness or of the bare indeterminate self, or empty and nihilistic. This seemed to us then the first and last word about egotism and therefore about ' human nature.' Must we now give it up to fit the facts or earthly egotism?

[1] Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Fragment 53.

We must give it up only to the extent that earthly egotism does consist in loving or seeking something determinate (riding or shooting, virtues, the carrying out of certain principles, certain achievements, etc.). But this something is never sought by it for itself and as what it is, but *always as something else which it is not. This something else is an absolute* non-ens, *that which is not and cannot be either in Heaven or on Earth—namely, a peculiar position, that of soleness or allness, the Absolute.* The search is for a *nihil*, something less real than a chimera and more unattainable than a will-o'-the-wisp. It is a romantic adventure—we use these laudatory words advisedly to remind ourselves of our love for egotistic self-love—an adventure of madmen who are apt at any moment to turn into homicidal maniacs. It is modified and restrained by other elements in human nature (appetition and the moral *nisus*). But in itself it is nihilistic.

The egotistic desire or ambition is further nihilistic because it is empty. Since it can always be satisfied by either of two contraries (the creation or the destruction of a species), it does not originate anything; the determinate contents of its ideal are purloined from appetition and the moral *nisus*, and are always distorted. Further, even after the ideal or 'symbol' has been fixed by training it is still liable to be replaced by what as a 'symbol' remains the same to the egotist but as regards determinate content is the contrary. Thus, an egotist who has been trained to look upon greatness, glory or honour as consisting in always saving life, and who is living in a society which has received this ideal, will meticulously save life; but remove him to a Rome of only glory-seeking gladiators, and he will after a time do as the Romans do. If the Uranian egotist does nothing, the earthly egotist is liable to do anything. He is *panurgic*—to use an expressive Greek term denoting one who will stick at nothing.

He shows his emptiness further, as we shall see, in running, for the sake of separation, after the mere 'more'—going

always one higher than his neighbour (record-breaking)—and after mere otherness, difference, rarity and strangeness. In this respect we may describe him as *pleonectic* (grasping after more) and *extravagant*.[1]

But all this will not satisfy him. He hankers ever after his lost Heaven, and dreams always of curing himself of the effects of the eating from the tree of knowledge. A return and a cure he seeks by the simple process of giving a little extra work to the fiction. Thus, a Nero who has absolutised artistic activity or determined that it is admirable would, we are apt to imagine, admire and prize it in others besides himself. Not so. Others must not try it; if they do, he wills that in them it is not really artistic. Similarly a Willoughby continually treats as ridiculous and contemptible in others those very qualities which he thinks invest himself with uniqueness and excellence. Neronian (or Willoughbian) are we all every day of our lives, whenever we claim that something is right, admirable, estimable, only because—as it turns out—it is ours. We are breaking the rule of the egotistic game, which is that lauding or prizing shall be of generic qualities as generic; we are challenging competition and comparison by an objective standard, and then identify the standard with ourselves; we are lauding, prizing, valuing, loving, not this or that alleged attribute or determination (*e.g.* artistic activity), not ourselves determined as this or that, but just our empty indeterminate selves—the mystic *je ne sais quoi* which every egotist finds in himself; we are loving emptiness, for:

> " Whoever deems within himself confined
> The pearl of virtue, wisdom, eloquence,
> He nought but emptiness, when opened, shows."[2]

But we cannot all do this, or we cannot do it in all things, nor constantly, nor comfortably: however often we will it out, the truth will in again. The stronger therefore in us is the

[1] See pp. 167-172.

[2] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 706 ff.

nostalgia for our egotistic Heaven, and the stronger is the truth in us and about us, the more we are driven—unless we choose either morality or suicide—to the sole cure: we must find a state in which fiction replaces fact for ever, in which fact exists not at all or is infinitely plastic, in which we are impregnable to the truth. This state is madness. The egotist's chosen panacea is madness. His refuge—a Capitol which is also the place of the celebration of his ultimate triumph—is madness. His Heaven upon earth is madness.[1]

[1] See pp. 131-132, 192, 270.

CHAPTER IV

EXPRESSIONS OF EGOTISM

IMPORTANCE OF EXAMPLES

To give examples of egotism is more important even than to give a formulation of it.

Egotism is everywhere in human affairs, since it is that which is generally called 'human nature.' Yet rarely is it mentioned under its own name. For we love it more than anything in the world: hence we are fain to have it *celebrated*, as morality or religion or poetry, while the writers who have analysed it and described it as what it is have been abused as 'cynics,' defamers of human nature who delight in bringing down all that is high, in profaning the sacred, desecrating the holy, tarnishing glory, etc.; they have roused bitter resentment —that is, egotism itself defending itself; they have been called morbid, and the examples they have cited monstrosities. The resentment is natural, for a thoroughgoing criticism of egotism does not merely bring down the high, noble, glorious, etc., but asks for the scrapping of the very notions of these; it calls not merely for a 'revaluation of values' but for the giving up of all 'valuing'—that is, of absolutising, idolising or idol-worshipping.

There are as many egotisms as there are *egos*. What are given in this and in the next chapter are only *types*, and only a few of these and not finely drawn: an individual egotist (for example, a Willoughby) may combine in himself all these types and more. A rational classification of the irrational may be possible, but here no more will be attempted than a stringing together.

PRIDE—CONCEIT—AMBITION

'Pride' and 'ambition' we are using to denote egotism itself or the source of all egotistic expressions; but they can also be the names of emphatic manifestations of egotism. With pride, as with every other egotism, there must go conceit. True, ordinarily we call conceited only him who, more or less openly, exaggerates his actual position (powers or merits) as judged by the objective or public measurement. But every egotist thus exaggerates in this matter, secretly at least; for he thinks himself the Absolute or *absolutissimum*, and this is exaggeration according to the public measurement, which, though it permits the absurdity of the Absolute, does not suffer the absurdity of this identification in the case of any one individual. Pride, then, as an emphatic form of egotism, does involve conceit; only, the proud man is distinguished from the merely conceited man or the vain man or the braggart by his acuter consciousness of the demands of the public standard, and hence generally proceed both the secrecy of his conceit and his energetic activity on behalf of it, in contrast to the blatancy and self-satisfied quiescence generally characterising these others.[1]

Pride-conceit is a spur to action because ambition always goes with it as its correlative. One for whom, we will say, the Absolute consists in the production of drama, wills that he is the world's supreme dramatist. That is, he both wills to be this and thinks he is it already. But if he writes nothing at all, or if others' plays are recognised as superior to his own by the world, including, perhaps, himself (for in spite of his egotism he may be cursed with the faculty of impartial criticism, or of recognising the objective standard)—then, although he does not abandon his conceit, another idea also begins to occupy his consciousness, the idea that he is far from being supreme. Indeed, the more conceited he is, the greater is his sensitiveness

[1] This very inadequate description is not given as applicable to all that goes under the name of 'pride.'

to failure and to non-recognition by others of his success, the greater also his tendency to exaggerate these, to despair and to think himself a nobody, so that his consciousness is continually dropping from the heights to the depths and soaring from the depths to the heights. The feeling of superiority and the feeling of inferiority are always correlatives, the opposite poles of one and the same egotism. But no consciousness can be just a succession of unrelated opposite states. These states also co-exist. *At one and the same time*, as well as successively, the egotist thinks that he is the supreme dramatist and that he is a nobody or at least not supreme; he is both conceitedly certain that he *is* supreme and ambitiously desirous to become supreme. The stress of the contradiction becomes intolerable; he must do something to relieve it; he must write, or do whatever will convince himself and others that he is supreme; he must express, manifest and make acknowledged this supremacy in whatever action he and others take to be the sign or symbol of supremacy; he must, not exactly make his supremacy a fact (which it already is to him), but dispel the clouds which obscure the fact. Hence pride-conceit is also ambition, a spur to activity, and, indeed, to ceaseless, anxious, feverish activity.

SNOBBERY

Primarily he is called a snob who worships or absolutises birth or rank or social position; in a more extended sense, he who worships any power (or success), physical, intellectual, artistic, but more he who worships apparent or reputed power or the mere trappings or symbols thereof; in all these cases we think also of the snob as insensitive to the meaning of personal relationship. But since all absolutising (that is, worshipping, prizing, valuing, etc.) is of power or position (they are the same); since personal relationship is irrelevant to it; and since at least the position of positions, the absolute position, which is coveted *par excellence*, is merely apparent, reputed

or symbolic, we must, if we look beneath the surface, say that all absolutising or prizing—that is, all egotism—is snobbish.

DEMOCRATIC EGOTISM

Essentially and at the core of his consciousness the egotist's goal or preoccupation is, indeed, his own omnipotence or divinity or absoluteness. But, as something overtly or consciously accepted, undisguised and unqualified it is perhaps to be met with only in those who are technically set down as megalomaniacs. The ordinary egotist is more concerned with not being inferior or with not having anyone or certain ones above him.[1] Indeed, though there are of course many whom nothing less will satisfy than their own despotism over all others, the situation of affairs which best accords with the egotistic self-love—that is, with the conceit and ambition—of the average man (who is the average egotist)—no doubt because over his conceit prevails his suspicion that he cannot maintain his own overlordship—is democracy, in which none can be above him unless placed there by himself, so that it is he who is after all the patron.[2] Hence, though latently conceit and ambition are present too, in the generality of men the egotism in evidence is that of *envy* and *jealousy* (*resentment* at the superiority of others). Commoner even than these is the desire to ' hold one's own ' or to keep whatever one has come to consider one's proper position without too explicitly considering it supreme or assigning it any definite place in a scale. Any impairment of this position, still more any assault upon it, rouses *indignation*, *anger*, *resentment*, *hatred*, *vindictiveness*. To these we must go if we would see the most general egotism,

[1] *Cf.* the first quotation from Kant on p. 84.

[2] Democracy is here used in a sense wider than the political. It can scarcely be denied that democracies, including the Athenian democracy, perhaps the most really democratic of them all, have owed both their hold over men and their vices to the egotism of the average man. None the less, perfect democracy may very well be the ideal condition. Autocracy, its opposite, is also based on egotism; it satisfies the tyrannic egotism of a few and the servile egotism of the many.

the egotism that is present in every man who is short of being a perfect saint. That along with envy and jealousy they are always egotistic will be argued later.[1]

In these common cases what is grossly apparent and obviously operative is a moderated, tamed egotism. But often we need but scratch the surface and we shall come up against unqualified and undiluted egotism, such, pretty nearly, as described in the myth with which we started. Thus, we shall find one who in all outward things is of the crowd and who either boastfully or with apparent humility proclaims that he is 'just an ordinary plain man, none of your highbrow artist fellows, poets or philosophers'; and in the very tone, not merely of his boasting, but even of his apparent self-depreciation, we hear the conviction not only that of course to be plain is to be sane,[2] and to be ordinary is to be supreme ('to be It'), but also that his own ordinariness is more ordinary than that of others, something unique, in fact something extraordinary! Or we shall find hidden pride and claim to distinction beneath every disability or disadvantage, based on that very disability.[3] Or we shall meet with one who seizes upon one single trifle in which he seeks or claims superiority over only one person; and in the *penetralia* of his consciousness we shall discern enthroned at least the penumbra of the idea that everything other than the trifle, than himself, than his inferior rival and his own superiority, somehow does not count, or exists only in another and an irrelevant universe.

SERVILE EGOTISM

Extreme egotism is present and is strongly operative even under a surface which taken by itself presents us with the very

[1] See pp. 157-159, 160-162.

[2] *Cf.* The Plain Man and also The Housewife in Galsworthy's *Studies of Extravagance.*

[3] *Cf.* (in Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd*) Joseph Poorgrass distinguished for his bashfulness and timidity, a 'gift' in his family for generations.

opposite of that which it conceals. One would not at first suspect ambition for, and pride in, omnipotence and 'godlikeness' in the individual who is not only shy, modest, retiring, self-effacing and ever ready to submit and defer to the wish, will or opinion of others, but is also, it may be, cringing and abject, habitually and indiscriminately deprecatory and adulatory, self-depreciatory to the point of apologising for his very existence, talking only of his own shortcomings, disabilities, faults and sins and of the greatness and perfection of others, anxious, worried and timid, shrinking from every undertaking and responsibility and sheltering behind a leader and protector, a slave always on the look-out for a master. Yet that one possessed by some or all of these characteristics is at least self-centred, preoccupied with himself, is obvious. And who that has known such a one for any length of time has not on one occasion or another, by some trifling act or unconscious unguarded expression of his, been startled into the discovery in him of an unbounded ambition and overweening conceit and pride, stubbornness and defiance, though all about nothing? The discovery gives one the key to the character of such an individual. At some quite early period of his life the experience of defeat or inferiority has left an indelible mark on him. It is not the experience that has turned him into an egotist. For in order to experience defeat or inferiority and victory or superiority one must already be an egotist; to interpret life in these terms is to interpret egotistically; they are the very forms or categories of egotism. But the experience has moulded the outward expression of his egotism. It has taught him to cherish his ideal of himself in secret only. Nevermore will he expose it to the gross test of externalisation, nevermore risk the bitterness of defeat or inferiority. He is safe so long as he does not undertake, or at least does not wholeheartedly will and commit himself to, anything. For only when he does this can non-attainment become defeat to him. Yet he does not think that he is really

inferior. He feels merely that there is some devil in others and even in himself who brings about this illusion of his inferiority. This devil—the egotism perhaps of others reflected also in himself—he will placate, in a sense even defy and frustrate: by making himself non-resistant and penetrable or by crushing himself he will make impossible even the illusion of having been crushed by others. Moreover, by his underestimating his own powers what he does achieve will seem great both to himself and others. But the means to self-aggrandisement which he permanently uses is to identify himself with the greatness of his master or teacher: he is that greatness. Thus acting, he also acquires wonderful and endearing qualities in the master's eyes, who almost becomes his slave. Further, at least in a society where the virtues of modesty and humility and non-claimfulness, and even the outward shows of these, are considered 'merits' or titles to greatness or superiority, he will, while fully guarding himself, make a bid for this greatness at least; for this venture is in his eyes absolutely failure-proof.[1] Him we may conveniently call the servile egotist.

REALIST EGOTIST

Though every egotist is ultimately a romancer, there can be the realist egotist, who is objective as regards the measuring and critical even of his own pretensions about his position, up to a point at least.[2]

[1] The *rôle* played in the egotist's life by the feeling of defeat or inferiority is illustrated in great detail by Adler and Kunkel. Where we differ from them most is that they imply (so it seems to us) that failure *makes* the egotist. We think that it only determines his particular expression.

[2] Only up to a point: Papini in *A Man—Finished* shows himself very critical and exacting towards himself. But when it comes to a really frank estimation of his most fundamental claim (the claim to genius) he buries his head in the sand of the desert of illusion. Egotism and full acknowledgment of the truth are impossible neighbours.

(*a*) THE GENUINE COMPETITOR

This position he may try to attain or maintain by running the race and running it according to the rules; he is then the genuine competitor, the more insistent on the strictness of the rules and on their observance by himself as well as by others the more critical he is of the reality of victory and supremacy.

(*b*) THE MALIGNANT DESTROYER

Another, especially if he cannot win in the above way, will see to it either that there is no race or that those of his fellow-competitors who are formidable are in some way or other disabled; or he will magnify himself by the contemplation of the defeat of others. He is the blight of all initiative, resource, growth and progress of those about him; or he is the spiteful rejoicer in others' failure, defeat, humiliation, ignominy, or any suffering or loss which he can regard as one or other of these. At his grossest he will inflict these himself: he is then the bully, the sadist, the destroyer, in many forms. Thus only, if at all, can we explain that most irrational and most opaque but also most widespread of all the forms of evil, the one which, at least attenuated, subtly qualified and disguised and perhaps only momentary, is present in every human being—the delight in cruelty and destruction for their own sake. Next to creating, marring or destroying is the activity or expression which most fills the agent with the sense of his own self, mighty and towering above the other.[1] Perhaps even, this sense (an

[1] *Cf.* the following imaginative account of the ingredients entering into the state of mind of the man who runs *amok*: "But stronger than even that desire [the desire for death] is the ecstasy of mortal combat, a defiance flung to all humanity. One against all, and he the attacker. And before he dies, he must kill once more, all his ultimate strength must be exhausted in this savage, thrilling, delicious sport. . . ." And again: "This frenzy that is called *amok* may well be a revenge, a self-liberation through revolt; a soul too sensitive to suggestion, humiliated by its own conscious enslavement, at last turns in upon itself, and accumulates so much energy that only the faintest pretext is needed to release it. What follows is not madness, it is a lucid frenzy that can utilise all the resources of guile" (*The Soul of Malaya*, by Henri Fauconnier, translated

intoxication significantly akin to madness, and on the brink of passing over into it, as in a Caligula, for example) he does not get at all from creation, which always seems to bring with it the atmosphere of the mysterious, the greater than oneself, the impenetrable and the unmasterable, and certainly requires the subjection of the agent to something; on the other hand to reduce something to nothing (or apparently at least to nothing), to unravel it, to pull it to pieces, above all to do this to another person and to feel the terror one inspires in him, fills one at least with the illusion (invincible to most) of complete mastery over the thing's or person's being and of complete insight into the mystery of its or his existence. Hence we may perhaps say that the expression which gives supremely the sense of one's own self and of *nothing but one's own self* is marring or destroying. And this is one of the most important senses in which egotism, and the evil which is it or comes from it, may be said to be merely nihilistic. Such a destroyer we may call the malignant egotist. His motto is: *Oderint dum metuant.* With him we may place also the criminal, who will be treated at greater length elsewhere.

(*c*) THE BENIGNANT DESTROYER

Opposed to him in expression but not at all different in spirit or purpose (unconscious) is the benignant egotist, who is

by Eric Sutton, pp. 225, 226-227). *Cf.* also the quotation from Papini (above, p. 88): "To destroy a people or create a new species is the same." In his later book, *Gog* (Firenze, 1931), under *Cosmocrator*, the same author portrays a character who considers that for anyone above the common ruck the only respectable career, since he cannot become a Demiourgos, is that of a Demon, and whose ambition is to destroy at least a race, starve a continent, turn into his menials all the great of the world, in order to avenge himself for the despairing sense of his own unbearable littleness; under *Finto assasinio* and *Ripulitura difficile* he shows the same man indulging in mimic murder and planning the wholesale destruction of mankind. E. Seillière in *Le Mal Romantique* shows how Romantic literature, which he considers the apotheosis of egotism, culminates in the idealisation of the bully, the murderer, the destroyer, the man who runs *amok*, an idealisation (it may significantly be added) which is continued in the popular cinema. In classical literature the same aspect of egotism (*hubris*) is expressed, unidealised however, in the myth of the Titans.

all for love and kindness, who, by the exercise of charm, personal magnetism, the display of virtues and dazzling talents, by conferring services, by indulgence and devotion, enslaves his victim into abject admiration and disabling dependence, stunting his growth and development. He is the Zeus to a Semele, the Helios to a Phaethon.

DECEPTION. (See pp. 96-97, 251-264.)

Every egotist is a deceiver or liar as regards the fundamental egotistic lie with its postulates. Hence, in very truth, all men are liars. The deceiver is, therefore, not a special type of egotist. The realist is a realist only about the grading, about whether this or that particular should be subsumed under the lie, but not about the lie itself: he is a realist about the question whether this particular riding or shooting or writing comes under honoured or valued riding or shooting or writing, but not about the question whether there is such a thing as honour or value or glory. There can also be a closer and closer approach to realism on this latter question also, an approach which is always checked by the fundamental lie. Egotists differ from each other with respect to the amount and kind of truth they admit and as regards the things they lie about (they have different private Absolutes) and the ways in which they lie.

The lie may be directed chiefly to oneself or be meant principally for home-consumption; it is then self-deception. Or it may be intended chiefly for export; it is then deception of others.

(*a*) DECEPTION OF SELF: ITS PURPOSEFULNESS AND SHIFTS

Self-deception may range from the most trifling, amusing and 'harmless' vanity or conceit or foible to neuroticism and insanity. It is never merely intellectual blindness or error, which (so at least we suppose) is something independent of the subject's wishes, desires or will; it is something carefully

maintained and fought for by the subject himself, as may be seen from his unease, resentment or anger at any attempt to bring the truth home to him, and from the inexhaustible shifts he adopts to stave it off, continually changing tactics, abandoning one position after another, apparently even correcting himself, but always keeping one and the same end in view, the preservation of his fundamental fiction, for which he will sometimes sacrifice everything, including his life. Hence, to come near such an egotist with the truth or with a certain kind of truth is like coming near a bull with a red rag, or like telling the truth to a madman.

The egotist's devices are sometimes incredibly ingenious and subtle. Sometimes, on the other hand, they strike us (especially when, as is often the case, he is in spite of them no fool but endowed with a penetrating intellect) as amazingly crude and puerile: to convince himself that his lie is true he will not shrink even from extorting others' assent to it (their flattery) by force, or from buying it, payment being sometimes in kind, as when flattery is bought by flattery amongst the members of mutual admiration societies.

HERO-WORSHIP

Often the egotist's lie to himself seems to be neither about himself nor for the credit of himself, least of all when it takes the form of hero-worship exalting another human being not only over others but also over himself. The disguise may be simple, as when the worshipper is the hero's parent or child, or stands to him in some other close relationship which will communicate the glory to himself. When it is more elaborate and some scrutiny is required, this scrutiny will show that the hero or the god is made in the image of the worshipper, or that the latter is his impressario, discoverer, maker or prophet, or his especial *protégé* or elect in such a way that the hero or god is ultimately the servant rather than the served. In all

these cases *ad maiorem Dei vel herois gloriam* means ultimately *ad maiorem meam gloriam*. For hero-worship there are very common, and very strong, egotistic motives: the egotist needs to believe that what he regards as perfection, supremacy, or absoluteness is already realised at least in his neighbourhood (if he dare not assert it is in himself), and by being, or imagining himself to be, in one or other of the above-mentioned relationships to the hero he comes to regard that perfection as really more his than his hero's, while he feels dispensed from the necessity of effort on his own part and, above all, feels spared the risk of that effort's failure in his own or others' eyes. Such worship (offered to Dictators) is threatening to become the main characteristic of our own times, and therefore we have a special need to try to understand its nature. But for such understanding we must perhaps go, not to a contemporary, but to a poet of another age, to Cowper, who, in *The Task*, reflects as follows upon the devotees of the autocrat:

> "They roll themselves before him in the dust,
> Then most deserving in their own account
> When most extravagant in his applause,
> As if exalting him they raised themselves:
> . . . . .
> They demi-deify and fume him so."

PREJUDICES

The same concern with the self, with one's own standing, will be discovered under, and will explain, self-deceptions apparently the most impersonal. Thus, one man will defend to himself a false intellectual dogma, professedly because its abandonment will mean the undermining of the whole of science, but really because it will involve the giving up of all that he has made his and will entail the acknowledgment of his fallibility; for the same reasons and with similar pretexts another will beguile himself about an old institution, practice

or philosophy, about a *Lebensanschauung* or *Weltanschauung*. Thus may a lie be persisted in, once espoused. But its original espousal may also be egotistic: to feed his good opinion of himself an idealist will convince himself of the original perfection or ultimate perfectibility of mankind,[1] while to find excuses for himself and also to be in the critic's position of superiority a cynic will tell himself that men are essentially, and can be nothing but, mean, dishonest and rotten. Egotism may be at the bottom of obstructive conservatism with its persecution of the new truth; but it may also (for it loves opposites, as we have seen) be the inspirer of disruptive progressivism with its contempt for the old truth. Through it is preserved the rotten old orthodoxy, and through it also flourishes the rank new heresy.

SENTIMENTALITY

All these self-deceivers, or some of them, would be called sentimentalists even from the egotistic standpoint. For their sentiment is about 'false values': they are unrealistic in their subsuming certain items under the absolute, worshipping, for example, as effective a rotten old institution which is not effective. But from the standpoint which transcends egotism all worshipping and valuing is false; therefore, all the sentiment (all the affective aspect) in any laudatory or culpatory attitude is sentimentality, being vitiated by falsehood; it is a more or less hidden form of self-complacence, and this is what all sentimentality is at bottom.

[1] Augustine explains his long persistence in Manichæism by his reluctance to acknowledge imperfection and evil in himself: "Malebam etiam te opinari mutabilem, quam me non hoc esse, quod tu [*i.e.* Deus] es. . . . Contendebam magis incommutabilem tuam substantiam coactam errare, quam meam mutabilem sponte deviasse et poena errare confitebar" (*Confessions*, IV. xv.). E. Seillière (*Le Mal Romantique*, xxi.) says: "L'égotisme se couronnant presque toujours de quelque foi mystique, nous avons assez montré que celle de la bonté naturelle de l'homme fut dictée à Rousseau par ses latentes ambitions de classe, par l'élan de ses désirs de conquête."

BOREDOM

A kind of opposite to sentimentality is boredom.[1] (What is true of all egotistic opposites is true of it: they are all at bottom the same in so far as they are all nihilistic, and each arises as a reaction to its opposite.) It is the modern counterpart of the old accidie or *tædium cordis*, and can be the mother of the most diverse wrongs and perversions and most monstrous or ridiculous fictions in which refuge is sought from living and working. For it involves thinking oneself too good for one's actual conditions or work. Its cause may be weakness and an inability to cope with one's circumstances, at least in such a way as to satisfy one's egotistic ideal of oneself. But the opposite may also be its cause—namely, great ability bringing surfeit of success but also disillusionment or a realisation that nothing possesses the absoluteness for the sake of which it is sought. The core of boredom may be defined as the unreadiness or inability to absolutise anything determinate although one has not transcended absolutising or freed oneself from the need and impulse to absolutise; it is the *nil admirari* attitude without the realisation of the absurdity of admiration or without a hold on that which can replace admiration; it comes from loving oneself as Absolute in a determinate world while being too critical or too weak to assert the absolutised self as this or that determination (to assert oneself as the Absolute in virtue of being a writer or ruler or climber, etc.). At its widest it is a kind of quasi-metaphysical protest against, or indictment of, the very conditions of existence or of being or of 'the Universe,' for which one thinks oneself too good. Such is the Byronic posturing of much Romantic literature. "Je méritais un meilleur sort; si bon, comment ne puis-je trouver des hommes tels que moi," writes the apostle of romantic boredom, Stendhal, in a letter to

[1] Placed here under self-deception because to think oneself too good for one's circumstances is always to deceive oneself.

his sister. It has of course its own sentimentality: for example, the dropping of tears for the noble soul, great man or rare genius (oneself at bottom) unappreciated by the harsh world; only, it rejects received or commonly approved sentimentalities. Thus, the *nil admirari* pose or boredom of our own age is a reaction both against Victorian and against pre-War sentimentality and idealism. Yet, of course, we ourselves are full of sentimentalities: we are sentimental about not being critical or sentimental, about being bored, brutal or cynical, about calling a spade a spade, about discussing sex freely, and, indeed, about being able to perform the sexual act; we are sentimental about these things in the sense that we feel a lot of uncalled-for sentiment or excitement about them without which a good deal of contemporary literature would not exist.

NEUROTICISM

The neurotic is just a self-deceiving egotist. One feels inclined to define him as the egotist who goes to the doctor and about whom the latter writes books. He goes to the doctor, however, because he has reached a point where he can no longer adjust his egotism to the egotisms of others (his neuroticism is in too great conflict with that of the rest of the world). The difference between his egotism and that of the others is most outstanding when it expresses itself in a bodily illness or disability which is not due to bodily causes but to the egotism itself. Speaking generally—for each case requires an individual description—this illness is meant to procure him an *ægrotat* or, to use Adler's phrase, "a certificate of illness," so that he may be able to tell himself (and others) that he is really great but that his greatness is prevented by this illness from manifesting itself in achievement. The illness is real and not feigned, but it is purposive, and though the patient goes to the doctor (to give verisimilitude to the whole play), he fights against being cured. The purpose, like all the egotistic lying discussed, is only in the

unconscious, but what this means will have to be discussed elsewhere.

INSANITY AND GENIUS. (See pp. 114-115.)

Insanity has already been described as the most drastic means adopted by the egotist to establish and maintain the lie within his soul, as the cure he chooses for the poison of truth and criticism; it consists of destroying or disabling the very instrument of criticism—namely, the brain or its critical function. If this account is true of insanity or of some insanity—that is, if the impairment of the brain is purposed, and is not the cause, but the effect, of the insanity or psychosis (the egotism) —we have here an explanation of the difficulty of curing the insane: it is difficult to cure a patient who most furiously wills not to be cured, who has, indeed, adopted insanity as a cure against sanity. We also get some insight into the alleged special affinity between the genius and the madman. The genius is akin to the madman only as the most ordinary person and those who are ordinarily called sane are akin to him. Ordinary 'sanity' is simply insanity adjusted to the insanities of others by the help of objective criticism which yet is not extended to the root of insanity—namely, to the ambition for absoluteness or to megalomania. The genius, however, differs from the ordinary man in this: genius is great power, and the possession of power may bring with it the lust for more and more power; hence in the genius the will that he is the Absolute, which is no different in him from what it is in the dullest Philistine and most incompetent egotist, may become more operative and at first also seem to have more support from fact. But it is essentially a mad idea which no fact but only fiction can support. Unfortunately for the genius, however, his speciality consists in a special development of the instrument of criticism, the brain. Hence, much as he would, he cannot so easily accept fiction as the ordinary man. If he is to have the advantages

and beatitude of the latter, he must destroy his brain or its critical functioning. This sometimes he does, and he is then insane. But, of course, not all geniuses become insane. Those who have done so have been mostly men whose works of genius have been a celebration of the absolutist or megalomaniac ambition (and all ambition is at bottom this) as that from which man *should not* free himself.[1]

(*b*) DECEPTION OF OTHERS

To the class of egotists whose lie is meant more for export than for home-consumption belong: the malicious or destructive critic and the calumniator or slanderer, who aim at the belittling of others in the opinion of their fellows that they themselves may stand therein the higher; the *laudator temporis acti*, who, if he cannot make men think him great, will at least have them find greatness only in the past and not in his living rivals (all contemporaries at least are to him his rivals); the impostor or charlatan of all kinds, the crowd-compeller, the false teacher or prophet or Messiah (the most widely disastrous of all egotists).

Between the egotistical self-deceiver and the egotistical deceiver of others the difference is by no means as great as might be implied by this designation of them. The former can believe in his lie only if he can make others believe in it, and in trying to deceive himself he must try to deceive others also: indeed we have seen that to fortify his own belief in his lie he will even extort or buy their verbal assent to it; still more then would he have them really believe in it. Thus, the defenders of false doctrines (a Rousseau, an Augustine), though their

[1] In the last two paragraphs, more than in the rest of this work, the writer speaks as one having no authority. He has done some reading on Psychopathology, a very controversial subject, and has moulded his speculations with the help of Adler. (But his own very untechnical account must not be taken as doing justice to the latter.) If Adler's theory of neuroses and psychoses is right, Psychopathology must become a branch of Ethics, or Ethics a branch of Psychopathology.

chief concern is with their upholding them in their own minds, also teach them and preach them and vigorously proclaim them from the house-tops to others. On the other hand, he who would deceive others gets his main motive-power from the lie established first, to some extent at least, in his own soul [1]; at any rate in the process of imposing upon others he comes to impose upon himself, and he never succeeds completely in doing the first unless he also does the second even if only incompletely. Hence, as our perception matures we realise that it is naïve to look upon any great charlatan (a Cagliostro, for example) as merely a victimiser of others and not also his own victim. The difference between the self-deceiver and the deceiver of others is this: in the first the imposture upon others is incidental and instrumental to self-deception, while in the second self-deception is incidental and instrumental to the deception of others.

[1] Of course there is merely egoistic lying, lying in the service of appetition (for pleasure, comfort, etc.), lying for gain; to this lying self-deception is not necessary. But the egotistic liar (whom we are here considering) lies for glory, and he *must* deceive himself, for he cannot care for others' opinions of his greatness if he allows himself to see clearly that he is not what he has made them think him to be. Molière's Tartuffe is an impostor mainly of the first kind, and hence self-deceived very little, if at all. Jules Romain's Knock, on the other hand, deceiving for glory as much as for gain, and very subtle indeed, takes himself in nearly as much as his clients.

CHAPTER V

ALTEREGOTISM, COLLECTIVE EGOTISM AND PHARISAISM

I. ALTEREGOTISM

AUTONOMY = HETERONOMY

The egotist on earth is the Warrior, happy only as the Warrior. He must have his enemy. In this sense, therefore, he is always 'other-regarding.' The world is indispensable to him —indispensable as an enemy, and as a mirror and measure. So indispensable, indeed, that egotism is synonymous with what has significantly been called 'worldliness.' [1] The ambivalence or self-contradictionness of all egotism is shown not least in this: he who wills that he is the god and master of his world is its slave with all his soul in a way in which no legally owned human being need ever be the slave of his master, and he who is self-centred, always living for himself and with himself, and always thinking of himself, never lives for himself and with himself and is always thinking of others and of the thinking of others; in short, the aim after complete autonomy results in complete heteronomy. For what would be the life of this god without his worshippers and the incense of their sacrifice? What the life of the worshipper without his god or hero? How could the despot live without his subjects, the patron without his toadies, the slave without his master, the crowd-compeller without his crowd and the breath of popular favour which is his life-breath, the charlatan without his dupes, the false prophet without his followers to testify to his greatness by canonisation and his persecutors to testify no less by martyrisation, the rebel

[1] "And what is worldliness but snobbishness?" (Thackeray, *The Book of Snobs*, chap. xii.).

without the old society to triumph over and the new to hail him as its creator, the sadist without his victims, the criminal without society at large to assert himself over and the smaller society of his gang to assert himself with, the solitary without the madding crowd to be far from? Even the madman, who most seeks, and best attains to, complete isolation, shuts himself off with an imaginary court.

And yet, because the heaven of solitariness, such as our myth described, is the egotist's original home which in his depths he still remembers and to which he ever harks back, relationship is to him a mere *pis-aller*—he is other-regarding and social *per accidens* only, and true communion is unknown to him. The world is both essential to him and an intrusion and impediment; he ties himself to it and yet repels it. His love is also hatred and his hatred is also love.

'LOVE'

Thus any form or emotion or sentiment of egotism (including hatred, resentment, envy, jealousy, contempt) unites one individual to another, even though it be by imprisoning them both in a common hell. But less paradoxically unifying (in a union which is apparently of heaven and not of hell and in which each tries to satisfy, instead of to thwart, the other) would seem to be that egotism which along with egoism forms such a large portion of what is commonly called love, and which therefore deserves to be described as *alteregotism*, corresponding to *alteregoism* or the other-regarding aspect of egoism.

(*a*) PARENTAL AND FILIAL LOVE

In the love and in the protection-dependence relation between parent and child we have already indicated by anticipation how the parent may obtain egotistic satisfaction from being worshipped and from moulding the child after his own mind and in his own image, and how egotism (often of the

'benignant' kind) can lead to the enslavement and stunting of the child and can make of the family that fatal hell which it so often becomes.[1] The egotistic satisfaction of the child is that of hero-worship: he worships one who is, indeed, a god or hero far above himself, but who, as his source, is nevertheless somehow identical with himself, and the centre of whose universe moreover is himself, the humble worshipper; and he is as much bent on enslaving (by love, worship, obedience) his god (more often his goddess) as is the latter on enslaving him. Often the relation is reversed and the parent worships the child, in reality worshipping himself as the author of, and therefore as greater than, the young godling.

(*b*) SEX-LOVE

But the most egotistic love can be, and generally is, sex-love, whether in or out of marriage. Either one of the partners becomes the god or hero or master and the other the worshipper or willing slave, or the two form a mutual admiration society in an inner isolation from the world as complete almost as that of the madman. Indeed, next to madness this kind of love is the egotist's surest stronghold.[2] It is because egotism can enter so largely in sex, because the sex-experience both physical and psychical is desired not simply as experience but as a symbol of standing or of victory, that cruelty to the point even of destruction (whether to the partner or to a rival) so often goes with it; it is because of this that the sex-emotion is most clearly characterised by 'the war of the opposites' or 'ambivalence.'[3] Hence too it is that sex, which as a mere

[1] P. 64.

[2] In Meredith's *The Egoist* what frightens Clara Middleton most is that Willoughby will continually talk to her of marriage as a means of shutting out the "base, ignoble, materialist, soulless" world.

[3] Which, therefore, has been best expressed by a poet of love, Catullus, in the famous epigram:

"Loving, I hate. 'Why so?' you ask. I know
Not why. My torment 'tis to feel it so."

appetition is powerful, indeed, yet simple, brief, periodic and easily satisfied, not to say sated, plays so much larger a part with humans (generally more egotistic than just appetitional) than with animals, with civilised people than with savages (in whom it is chiefly an appetition), with women (in whom it is the chief and almost the sole weapon for self-assertion or conquest) than with men, in literature (because the complexities of egotism make interesting reading) than in life. Hence also in the women at any rate (but perhaps also in some Don Juans [1]) in whose life it plays the largest part, that part is by no means always proportionate to its strength as an appetition, coquettes (those who use sex to make conquests) being as a rule free from the urgency of mere lust (appetition), which would in fact militate against their success.

It is his perception of the egotism of so-called love (both sexual and other) that inspires Mr Bernard Shaw to utter diatribes against love in general and to refuse it a place in the best experience: "I come to you and say that I love you. That means I have come to take possession of you. I come with the love of a lioness and eat you up and make you a part of myself. From this time you will have to think, not of what pleases you, but of what pleases me. I will stand between you and yourself, between you and God. Is not that a terrible tyranny? Love is a devouring thing. Can you imagine heaven with love in it?" [2]

[1] "His feeling for her . . . was nothing but a cruel vanity. Lust itself was subordinated to this icy passion. . . . Madame was the first lady in the land by right not only of birth and position but of charm and character. De Vardes did not much care whether she became his mistress or not, but was determined that before this happened every person in the Court should believe she was" (*Royal Flush*, by Margaret Irwin, p. 268). De Vardes was the historical prototype of Molière's Don Juan, who is shown as lustful indeed, but as above all an Alexander who could wish "qu'il y eût d'autres mondes, pour y pouvoir étendre mes conquêtes amoureuses," and for whom "il n'est rien de si doux que de triompher de la résistance d'une belle personne" (Acte I., scène 2).

[2] *The Adventures of the Black Girl in her search for God.*

II. Collective Egotism

ITS GENERAL TRAITS

Pride of family, pride of class, caste, trade or profession, pride of sex, pride of race and, loudest in our own times, national pride speak to us of collective egotism. This egotism is concerned, unlike collective egoism, not merely with the existence, ease and comfort of the group, but with its supremacy or superiority, with its honour, glory or prestige.

In the individual it is the most potent factor making for the fulfilment by him of the ways, customs, laws, in short, 'fixations' of his group—the ways with which the group identifies itself and which it absolutises as the real reality, as the high contrasted with the low. This fulfilment, we have said, is secured by egoism in so far as the fixations have become habits in the individual and their fulfilment is that of habits in him.[1] Egoism is, however, not sufficient. In moments of reflection, hesitation and temptation, and, indeed, throughout the whole process which leads to the formation of habits and which is known as education, it is reinforced by this collective egotism. In the next chapter we shall show the life of a community as the mutual equilibration of many egotisms; here we must try to see its working in the individual.

Smith will act or will not act in a certain way because it is or is not 'right' or the way he 'ought to act.' Which means, according to the individual case: because it is or is not the way of the Smiths; because it is or is not good form, in good taste, gentlemanly (a term which has never quite lost its class connotation), the thing done, fashionable, civilised, modern and un-Victorian; because it is or is not etiquette; because it is or is not 'white'; because it is or is not English; because it is or is not manly (as contrasted with womanly); because it is or is

See pp. 69-72.

not in accordance with the dignity of a human being (regard for humanity being the widest and also the shallowest and vaguest collective egotism in proportion as humanity is a wide and indefinite group); because he will not let down in his person his family, his class or caste, his race, his country, his sex, his species, or—which is the same thing—because he will not let himself down, because he will not lose caste or face, or descend from the high to the low. When he does descend, the voice of public condemnation and scorn casts him forth into the world of Outer Darkness, as low or odd, as un-Smithian, or ungentlemanly, or unprofessional, or un-English, as un-this or un-that. What is worse, even should he escape detection by others, this voice speaks condemnation within himself; he casts himself out, or at least he experiences a struggle, strain and unease within himself—shame, humiliation, remorse. For he has made this voice his voice or the voice of his higher self. He has set up two selves within himself and now there is war between them. This war is his distress, remorse and shame. On the other hand, if he fulfils the social code, if he keeps to the highway of respectability, he feels the glow of self-approval and expects the praise of others; for offenders and dissenters he has scorn, contempt, condemnation, censure—attitudes which are also affirmations of his own superiority. He is Mrs Grundy, that is, the social or collectivist egotist whose standard of reference is conformity to the group, whose Absolute is the idol of the tribe.

ITS CO-OPERATION WITH INDIVIDUALIST EGOTISM

In spite of appearances to the contrary, there need be no gap or contradiction between individualist egotism and collective egotism in the individual, between a man's claiming supremacy for himself (thereby separating himself from his fellows) and his joining with them in making a claim for the group. Or if there is a gap it is one which can be easily bridged.

For the individual may aspire to become in practice, and to be proclaimed by his fellows (in the *rôle* of leader or public benefactor), the incarnation *par excellence* of the divinity he worships. And if only a few can obtain this recognition from others, many more can and do obtain it from themselves, in their own imaginations. The American clergyman who is alleged to have boasted: "The most important country in the world is America; the most important city of America is Boston; the most important Bostonians are the members of the Congregation of the Church of M.; the most important man of the congregation is the Minister, and I am the Minister," is typical of all collective egotists.[1] The union between them partakes both of the fictional and of the ambivalent nature of all egotism: it is an impossible mutual identification which is also a mutual separation. They join to set up a god whom each then severally and tacitly identifies with himself, to swell the chorus of praise which each then severally and tacitly arrogates to himself. Assuredly he whose voice is loudest in the common glorification of his country or class would have to admit, if he examined himself, that the object of his praise is not altogether other than himself or something which inspires him with humility; and that in his heart of hearts the representative *par excellence* of this glorious country or class is not poor Smith or the all too imperfect Jones, but just himself. Assuredly also orators of all times have known that praise of their hearers' country or class (or some larger or smaller group) is something that intoxicates each one of the audience with the sense of his own greatness as much as does personal flattery. Egotists can, and most commonly do, hunt in herds for the food for their conceit, which latter is not a whit the less individualist because of this

[1] A grimmer and an actual example is the Turkish dictator, Mustafa Kemal, who, perhaps resembling in this at least all dictators, both maintains that all civilisation and all the civilised nations are Turkish in origin and proclaims: "I am Turkey. To destroy Me is to destroy Turkey" (*Grey Wolf*, by H. C. Armstrong, pp. 270 and 314).

gregariousness. Not least energetically does the pack hunt for that most poisonous of all foods, deception or self-deception. It is from the working of collective egotism, from 'loyalty' to family, class, country, to a Church or profession, from the operation of mass-suggestion, of the Press, of Public Opinion and of the education of the young, that we could have drawn the most striking illustrations of the flourishing of the egotistic lie and of the persecution and suppression of the truth which we have already mentioned. It is in this particular form of egotism, in this *suppressio veri et suggestio falsi*, that the individual most clearly needs the help of his fellows, their shouting which is to drown the voice of truth; unless he chooses to retire within the ivory tower of madness he must have others to work with or upon.

INTERNAL ATTRACTION THROUGH EXTERNAL REPULSION

It may be that in the majority of cases collective egotism brings about in the individual what we have called modified egotism, in which absolute egotism works only underground. As far as his explicit surface consciousness is concerned, he may be content to be great along with equals and even under superiors, as a member of a great community. Yet even so, supremacy (and that with the minimum of effort on his part or with none) he still wins—over the members of every other group. For if his group makes him acknowledge a certain kinship, and enter into a certain union (the egotistic identification which is also separation), with some of his fellows (the others of the group), it rewards him by asserting multitudinously, uncompromisingly and finally his absolute difference and supremacy in relation to a far greater number of his fellows —the vast number of all those who are outside his group. This double function is best illustrated by, and also best explains, the operation of fashion. Fashion seems at first a mere instrument of conformity whereby the individual is made

to sink into the mass in all the details of his life [1]; it seems therefore to disprove the theory that everyone craves for distinction. But it is notorious that it is also a sure means of differentiation, distinction, elevation, and that there would be no charm in being fashionable—that is, in conforming to the ways of one's group—if fashion did not also mark one out from all those outside the group. The group has over against it other groups, and its internal cohesion and attraction (between its members, such as it is) is often directly proportionate to its external repulsion of these others. For group egotistically repels group just as individual repels individual.

CLIQUE EGOTISMS

Within what in our own days is the largest and most significant organised group, the nation or the State, this egotism between group and group manifests itself in many forms which are purely vestigial and the significance of which is merely symbolic so that they are treated more as material for humour than for apprehension or serious reflection. Such are the pretensions to superiority of school over school, college over college, profession over profession, club over club, any one coterie or clique over another or over all others. Unimportant and harmless as these have been rendered in their outward operation, they nevertheless may sometimes illustrate better than anything else the pure essence of egotism, its bare exclusiveness, separation and emptiness. Thus, the chief merit and function of many a club is its exclusiveness, the exclusiveness being more important than the ground of the exclusiveness. Thus also, adolescents particularly, in whom human egotism like all human nature shows most in the raw, will constitute themselves

[1] " There is always a fashionable taste; a taste for driving the mail—a taste for acting Hamlet—a taste for philosophical lectures—a taste for the marvellous —a taste for the simple—a taste for the devil—a taste for taste itself, or for essays on taste; but no gentleman would be so rash as to have a taste of his own, or his last winter's taste, or any taste but the fashionable taste " (The Hon. Mrs Pinmoney, in Peacock's *Melincourt*).

into a body which will itself decree wherein supremacy shall consist (in the wearing of a badge, for instance), and whose sole function as a body will then be to prohibit and prevent by force anyone but the members from aspiring and attaining to this supremacy. In sheer nullity or negativity, in the assertion of the bare or qualityless self, egotism can go no further.

CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS

Far less harmless and risible is the egotism of class, or class-consciousness. To what extravagance men may go in their assertion of the separateness or the absolute otherness of their class is perhaps most forcibly illustrated by the claim of the Polynesian nobility that they are of a different species from the commoners.[1] But for a similar sentiment, even though not expressed in exactly the same terms, we need not go to Polynesian savages. It has flourished more or less vigorously in all the ages of our European civilisation in which class distinctions have counted for anything, and in proportion to its strength at any time it has approached the denial of any relations between the higher and the lower class other than those between persons on the one hand and animals or things on the other. Nor is the verbal expression which it has received so very different from the Polynesian. Do we not speak of 'blue blood'? And if the 'blueness' is metaphorical, this means that it is more important, and implies a more pervasive difference, than the literal blueness. In our own days this belief in blue blood has perhaps died or is now dying. But it is fast being replaced by the gospel of the black blood or black heart of the bourgeoisie as contrasted with the red superiority of the blood of the working class. Indeed, it is in a description

[1] Westermarck, *A Short History of Marriage*, p. 60. *Cf.* the opinion once (perhaps now also) held that negroes ought to be treated as a class "with orang-outangs as a different species of the same genus" (R. Coupland, *The British Anti-Slavery Movement*). The most flagrant example is, of course, the Hindu attitude towards the Untouchables. In both these cases the egotism is partly of class, partly of race.

of the 'faith' which in the Russian revolution led men the least brutal by nature to commit or to tolerate the worst atrocities on the 'bourgeoisie,' that can be found the best support for even the most extreme statements here made about egotistic separation. It is thus that Essad-Bey, in *Secrets of the O.G.P.U.* (p. 42), analyses that faith: "The class enemies constituted a separate species of humanity. They were far worse than hereditary foes, heretics, witches or lunatics. The class enemy was hell incarnate, the hostile element *per se*; he was worse than nothing." A similar though less robust faith is deemed essential by Plato for his very class-conscious ideal State, in which the population is to be brought up to believe in the metallurgical, if not sanguinary or specific, differences of the classes, while Aldous Huxley, going a step further in his *Brave New World*, satirically pictures such a faith turned into fact in a society which will be based on ectogenesis and in which a kind of blood-difference between the classes will be artificially secured by pre-natal conditioning.

NATIONAL EGOTISM

Of all group-egotisms the most serious and the most dangerous is that which animates nation against nation. It is the egotism of the individual writ large, with all its characteristics which we have tried to exemplify: the assertion of the self (the collective self in this case) as absolute, not in virtue of any particular quality or totality of qualities, but just in virtue of its bare indeterminate selfhood—the assertion, therefore, of emptiness or nothingness; the cheating which consists in setting up a common measure and then identifying the measure with the self to be measured; the claiming to have no community with those others with whom comparison is nevertheless challenged; the continual search for separation from others (other nations) together with the search for identification by their forceful incorporation or by the forceful imposition upon

them of an identical government or civilisation; the quest not for the satisfaction of appetitions but for position and for the power of getting this acknowledged, which power is in the last resort (especially with nations) physical force. All this, it is true, is to a certain extent disguised, during the brief intervals of peace at any rate, by diplomacy and by the amenities of international communication, and it is even modified by the influence of those individuals in every nation who have transcended this point of view, just as to a larger extent and more permanently and profoundly it is disguised and modified in the relations between individual and individual. But deep down in the collective consciousness (or in the consciousness of the majority of the members) this egotism lives on, always fed rather than starved, and in times of conflict given full rein and in fact relied on as the chief motive-force. In all its crudeness it might perhaps be expressed as follows: 'We are we and they are they. *Therefore* we are the chosen people, the representatives of God, God Himself; they are mean, low, worthless. We will fight it out. If we win, we prove our argument. If we lose (which is impossible), we also prove it, for their victory can be due merely to cunning, vileness, devilishness.'

WAR. (See pp. 109-112, 154-155, 172, 187, 237-239.)

It is this attitude which is the primary, or at any rate the least easily tractable, cause of war. If war were always due only to appetition—that is, to hunger, greed, desire for booty; if its origin were always such as Peacock describes it in his famous *War-song of Dinas Vawr*,[1] then we might look forward to its abolition in the near future through the appeal to appetition itself by experience, which teaches us that victory,

[1] "The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter."
The Misfortunes of Elphin, chap. xi.

like defeat, brings with it only greater hunger and leanness. But the fat fruits of victory form with the majority of the members of a nation only a secondary or supporting motive; largely they are conjured up in the imagination by the desire for victory itself, and are desired chiefly as the symbol of that victory. War is largely for honour, for glory, for self-assertion as an end in itself—for the feeling of aggrandisement, importance and intenser living, experienced by each individual of the group. It is, as is often enough argued, rooted in 'human nature'—that is, in egotism. A fundamental characteristic of that nature is that it unites individuals in groups the internal attraction of which is directly proportionate to their external repulsion, as is manifested most clearly, though not solely, by patriotism, which reaches its zenith in war-time, when the food which brings love (between the members of the same nation) to so rare a growth is largely hatred (for the other nation). Hence, if war is abolished between nations it is likely enough to break out between some other groups (between classes perhaps), so long as group-life continues (which it must do as long as there are human beings), and so long as it is still based on 'human nature' or egotism (which it need not always be); unless indeed—an unlikely contingency—the danger of the annihiliation of mankind through war should in the future present itself to men's minds more permanently and palpably than it does now. Yet even such a thought might not act as a deterrent; for, if an individual can act on the principle: 'Let the world including myself perish, provided my enemy also perishes,' still more can a group so behave. This is not to say that the *complete* disappearance of war is impossible in principle, but only that it probably will not occur except through the real moralisation of mankind or through a 'change of heart.' This change was not necessary for its partial disappearance, for its abolition between clans, for example, when these became unified into a nation. For this modification was effected with

the help of egotism (in fact, by conquest) or at any rate not in the teeth of egotism, to which were still left its ultimate expression, force and destruction (between the larger groups or nations though not between the clans), and the power of internal attraction through external repulsion. But if the moralisation of mankind is unnatural, it is not therefore impossible. Morality is unnatural only in the sense that we are not born with it nor grow up to it as to puberty or to old age; in the sense that we are by nature such as to become or be made moral, it is, as Aristotle says, natural; certainly whatever it enjoins is possible, and therefore the disappearance of war is also possible.

War is, indeed, the law of human nature and of the physical universe. But every such law is simply a habit. Every habit is a bad habit, and even the worst habits are not incurable.

III. Pharisaism.[1]

General traits

The pharisee or the prig differs from Mrs Grundy or the social or collectivist egoist only in that he does not seem to refer to any definite society or to its code, nor to covet its applause or fear its condemnation. He acts from self-respect, or in obedience to his own conscience, or (so he alleges) from respect for the Moral Law and in obedience to God or to the Law of the Universe. And on the ground of being *integer vitæ scelerisque purus* or 'righteous and firm of purpose' he is proud of, and pleased with, himself and suffused with that glow of a good conscience on which moralists rhapsodise so priggishly and the experiencing of which should surely be a sign of an unsound character; while towards others he is intolerant, censorious, overbearing.

[1] This section is not intended as an attack on the Pharisees of history.

ARISTOTLE'S 'HIGH-SOULED MAN'

Not unjustly Aristotle is accused of having unintentionally portrayed such a prig in his picture of the high-souled man, who, possessed of perfect virtue and knowing it, "will rejoice moderately at great honours conferred on him by good men, thinking that he is getting only what is his due or even less than this—for there can be no honour adequate to perfect virtue—and will accept what they give him because they have nothing greater to give him; to whom nothing is great and who therefore is not given to admiration; who is rightly contemptuous, and free of speech and truthful because he is contemptuous; who likes conferring benefits but is ashamed of receiving them, and remembers the former but not the latter, since the one is a mark of the superior, the other of the inferior."[1]

THE STOIC SAGE

He is but the forerunner of that far more extravagant prig, the Stoic 'wise man,' who could feel himself towering above a world of vicious fools and madmen, himself alone (or with a few peers only) truly a king, truly rich, handsome, free, invincible and happy, a god or equal to God, nay (according to Seneca[2]), greater than God, since the latter is only outside the endurance of evils while the wise man is above it. With such an ideal to serve as the motive-power for its followers, and with pride scarcely ever absent from its most characteristic utterances, Stoicism cannot escape the charge of having come not so much to change men as to teach some of them so to apportion satisfaction between the different elements of their human nature as to safeguard and fortify their egotism always, even in the most unfavourable circumstances.[3]

[1] *Eth. Nic.*, 1123*b* 1 ff. [2] *Prov.*, i. 6, 4.

[3] *Cf.* La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*, xxi. (in early editions): "Les philosophes, et Senèque sur tous, n'ont point ôté les crimes par leurs préceptes: ils n'ont fait que les employer au bâtiment de l'orgueil."

SECTARIAN ETHICS

Nor in this does it stand alone. It has had worthy rivals in various forms of historical Christianity, as well as in other religions, which have encouraged the individual to seek his own perfection and the salvation of his soul, and in return for the observance of a certain code and the cultivation of certain virtues have promised him special distinction in the eyes of God in an after-life—a distinction to be shared only with those of his own sect and the enjoyment of which was to be enhanced (so he has sometimes been told) by the beatific contemplation of the torments of all those not of his sect, the unregenerate and unfaithful.

SECULARIST ETHICS

A similar taint affects the ethics directly and historically opposed to all religion including all forms of Christianity—the ethics of secularism, rationalism or of the 'Religion of Humanity,' at any rate when, although denying all transcendent significance to morality, they yet desire not to reduce the latter to mere egoism or the satisfaction of appetitions; they then fall back upon human egotism for the motive-power of morality. The most emphatic expression of the spirit which inspires them is perhaps to be found on the one hand in an old essay of Bertrand Russell's, *A Free Man's Worship*,[1] and on the other in some of the hierophantic prefaces of Bernard Shaw. Russell pleads that the fact that the Universe is Godless and goodless does not dim the lustre of our ideals; in other and in less magnificently rhetorical words, we are told that our isolation in a hostile and beastly Universe does not alter, but

[1] The point of view from which that essay (published in *Mysticism and Logic*) was written, Bertrand Russell later gave up, because—and this is significant—he no longer distinguished between morality and egoism. 'Good,' he later defined as what is desired, especially what is desired by the whole of a social group (see *Outline of Philosophy*, chap. xxii.).

rather emphasises, the fact that we are mighty fine fellows, and with the consciousness of our fineness, as well as with the spirit of proud and disdainful defiance and opposition against the Universe (that is, with egotism) to inspire us, we are urged to continue in the pursuit of our ideals. Bernard Shaw proclaims that the Universe has, indeed, had a Creator, but one who has been a bungler until he made us, and that it is for us to put Him and His work right. The attitude of both these writers breathes a pride reminiscent of Stoicism—that of Russell would in fact by some be called Neo-Stoicism [1]—and in the case of both we feel that they would be seriously annoyed if they discovered that there was God who helped or was ready to help us, because this would detract from the glory, distinction or credit of humanity; it would also take away the zest of defying or opposing the Universe. Indeed, if not they, then other writers have explicitly asserted that the moral game is worth the candle only on the condition that it and the merit of the victory are wholly and exclusively ours, that we are the creators of Goodness and the begetters of God. All this is surely egotism *in excelsis*. And egotism it is, and not merely a regard for truth or a cool intellectual difference, that has inspired the warfare by secularist or purely humanistic ethics against religious ethics or ethics associated with any metaphysic in the slightest degree transcendent—marked as that warfare has been by impatience, scorn and the readiness to accuse. Nor is the truth of this statement impugned, but rather it is supported, by the fact that the religious ethics attacked is itself egotistic. It is always the fate of any egotism to arouse either an opposing or a complementary egotism.

[1] Metaphysically, since it regards morality as a defiance of the Universe, this is of course the opposite of the old Stoicism, which defined morality as living in accordance with the Universe or with Nature.

THE PHARISEE AND MRS GRUNDY

The most striking difference between the collectivist egotist and the pharisee is this. The former's Absolute—the idol of the tribe—is a code comprising the most heterogeneous items, all of which are to him on the same level and call forth the same laudatory or culpatory attitudes. He will cast a man out, actually or symbolically, for not being of a good family, for not wearing the right clothes on the right occasion, for not being in the fashion, for not having aspirates or money, in precisely the same way and with precisely the same emotion as for telling a lie or for cheating or bullying. He himself may experience more excruciating shame and remorse for having unwittingly committed a social *faux pas* than for having intentionally lied or cheated. Only in so far as he and his society have been affected by pharisaism or, from a distance at least, by morality is there a difference in his attitudes to certain items —namely, to virtues and actions willed in accordance with certain rules. But the difference, when it is not merely verbal, is purely quantitative: offence in these items entails more of a casting forth, or a casting forth to a greater distance, than offence in the other items, while conformity in them may bring higher elevation than conformity in the others.

The pharisee's Absolute is also a code. But this comprises only virtues and universal 'moral' rules to be carried out in willed actions. To this extent pharisaism has been influenced by morality. Or rather it has distorted the latter into egotism, for genuine morality is not an affair of virtues and rules. The pharisee wills to reserve laudatory and culpatory attitudes, or some of them, only for character and for virtuous actions and their opposites (or actions in accordance with, and actions in violation of, 'moral' rules). Remorse is *par excellence* one of these reserved attitudes. Yet, try as we will, it is difficult to see any but a quantitative difference between the collectivist's

remorse at having unwittingly committed a social *faux pas* and the pharisee's at having voluntarily committed murder or adultery. Even this difference is due purely to training, to a difference in the 'fixation': all remorse, we shall maintain, like every laudatory or culpatory attitude, is egotistic [1] because concerned with the ego's position, and fictional because connected with a fiction, the fiction of the Absolute.

THE EGOTISM OF PHARISAISM

The difference between pharisaism and collective egotism is as nothing compared with the similarity. The latter and, in general, the egotistic traits of pharisaism it is important to emphasise because pharisaism is so often confused or identified with morality, whence the unattractiveness of the term 'morality' to most who have some grasp of reality.

The similarity lies primarily in there being in pharisaism any laudatory and culpatory attitudes at all—forms of absolutising as always—and in the presence in it of a code of virtues and general rules (or a programme of measures), without which, indeed, lauding and condemning, identification and separation, comparing, grading and competition (all of them forms of egotism and all necessary to pharisaism) would not be possible. All the pharisaisms we have mentioned have codes. Indeed, only in the items of their codes do they differ from each other, for in spirit they are all identical—all egotistic. Even Stoicism, apparently so insistent on the fact that morality is a matter of the spirit, in reality reduces itself to a code of a few principal virtues, not to say to one monotonous frozen attitude. The codes of some modern pharisaism comprise mostly some virtues and moral rules selected from the codes of the Christian pharisaisms which they oppose; or they are the programmes of Socialism or Communism or Pacifism or Fascism or æstheticism or vegetarianism or nudism or un-Victorianism. The trouble

[1] See pp. 203-205.

with all of them is not that they are nebulous, as their opponents who refuse to understand them complain, but that they are precise—they are not clouds but rocks, rigid egotistic petrifacts. Whether the items of a code are trivial ('tittles of the Law'), like ritual ablutions or the Hitler salute, or comprehensive, like universal peace and the equitable distribution of external goods along with the cultivation of qualities necessary for the securing of these ideals, they are unalterable and final and the be-all and end-all of life—in short, absolute: besides them nothing else counts or exists, for them everything else is to be sacrificed. (Think, for example, of Communism or Hitlerism.) Every pharisaism is a fanaticism.

Pharisaism cannot concern itself with personality or individuality. The person is simply identified with his virtue or with his adultery or with his being a pacifist or communist or Fascist. As such only he is praised or blamed, loved or hated.

Pharisaism works by identification. The persons within the charmed circle are identified with each other (often compulsorily) by being identified with the carrying out of the absolute code. Whatever he names his Absolute (actually it is always a code or programme), whether 'God,' or 'Reason,' or 'The Moral Law,' or 'The Categorical Imperative,' or 'Humanity,' or 'The Universe,' or 'The State,' the pharisee says, or at least feels, that it is himself or his 'higher or real self,' his 'higher nature or impulses,' his 'pure Will,' etc. And indeed even considered objectively it is at least that of which he is a part: society, or his party, or Humanity. When it is as wide and vague as Humanity it is generally represented by a much narrower circle of a few followers, sympathisers or admirers, if not quite simply by himself.[1]

Pharisaism works also by separation. First, by the separation

[1] W. McDougall seriously thinks that all moral advance consists "in the improvement and refinement of the 'gallery' before which we display ourselves . . . until the 'gallery' becomes . . . in the last resort, one's own critical self standing as the representative of such spectators" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 213-221).

within the identification—that is, by competition and grading or ranking within the charmed circle of the mutually identified. Competition and grading, together with the notions correlative to them of 'merit,' 'desert,' 'worthiness,' are indispensable to it. Thus, just as some regard shooting or climbing or singing or painting as an accomplishment to be competed in, or as a distinction setting them apart from and above others, so Aristotle's virtuous man looks upon virtue: he gives to his friend money, office and even the opportunity for virtuous action, all the time competing with him in a contest (that of virtue) in which he comes out top by his very giving.[1] So also to the Stoic virtue is not only an accomplishment and distinction but the sole one or one summing up all distinctions: the wise man is alone truly a king, truly rich, handsome, free, invincible and happy.

More important is the separation from, or war with, those outside the charmed circle. Each pharisaism lives on the inspiration of the struggle with another antithetical pharisaism —on pride, defiance, rivalry: it is heteronomous. When it has killed its opposite (sometimes by actually killing the opponents), when it is no longer militant but only triumphant, it begins to wither and to die, until a new antagonist springs up, and then it flourishes anew for a time as orthodoxy or the Right *versus* heterodoxy or the Left. (This will undoubtedly happen, if it is not already happening, to Russian Communism.) The war is real war even when it is only one of ideas; and only such benefit or progress accrue from it as can come from any war.

'Pharisaism,' since it has been used synonymously with 'fanaticism,' may also be used for 'idealism'; for every idealism is fanaticism in proportion to its effectiveness; it draws its inspiration from setting up a code or programme as the Absolute. All the 'progress' of civilisation has been due to effective idealism. But because idealism is fanaticism, pharisaism

[1] *Op. cit.*, 1168*b* and 1169*a*.

or egotism, this ' progress ' has been a very queer thing indeed. Whether we study the history of a people, or of art, or of any branch of civilisation, we do not find continuous advance in a straight line consisting of the conservation of the good and of the dropping of the bad. Instead we find continual interference by the quest either for mere difference or for the bare ' more.' Above all we see sheer destruction resulting from opposition —because each idealism is inspired by the struggle against a rival idealism treated as the enemy. (Thus the upheaval in Russia has tried to destroy everything ' bourgeois ' simply because it was ' bourgeois,' that in Germany everything ' liberal ' simply *qua* ' liberal,' and even our own mild reaction against ' Victorianism ' has tended to sweep away everything ' Victorian ' simply because it was ' Victorian.') Everywhere we find the famous ' thesis and antithesis,' but considerably less ' synthesis ' than is dreamed of in Hegelian philosophy. We find growth up to a certain point, ending in arrest and death or destruction and followed by new growth in the opposite direction which also ends in death or destruction. The career of civilisation—because it is the career of egotism—is the Dance of Death.

Because of this, because it is based on ambition, pride, rivalry, defiance, hatred and scorn, though of the ' noble ' kind, pharisaism (fanaticism, idealism) must be declared to be egotism and cannot be identified with, or be given a place in, morality. We can pay tribute to it only in the language of egotism. We can *praise* it. We can say of it: *C'est magnifique*; but we must add: *mais ce n'est pas la morale.*

CHAPTER VI

THE DIFFERENTIATION OF EGOTISM

I. The Relations between Ambition and Appetition

THE DIFFERENTIATORS OF EGOTISM

Such are a very few of the main expressions of egotistic self-love, and each of these could by a finer and more detailed analysis have been subdivided into a thousand nuances. The varieties of egotism are infinite. It can manifest itself in all contraries—in opposite vices, in every vice and its contrary 'virtue,' in the most diverse practices and attitudes: in unmeasured arrogance and conceit and in grovelling abjectness, in domineering and in submission, in cruelty and in kindness, in destruction and in construction, in condemning and in praising, in grasping after possessions and in the giving up of them, in licentiousness and asceticism, in conflict and in co-operation, in solitariness and in sociability, in conformity and in revolt, in criminality and in respectability. "Description cannot keep pace with its shifts and twists, its transformations surpass those of fairy-tale, and its operations those of chemistry. It is present in every state and condition of life; it lives everywhere and on everything; it lives on nothing, and can manage as well in privation as in plenty." [1]

But how comes this infinite variety from the womb of very emptiness or nihilism? For emptiness or nihilism or nothingness we have asserted the essence of egotism or ambition to be, and nothing can be more monotonous and less susceptible of variety than nothingness; hence, in trying to exhibit this essence beneath each different surface, we have inevitably said

[1] Part of La Rochefoucauld's *Pensée* referred to on p. 84.

the same thing every time and have ourselves been monotonous. The variety does not of course come from the egotism or ambition itself. Every pure egotist would be exactly the same as every other pure egotist; for every pure egotist would be too proud to be, or to do, anything. Ambition can itself suggest no action; nor, when it is presented with two contrary courses of action either of which would equally satisfy it—the creation or the destruction of a species, for example—can the principle determining the choice reside in itself. It itself is panurgic. If, nevertheless, an egotist does act and choose, and chooses and acts differently on different occasions and differently from other egotists; if in fact it is precisely his peculiar egotism that chiefly constitutes his *differentia* or his 'character,' the reason is that, however closely he may approximate to being a pure or Uranian egotist, he never is just this and nothing more: he is also an egoist acting appetitionally—that is, seeking merely the satisfaction of his instincts, habits, dispositions, aptitudes; and he and those about him have also the moral *nisus* within. Earthly egotism is supervenient and parasitic upon appetition on the one hand and upon morality on the other. In showing this we shall discuss once more its relation to either, as partly we have already done both expressly and incidentally, and while maintaining that it uses both, we shall at the same time vindicate its autonomy and reassert its distinction from either.

APPETITION NOT THE CAUSE OF EGOTISM

We will treat first of appetition and show it first unaccompanied by egotism and then with egotism supervenient upon it. Suppose that I merely like or desire something: the eating of a food, the climbing of a mountain, the satisfying of a curiosity—any process or experience. If I am merely appetitional I pursue the object so long as my desire or liking lasts, with an energy directly proportionate to my desire or liking,

until I attain it. Attainment brings pleasure and the stilling of that desire for the time being at least. But it does not bring the sense of triumph, of victory or of superiority over something, nor the pride attendant on that sense. On the other hand, non-attainment, though it fills me with dissatisfaction and unrest, does not involve any feeling of defeat, humiliation or inferiority, or anger or repining; it may even simply kill the desire. The encounter with difficulties on the way also may or may not kill it according as it is weak or strong, but certainly it does not rouse any defiance in me or the feeling of being defied, or stubbornness or anger. If I see my neighbour possessing what I covet or the means to it, or attaining where I do not attain, I may take from him what I need. But my taking, like the whole of my action, is simply a means to the desired end, and though I may sometimes improperly say that I envy him when I mean simply that I would like to have or to do what he has or does, I do not experience envy or jealousy proper—a 'sinking' feeling or a feeling of my own inferiority and one which may sometimes lead me to work, or at least to wish, for his loss even when this does not contribute to my gain. On the contrary, so far am I from having this feeling that if by moral or other reasons I am prevented from robbing him, I may even console myself by enjoying his enjoyment of his possession or achievement. If he impedes me or robs me I may dislike him, avoid him, even remove him out of my way by killing him, my action here again being adopted merely as a means to the end; but I do not feel hatred, vindictiveness or anger towards him.

There is nothing in appetition itself to bring about egotism in any of its expressions: triumph, pride, humiliation, anger, envy or jealousy, stubbornness, defiance, repining, vindictiveness, hatred. Were we merely appetitional, we would no more feel these or any other egotistic emotions or sentiments than we conceive trees or plants to feel them, which also have

appetitions—for nourishment, for air and light. There are men who are nearly as unegotistic as we imagine trees and plants to be. One such we have already cited often enough, Tito Melema. From all the emotions or sentiments we have enumerated he is as completely free as any human being can be who is nevertheless far from being moral. Not even the sense of being wronged can rouse in him anger, resentment or hatred. Indeed, he lacks that sense even more completely than that of wronging others. The nearest approach he makes to anger is a cold and hardening dislike,[1] while hatred he never experiences, but at the most a feeling near to it.[2] To contempt and condemnation he is sensitive only in so far as they deprive him of the things he desires, amongst them the enjoyment of the company of his fellows.

QUALIFICATION BY APPETITION

But just as egotism can oppose and suppress appetition, as has already been shown, so appetition can at least qualify egotism, exclude certain expressions of it and even circumscribe its sphere. It can qualify it by determining it to one of two contrary possible manifestations, at the same time excluding of course the other. Thus, if a man is naturally sympathetic and humane, he will not try to assert himself over his fellows by cutting off their heads or by exercising cruelty over them, but will try to subject them to himself by kindness—he will be still a destroyer, but a benignant destroyer; if he is sociable, his egotism will be predominantly of the social rather than of the solitary kind. And here, in the fact that different people have different appetitions, we have one cause of the variety in the manifestations of egotism. Again, there is one species of egotism which is excluded universally by appetition, at least in connection with the latter's own object. This species is self-

[1] *Romola*, chap. xlvi., near the end.
[2] *Ib.*, chap. xlvii., at the end.

deception. Thus, an egotist who has absolutised wealth, if he also desires for their own sake the things (experiences) that money can buy, will not be content to delude himself into the belief that he is rich and that he can have them when this is not the case; the absolutiser of artistic activity, if he also desires artistic activity in itself, will not suffer himself to think he achieves it when he does not, however much the truth may be a humiliation to him. Where the object of ambition coincides with that of appetition the latter tolerates realist egotism only.[1] It may even be that in proportion as a life is filled with many absorbing appetitions it tends to have no room for egotism, the man being sunk in the terminal objects of his appetitions and having consequently little time to take his own measure or to bother about his greatness, his position, his superiority over others. But it would not be safe to insist on this as a general truth. For many examples could be cited of men rich in appetitions who are nevertheless also great egotists. All that can be maintained is that their egotism is such as will least interfere with their appetitions.

APPETITION THE VEHICLE OF EGOTISM. (*Cf.* pp. 225-239.)

But if appetition so far from begetting egotism merely influences it in the way of a limiting factor, it may nevertheless serve as its vehicle or expression. How it does this we must now illustrate as we promised to do. Egotism supervenes on appetition when one who is already an egotist (certainly not made such by appetition), having the appetition, does not merely desire its object and seek this as an end satisfying appetition, but *wills* its attainment. The willing in question is not that of the egoistic will, a mere spectator, arbiter and co-ordinator of appetitions.[2] It is a peculiar act of the ultimate

[1] The realism is, of course, relative only. It does not extend to criticism of the fundamental egotistic lie and its postulates.

[2] *Cf.* pp. 77-79.

subject, the latter's ultimate *fiat*, that by which he identifies himself. What he identifies himself with is the object or its attainment. This, for the moment at least, becomes the Absolute or an item within it; everything else belongs to the world of Outer Darkness. To attain is, above everything else, to separate oneself from, or to affirm oneself against or over, this other world: it is to gain triumph, victory, superiority (in short, position)—over difficulties or resistances, over others who do not attain, but chiefly over the appetition itself, which is a reminder that one lacks something and that one is not yet the All, and which by the attainment is, for the time being at least, stilled. Non-attainment, on the other hand, means belonging to the world of Outer Darkness: it means defeat, humiliation, lowering, inferiority. Difficulties, obstacles and resistances rouse stubbornness, defiance and the sense of being defied and challenged—all the attitudes of the partisan or fighter—and, though they do not increase the intensity of the appetition, they intensify the ambition and the willing. The whole striving process in fact changes once egotism has supervened, and the original object of appetition acquires a significance which has little relation, and bears no proportion, to the intensity of that appetition and which is kept with unimpaired effectiveness long after the appetition has vanished or even turned to an aversion; the object has, in short, become a symbol, and egoistic self-love is at first reinforced and later, it may be, ousted by egotistic self-love or *amour-propre*. The change stands out even more glaringly when the egotistic agent comes into contact with other persons. Envy or jealousy is roused in him by the success of others where he fails. Either is a feeling of his own inferiority to those who, being superior in that wherein he is inferior, must be superior to him. It is therefore understandable why it should lead him to wish, and even to work, for their loss even when the latter does not mean any gain for him in his immediate particular ambition. For in the logic of

egotism their loss does contribute to his general and permanent ambition to be superior, or at least not inferior, to others; it removes their superiority and, when he is the cause of the removal, it asserts his own power or superiority over them. When others obstruct or resist him in the process of attainment, especially if they do so as wills, he reacts with resentment, anger, hatred and the desire for revenge. The essential characteristics of all these, whatever the differences between them, are first the thought or feeling in the egotist that his own position has been invaded and that others have asserted their own superiority over him by causing him loss, and second the desire to re-establish (according to purely egotistic logic, no doubt) the *status quo ante* by inflicting on them loss equal to that suffered,[1] or, better still, to rise even higher above them than he was before by inflicting greater loss and humiliation on them or by reducing them to nothing, by killing them. (The egotist likes to think of killing as annihilation. Nothing is so bitter to him as the thought that after dying his enemy may still be something and may go on defying him; when this thought is insistent he takes refuge in make-believe or self-deception if he can do nothing further.) This harming or killing has nothing to do with self-preservation; often the egotist will pursue it knowing full well that it will entail his own destruction. Nor is it aimed at by him as by the appetitional man as a means towards the attainment of the end; it is an end in itself or at least a symbolic action. This attitude is present in resentment, anger and hatred even when the harming, humiliating and 'annihilating' are done in a look, a gesture or a form of words (a jeer, a sarcastic remark), and when the restitution of the *status quo ante* takes place in an apology; it is only the 'symbolism' after all that has been modified, the action sought having been all along symbolic. Resentment, anger and hatred, so we would maintain, are always egotistic.

[1] *Cf.* pp. 268-269.

APPETITION LENDS CONTENT

We have shown how egotism acts in connection with appetition when it supervenes on it, but we have not shown why it supervenes on it at all. The egotist does not necessarily espouse any appetition he has just because he has it; on the contrary, as was illustrated at the beginning of the description of egotism, he often resists and crushes the strongest and most fundamental of his appetitions. How then does he, the autocratic legislator, come to be all but legislated to, by appetition?

The earthly egotist, for all his earthliness, is Uranian at heart: he wills that he is the Absolute or the All. But he is earthly: he has appetition (the violent one of hunger, for example), something not chosen by himself but innate or inherited. It stands to him as a memento of incompleteness and of *lacunæ*, as a denial of his absoluteness or allness, a threat to his Nirvana, a possible rival to him, a possible enemy or tyrant. It actually is other than he, and it presents itself as such to him. He must deal with it, and his methods of dealing are either identification or separation. He may separate himself from the appetition and become an ascetic. He may also identify himself with the tyrant so that the latter's satisfaction or gain is his own. And the identification is also a form of conquest: for one way of getting the better of a tyrant is to satisfy, or, better still, to outstrip, all his whims and wishes. If identification is chosen, ambition espouses or adopts appetition.

The ambition, however, is not, and does not become, the same as the appetition. The latter is for eating or for nutrition; the former is at bottom for victory or superiority over the appetition, to be won by satisfying it; it is the victory or superiority, the *power* to satisfy the appetition and thus to silence it, the *power* (by possessing the means) to eat or the being in the *position* to eat whenever one wishes, and *not* the eating itself or the pleasure thereof, that comes to be counted as 'high'

or absolute, to be 'prized,' 'praised,' 'esteemed' or 'valued'; the eating becomes a symbol of the power or position.

Further, the earthly egotist is aware not only of a body and a group of appetitions (psychical and physical) which, though external to himself as subject or will, are after all in an important sense his, but also of other subjects or wills. These can assert their superiority over him by satisfying or thwarting his appetitions, and he can assert his superiority over them by satisfying or thwarting their appetitions. He comes therefore to prize the power to satisfy any appetitions even if they are not his own, and also the power to thwart them—in other words, omnipotence positive and negative, constructive and destructive. Thus in a community of many persons, the categories or forms of position, supremacy, superiority, inferiority, can derive, not indeed their origin, but their content, from appetition. Omnipotence is the power to satisfy or thwart all the appetitions of all the members and thus to bend their wills. Supremacy over others lies in coming nearer to this power than they do, and, in general, one's actual position is fixed (always more or less vaguely, of course) by one's distance from this omnipotence in relation to others' distance from the same point. The owners of the power are prized, esteemed, honoured, admired, venerated, like the power itself. Indeed, for the egotist, we have said, a person is identical with his power. The prizing is also extended to the instruments of power, that thing being most prized which, whether as a means or terminal object, is connected with the greatest number of appetitions of the greatest number of people, provided that it is at the same time rare and difficult to obtain (gold and jewels, for instance, are prized, but not the air and water).

Thus appetition provides the initial impulse for the manifestation of egotism—the latter, we must repeat, already being there to manifest itself—and also a centre or centres about which ambition may particularise itself. In doing this it also

furnishes a common measure of greatness, a common symbol or currency, and forces the egotist to be a realist and objective to a certain extent at least, though at bottom, as we have said, he cherishes, and must cherish, self-deception to keep his consciousness of his soleness and omnipotence. It also serves to differentiate between egotists by the different objects it sets to their ambitions. In a community of many persons with different appetitions there will be many different powers which can bring into subjection different people; there will be, therefore, many different objects for egotism to prize. But egotists are born with different aptitudes or capacities. And although it is true that an egotist will not always choose that which is easiest for him—for power is shown in the mere overcoming of difficulties, which therefore are in themselves endowed with attraction—he will naturally tend to guide his ambition in the direction of his capacity, or at any rate to shun that for which he is not fitted, ignoring or depreciating it; for he certainly fears defeat as much as, and perhaps even more than, he desires victory. This explains partly at least why, as Horace says: "Some royal ancestry, Olympia's palm of glory some, this one honours heaped on him by fickle citizens, that one his bursting granaries fill with the pride of lords of the earth and aspirants to heaven; me [Horace] the poet's garland makes the gods' peer and Beauty severs from the ruck." [1]

II. The Autonomy of Ambition in relation to Appetition.

(*Cf.* pp. 37-40, 86-89, 157-163, 225-240.)

POWER AS AN END IN ITSELF

It might seem then as if, after insisting in so many pages on the difference between egoism and egotism or appetition and ambition, we had now proved their identity and even shown that ambition in the long run seeks, and makes for, the greatest

[1] *Odes*, I. i.

happiness of the greatest number provided that happiness be taken to mean the experience or sum of experiences which is desired. This would be a mere seeming. All that we have achieved by bringing in the reference to appetition is that for the rather abstract notion of position we may substitute the more concrete one of power. We may now say that the egotist loves or absolutises or prizes power or omnipotence—power to satisfy or thwart appetition.

But what is power when absolutised or prized? It is *power sought as an end in itself.* As thus sought, it is completely differentiated from the power which we may seek appetitionally also or as a means to satisfy appetition. (Or the two seekings are differentiated.) In the latter case the power sought is positive only—we seek the means to satisfy, not to thwart, appetition; it is limited—we do not seek omnipotence but only what is sufficient to bring about the satisfaction of the appetitions we have; it is not relative—we do not want more power than our neighbours simply for the sake of more. But not such is power sought as an end in itself. It has all the characteristics of egotism.

It is *panurgic* or the power for opposites—for satisfying or thwarting appetition, for construction or destruction, for bringing about either the greatest happiness or the greatest misery of the greatest number. Even over his own appetitions the egotist seeks mastery or victory either by indulgence or by suppression: *qua* mere egotist he seeks either the power to live the full life (but only for the sake of the power) or, as an ascetic, the power to renounce life completely (but, again, for the sake of the power only).

It is militant or polemic or competitive and, therefore, relative or heteronomous. The power the egotist seeks as an end in itself has meaning only in relation to that possessed or sought or esteemed by the other fellow (who, being other, is therefore his rival or enemy), and its nature is determined by the nature of that. Hence the path which his ambition takes

is not necessarily pointed out to him by an appetition which is his own. He need not himself like climbing or playing music in themselves as experiences in order to desire to become a supreme musician or climber. It is enough that they are difficult and that others either desire them for themselves or prize them as powers. He will climb or play or compose music, unlike the man who loves these for themselves, always with an eye on his own power over difficulties, his own superiority over others, the admiration or envy of others, his influence over genuine enthusiasts in these things. In *Studies of Extravagance* Galsworthy gives a sketch, entitled *The Competitor*, of one who seeks pre-eminence in games, examinations, at the Bar, in Parliament, as a collector, writer, public benefactor, consumer of patent medicines, and finally in longevity, simply to go one better than his compeers, expiring when he hears of the death of his last rival because his sole motive for living at all has gone.

It is also—another aspect, this, of its relativity—pleonectic or infinite, that of which there can be, or there is desired to be, more and more *ad infinitum* and of which there can never be enough: the egotist seeks to have more power than the other fellow simply for the sake of the more—he will always go one higher.

At the same time it is sought as a constituent of, or as leading to, or as symbolic of, or standing for, *omnipotence*. Now, any notion of omnipotence—of a power that is to be all powers—may be chimerical or fictional. But certainly the omnipotence coveted by the egotist is this; for it is power that is to be all power or the sole power and is yet to be used against, or to stand over, other powers, for the egotist cannot do without a power to fight against.

All the above are traits of relativity. This relativity is best denoted by calling the object of ambition 'position,' for position is always relative. The notion of position is, in fact, more ultimate than that of power. It is not explained by, but rather is explanatory of, the latter. Hence we have used it in

preference to the latter, which seems to be more intelligible—everyone thinks he understands what is meant by saying that the ambitious man desires power. But this power really needs to be explained: we may say it is position in respect of, or counted in the terms of, the ends of appetition.

III. Divagation of Ambition from Appetition

PERSONAL MAGNETISM

In all the above cases appetition is set on a certain path by appetition and then proceeds independently of appetition. But it can also follow paths not laid down by, not leading to or from, appetition: it divagates from the latter. The power it most prizes is that which is exercised directly, as far as one can see, by will over will, without appetition as an intermediary at all. It is possessed by those who can make themselves obeyed or be deferred to or humoured or gratified by people who have nothing to hope or to fear from them as regards the satisfaction or thwarting of appetition. This is the so-called power of personality or personal magnetism.

EXTRAVAGANCE OF AMBITION

Other divagations of ambition from appetition we shall call 'extravagance.' They are many and diverse. In an intentionally vague expression we have said that the categories or forms of egotism are filled with content by appetition. But it would seem that they can be effective even when quite empty. Egotism can prize the bare 'more' and 'most' or superlative, bare soleness and rarity, the merely different or exotic; or, which comes to the same thing, ambition can take for its object anything just because of its superlativeness, uniqueness or rarity or strangeness, though no one desires it for any other reason. It can do this because the object can serve to differentiate and to grade (that is, only one or a few can or do have

it), and because egotism is essentially interested just in differentiation and grading, while that whereby these are effected, whether it be genius, virtue or a trifle, is a mere symbol to it and therefore indifferent. We are not here referring to money, which serves as a measure of power indeed (and therefore as a means for grading), but of a power which is obviously relative to the terminal objects of appetition—food, comfort, etc., to be bought by money; nor are we referring to rarities for which men agree to compete with money merely to measure their wealth against one another and which are through money remotely connected with appetition; these only illustrate, though they do it well, what we have already stated—namely, that ambition, though set on a certain path by appetition, soon proceeds independently of appetition. The ambition we have in mind here is to do or experience anything which no one else has experienced, though from the point of view of appetition there is no sense in doing or experiencing it; or to go in anything beyond others (to achieve a record), though beyond the point already attained all touch is lost with appetition, if the latter was ever present at any point. Most paradoxical of all, in view of what has been said about the connection between egotism and power, there may be, if not ambition for, at any rate pride in, any superlative, rare or unique illness or other defect or disability.[1] These are aberrations, it will be urged. But our contention is that all egotism, from the most serious to the most trifling, and therefore the major part of life, which is animated chiefly by egotism, is aberration; in other words, that man's life is mostly folly—a hoary truism, surely, and an uncontrovertible.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN SOCIETY

May it not be, however, that the ambition, if not of individuals, at any rate of any community as a whole, is for the

[1] See p. 120.

satisfaction of the greatest number of appetitions of the greatest number of its members, or for the greatest happiness of the greatest number? It is difficult to see how, if individuals do not have this ambition, the community can have it. However, if communities did have it in whatsoever way, some community surely in the long lapse of history would have come near to achieving it. But who would dare to point to any time when this has occurred unless it be the mythical one of the Golden Age? The community, we have said, comports itself to other communities as does the individual to other individuals—namely, egotistically. Like the individual, it seeks absoluteness, power, position, supremacy, differentiation, for their own sake, starting, indeed, from appetition but soon taking leave of it. Like the individual, in pursuit of revenge it will accept the probability and even the certainty of the destruction of itself as a collectivity and certainly of the destruction or long misery of most of its members. Apart from these foreign affairs, in home politics also it shows the same indifference to appetition: even more than the individual it will stick to old ways simply because they are old and because it has long identified itself with them, however much they may thwart the appetitions of most of its members or of all of them; this it will do, not, as is often said, from inertia, but from pride; for to admit change is to allow that one is not yet the All. As of the individual's, so of the community's, ambition all that can be safely asserted is that it is set on its path at one time by appetition, but that in the course of time it travels independently of appetition and also divagates entirely from the latter's path.

EXTRAVAGANCE OF HUMANITY. (See pp. 229, 234-235.)

The same must be said even of Humanity as a whole. We cannot, it is true, properly speak of it as a whole, since it is not in any way organised as such. But this expression may help us to think partly of the fundamental human nature in everyone as

contrasted with what is non-human, partly of how Humanity would behave if it were organised into a whole. Humanity then in this sense is obviously not free from one form of egotism which we have shown to operate in particular communities—the egotistic conservatism which can so drastically interfere with the free development of appetition. It might however seem that it must be free from the other interference, that of competitive egotism. For who, or what, is there to compete with? There are animals, plants and trees and inanimate matter—in other words, Nature. Does not our most fundamental pride lie in being different from, and therefore (the egotistic *sequitur*!) superior to, the beasts of the field, in 'rising above matter,' in being artificial? In our clothing, eating and drinking, in our attitude to sex, in countless other things, do we not vary, curtail or protract, suppress or stimulate appetition, not at its own dictate, not solely with a view to health, efficiency or the maximum of pleasure, but (partly at least) simply in order to leave the impress of our will on it, not to accept it as it is given by Nature, and to differentiate ourselves from the rest of creation? How ashamed we can be just of those instincts wherein we are most like animals,[1] and how humiliated by the reminder that in one aspect at least we are after all lumps of matter! The whole immense structure of our civilisation is largely a Tower of Babel to lodge our pride above, and against, Nature. Nor are savages behind us in this respect. They go about naked, indeed, partly at least, and unashamed, but certainly not unadorned. One of the most astonishing things about them is how little of their body they leave unadorned and unmutilated. Nor is this ornamentation meant to satisfy their æsthetic impulse[2]; for it brings about ugliness, whereas

[1] "Il fatto che la mente umana non ha ancora associato manducazione e defecazione dimostra la nostra grossolana insensibilità," modern civilisation is made to say in Papini's *Gog*, p. 301.

[2] It will be said that it is due to superstition. But may not the sentiment here suggested have had a share in shaping that superstition?

their æsthetic impulse expresses itself in works which are by no means ugly. We need to have reached a very high level of objectivity or morality before we can joyfully acknowledge and accept our brotherhood with the beasts, with plants and trees, with stocks and stones. It is not natural to man to be natural.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN NATURE

Nor, perhaps, is Nature herself natural. Amazing pullulation, so pleonectic or competitive in appearance at least, variation together with maladaptation, stagnant conservatism or petrifaction, conflict and destruction—all these do not seem to be tokens of merely a biological urge to life or process or activity, but are rather suggestive of the career of civilisation which we have called the Dance of Death. Just below,[1] and again when we discuss the relations between egotism and evil,[2] we shall show what considerations may point to the surmise that even behind our most natural and fundamental appetitions and even behind all organic and inorganic Nature there may be an egotistic tendency—a tendency, that is, for war, differentiation, separation, destruction, etc., for their own sake. In other words, these traits, it may be argued, are final—underived and not instrumental to any other end—like the urge for life itself.

IV. Egotism shaped by Other Egotism

WHEN EGOTIST MEETS EGOTIST

Thus, while we must do full justice to the influence of appetition on egotism, we should not exaggerate this influence. The expression of the individual's egotism is shaped not merely by his own and others' appetitions but also by the egotism of others. Just above we have spoken mainly as though the others whom the egotist has to meet were merely appetitional. But

[1] Pp. 186-187.

[2] Pp. 225-227, 237-239.

of course they too are egotists; everyone in fact behaves to a greater or smaller extent egotistically. And without others, once he has fallen from his heaven, the egotist, we have shown, cannot do. Now, what happens when egotist meets egotist? It would seem that they must always be at each other's throats. But though this is often the case, it is of course not always so. Do we not often see them doing apparently the opposite: staging for us the most paradoxical of all spectacles, that of the mutual admiration league, each offering the incense of sacrifice to the other in order that he may receive it in turn?

In a very deep sense of the words egotists do of course always fight each other, use each other as mere means, and enter only into purely external relations with each other. For it is fighting a person and using him as a means even to make him your admiring slave, or to play upon his vanity and make him a slave to your admiration and flattery. But the fighting is not always to the death and is by different means according to persons and circumstances. The egotist uses those weapons, puts on that armour or expression, which the egotistic panoply of his particular opponent makes necessary for victory. To one (to the servile egotist perhaps) he will be the bully, to another he will be the servile egotist; some he will subdue by cruelty, others by kindness; against one man he will measure himself by deeds and by the common external measure (that is, he will be the realist egotist), while in relation to another he will prefer to be his own measure, his own judge *in foro interno* or within the court of his own consciousness, and risk no external test, no trial *in foro externo* (that is, he will use self-deception). He will even play a different part in relation to the same man on different occasions. Given a sufficiently chequered life, one and the same man may run through at least the whole gamut of the manifestations of egotism that have been enumerated here. For it is only for the sake of simplicity of exposition that we have used language implying that to each egotist belongs

only one or other of these manifestations. On the contrary, it is the nature of the egotist to be a chameleon in his outward expressions. Only, if his entourage and his external means are fairly homogeneous and constant, he will become relatively fixed in one or other expression: if, for example, his circumstances and the people around him have always been such that he could always domineer, he will become the tyrannic type of egotist; but we have only to reverse completely his environment and we shall see, in time, the tyrannic type turn into the servile, and the servile into the tyrannic; for egotism, we have said, is panurgic. Thus does one egotism lend shape, both fleeting and relatively permanent, to another egotism.

THE MUTUAL EQUILIBRATION OF EGOTISMS

The mutual shaping of egotism by egotism is the life of a group. This mutual shaping and equilibration between the egotisms of many individuals and many groups, a complex balancing of multitudinous powers, is the life, the self-maintenance, of a large community like the nation. It is the operation of the egotism of the collective self in, through, or over the egotism of the individual. It is, in the words of Hobbes[1]: "the Generation of that great *Leviathan*, or rather (to speak more reverently) of that *Mortall God*," which, we may add, represents and often ousts "the *Immortall God*," and becomes the Absolute or the idol of the tribe, endowed with omnipotence or all but omnipotence, which is exercised partly through physical might—through the "Power and strength conferred on him [the Sovereign], that by terror thereof, he is inabled to forme the wills of them [the subjects] all, to Peace at home, and mutuall ayd against their enemies abroad"[2] —but chiefly through the fact that each egotist (with some exceptions) not only accepts the idol as the Absolute, but in

[1] *Leviathan*, Part II., chap. xvii.
[2] *Ib.*

his heart of hearts thinks that idol to be himself.[1] This mutual adjustment between egotisms, we may say lastly, is also both the setting up and the preservation of that Social Contract or, in the words of Hobbes, the "Covenant of every man with every man" which has acquired such notoriety in the history of Philosophy. Only, if we say this, we must also say—and by this caution we may hope to escape the censure of philosophers which without it we should amply deserve—that we are using 'contract' here as loosely as we do when we talk of two egotists making a tacit *contract* to flatter each other: we no more mean that individuals previously isolated have on a definite occasion come together to form this contract than we mean that the cells of a living organism have congregated from different quarters to form the life of that organism; the setting up of the contract is never a thing done once for all, but is identical with the never-finished process of that mutual adjustment between egotism and egotism which is the life of a community. In this contract or process arise the rules of the game of egotistic fighting, which prescribe what shall be considered victory and what shall not, and thus set some limit to destructiveness at least within the community and to the expressions which the egotism of the individual may assume—rules which are the laws written or unwritten of the community, its customs or conventions, its 'fixations,' its 'morality,' its code of things or actions or qualities prized and despised, approved or condemned, in short and in sum, its monetary decrees regulating the currency or the symbol of "Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour and Worthiness."[2] This currency varies widely from

[1] See above, p. 140.

[2] These words form the title of chapter x., Part I., of Hobbes' *Leviathan*, in which is given a very long and useful list of the things that pass 'naturally' for currency (strength, eloquence, nobility, liberality, wealth, popularity, reputation, success, etc.) and those that pass naturally for appreciation or honouring (conferring office or titles, praying for help, obeying, giving gifts, serving, flattering, submitting, showing signs of love or fear, praising, showing consideration or respect and trust, agreeing, imitating, etc.).

community to community and from class to class. On what it is will depend of course enormously the expression of the individual's egotism: his choice, for example, of that wherein he shall pursue distinction—his adoption of piracy or scholarship, art or pugilism—and his cultivation of some qualities as virtues and avoidance of others as vices. But, because of the oft-emphasised essential panurgic emptiness of egotism, whatever the currency is, the individual egotist can be made easily to accept it. It makes no difference to him (*qua* egotist) whether it is gold or copper or paper, provided it is established or received. He cares little what he is required to give and what he is given in return: wherefore or whereby he is honoured, distinguished, set apart or given a position—whether it is for saving the lives of his fellows at the risk of his own or for taking their heads by any means, for having red hair or for writing beautiful poetry, and whether it is by being better fed, clothed and housed than others or by being allowed, alone or with a few others only, to wear a ribbon, to write certain letters after his name or to stand on his head.

SOCIETY SEEKS VICTORY

But what is it that determines the Leviathan himself in the choice of the currency? In other words, what factors influence the whole process of the mutual adjustment between egotisms? One of the factors is appetition, we have allowed. We agree, that is, with Hobbes that it is the desire of men "to secure them in such sort, as that by their owne industrie, and by the fruites of the Earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly," instead of leading a life which is "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short." But we have denied that it is the only, or even the chief, factor. For we have denied that the ambition of any community as a whole aims at the satisfaction of the appetitions of the greatest number, or at the greatest happiness of the greatest number. We wish now to

assert that, instead, it does aim at, and largely secures, the satisfaction of the egotisms of the greatest number of its members. We have seen that it does this, and how it does it, as regards the position of its members in relation to all those who are outside the community—by enabling them to worship themselves as everything and to despise the others as riff-raff.[1] How it does this also for each member in relation to his fellow-members we have also seen [2] and may further realise by considering how simple, poor and short would be the satisfaction of egotists if they lived, not in an organised community or State, but in what Hobbes calls the "naturall condition of Mankind" of war of every man against every man. For a few hours, months or years all would have the monotonous and simple satisfaction of hating, defying, fighting, killing. But the end would come soon for all but one perhaps; for they would all be killed. The survivor would indeed have victory and supremacy, but with none to acknowledge it in word or deed; and his triumph would be short-lived; for he, too, weakened and disabled by the fight, would perish, and that soon after his antagonists. In a community, on the other hand, each egotist has the possibility secured for his egotism of a complex, rich and varied career, not for a few hours, months or years, but, it may be, for threescore years and ten or more. Not only may he hate and scorn more or less crudely, and on occasions even kill, countless foreigners; not only is he assured against these at any rate, by the unanimous proclamation of his fellow-members, of a godlike position in virtue of merely existing, but at home he has 'God,' finite, unmysterious, attainable, fashioned in his own image, acknowledged by all the faithful, the idol of the tribe, whom *in foro interno* he may safely take to be himself and for whose chief incarnation he may hope to pass even *in foro externo* after satisfying intelligible

[1] Pp. 141-142.
[2] P. 140.

and universally accepted tests. With all this, neither *in foro interno* nor *in foro externo*, unless he be a saint in a community of saints, are hatred, bullying, oppression, domineering and even destructiveness really excluded. Only their expression is limited; but it is limited by rules which merely protract and vary the game, make the victory more of a victory because more difficult, and, above all, by being themselves undisputed make the victory also indisputable, keeping, moreover, the victim alive to acknowledge it. One is forbidden the easy, simple and short-lived triumph of killing another, but not the difficult, complex, subtle and prolonged one of ruining him in business by legitimate means, of slighting him socially, of hurting his vanity in a thousand and one ways, of exposing in learned but bitter print his pretentious ignorance, of hating and scorning him and hounding on against him the hatred and scorn of others for his unconventionality, immorality or wickedness, of balking him of the triumph of being the first to make and to announce an important discovery, by hurrying to be the first oneself though, it may be, from no other motive but to thwart him. And as for the victory or ascendancy to be sought over others by kindness, virtues, genius, wonderful qualities in general—by benignant destruction—there is no limit to that. No one objects to your so stunting and enslaving a child, wife or friend that they cannot breathe or move except in your name and by your permission because you are so generous, noble, great, marvellous; there is no law written or unwritten on earth, but only in Heaven, to forbid your acting Zeus to a Semele or Helios to a Phaethon.[1] Thus in a well-regulated community the egotist has countless opportunities

[1] 'How,' it may be objected, 'is this a sin and how can one help it sometimes?' The strongest and most gifted personality can always, if he will, so subdue and temper himself to the needs and capacities of the weakest and poorest that the latter can go on his own way enriched by him and yet aware of something beyond the donor himself. The good teacher knows how to subdue himself so that his pupil's intellect is not subdued to his own, and the wise parent tries to avoid being a god to his children.

in many capacities for the most varied exercise of his egotism: as a member of his family, class, sect or profession against members of other similar groups, as a respectable husband, father, teacher, employer, philosopher, scientist, moralist, citizen, magistrate, politician, etc., etc. Even as a misanthrope, hermit, criminal, rebel, he needs society, as we have seen. Nay, even as a respectable member of the depressed class, his egotism is satisfied in the servile expression consecrated for his fathers and himself by centuries of oppression and tradition, and he clings to it so obstinately that he will not change his condition or give up his position except under the leadership, or rather the driving, of others belonging not at all or not entirely to his class.[1] For he is convinced that, to quote with pious intent a most impious hymn:

> "The rich man in his castle,
> The poor man at his gate,
> God [the idol of the tribe] made them, high or lowly,
> And order'd their estate."

To sum up, we wish to maintain that A's egotism expresses itself as it does largely because of the expression assumed by B's egotism, that B's expression is in turn influenced by the expression of A's and C's egotism, and so on, and that the whole process of the mutual adjustment between egotisms,

[1] Almost any revolution will illustrate this, best of all the Bolshevik Revolution, intended for the benefit of manual workers and peasants but certainly not *initiated* by them. Apparently one of the greatest difficulties of the Bolshevik rulers is to make the peasant give up his servility, fawning and cringing, and to persuade him that he is the ruler. No doubt they will succeed in doing so in time, especially if they really hand over the reins to him. This does not contradict our statement about the possibility of the slave turning tyrant. See *Broken Earth* and *Red Bread*, by Hindus. *Cf.* also the history of the feminist movement which was championed not exclusively by women and which met with opposition largely from women themselves. An interesting comment on the mutual adjustment between the egotism of the servile, and that of the domineering, type in a community is provided by a remark recently made by an exiled German: "Ninety per cent. of our people consist of those who want to kick and of those who want to be kicked."

though partly controlled by appetition, is largely self-regulative, aiming at the maintenance, complication and difficulty of the process itself and generating rules of the game (the social code) which are like, but more complex than, the rules of any other game, chess or football, for example, designed to make victory difficult and therefore, to egotism, interesting.

V. Egotism shaped and modified by Education

SUFFERING AND TRAINING

It is during early childhood that the individual's egotism receives what relatively permanent shape it has. This happens both through the general unaimed impact of experience—that is, through the effect on him of his environment and entourage —and through the intentionally directed communication which we may call ' training,' using ' education ' to cover the former also. Through training chiefly though not solely he enters upon the inheritance of the social code, which he does all the more easily now in that, empty of content and indifferent to content as egotism is at bottom at all times, this emptiness and indifference are particularly unqualified at this early period. Through the general impact of experience, through the *mathemata* which are *pathemata* or through learning by suffering, he receives those particular indentations or ' kinks '—all egotism is a ' kink ' from the point of view of true morality—which constitute his personal peculiarities or his ' character,' and which may now or later be harmonised with collective egotism or may always carry on a struggle against it. Not, we must repeat, that he is now made into an egotist, except in the sense in which he is ' made ' into a mathematician or poet or philosopher. His egotism, being already there, now accepts its material, its predominant expression, its favourite policy, weapons, direction; and whatever he accepts he is free later to change for something else just as he is free to discard egotism

altogether for true morality. Now also is determined, but by no means irrevocably, the *rôle* or scope of egotism in his future life: it is determined whether, overriding appetition, he shall act from ambition, vainglory, resentment, envy, in all things or only in a few; or else perhaps only when no violence is done to appetition. Given mental and physical endowments just commensurate with the difficulties of his environment so that the appetition for a certain life-process and the ambition to master that appetition by satisfying it always nearly coincide, there being little struggle to give the sense of victory or defeat and to turn the agent back upon himself; given, above all, the comparative absence of egotism in those around him—the absence of competition, of praise and blame, rewards and punishments—and, instead, the presence, if not of a genuinely moral life, at least of an unimpeded life of harmonised appetitions, then in all likelihood he will develop only a restrained and circumscribed egotism. On the other hand, he will probably act later mainly on egotistic lines if his childhood has been filled with struggles owing to physical or mental shortcomings on his part or excessive resistance and thwarting by those around him; but also, if it has suffered from the boredom of excessive ease; above all if the egotism of his entourage has developed and strengthened most in him the notions of praise and blame, merit and demerit, high and low, rewards and punishments, especially if admiration or condemnation have been directed upon himself, thus turning him in upon himself and making him what is ordinarily meant by 'self-conscious' or 'self-centred.'

THE CHILD FATHER TO THE MAN?

We may agree with Adler and Künkel that egotism generally starts upon its career with the experience of inferiority or defeat, primarily through some physical defect but also through any other weakness or disadvantage. This experience, according

as it pervades the child's life or occupies only a corner of it, will determine the sweep, wide or narrow, of the man's egotism. It will also give it its method and direction; the egotistic strategy evolved by the child will be father to that adopted by the man and will mould it at least through the operation of analogy. When the particular experience has in the normal sense long since been forgotten and the defect or disadvantage is no longer considered such or has long since vanished, the grown-up, unconscious perhaps of the reason, will still be particularly sensitive to anything analogous to that experience and about anything analogous to that defect or weakness. The career of many a Napoleon, we may well believe, is an attempt to gain compensation in one or more directions for some early experience of inferiority arising from some physical defect or from being oppressed as the youngest in the family or from some persecution through any cause whatsoever. Many another, on the other hand, having been able to find refuge from the experience of defeat only in servility, in extravagant fantasy or self-deception, in running away from tests, or in illness, the child's favourite means of winning the attention of his superiors and of subduing them, will continue to use these in later life habitually or occasionally. Another still, having egotistically rebelled, if only in his heart, against an overbearing father, will later, by a compulsion which he ill understands and idly rationalises, be a rebel against anyone placed in any relation of authority or quasi-authority (analogous to the paternal position) towards him—an employer, the State, anyone generally recognised as an 'authority' in science or in art or in anything else; or he will always champion and justify the cause of any individual or group that his hasty fantasy can make out as at all resembling the 'under-dog.' There is also the man who, having through sex-egotism come to believe that man is superior to woman and must assert this superiority, but having also as a child been made to experience

defeat by his mother or elder sisters, will later become a misogynist, or an ascetic of sex, or, if he can, a Don Juan taking revenge in conquests; but, whatever he becomes, he will in any case protect himself from the danger of equality or inferiority which may arise in marriage, making maybe all the time apparently the most serious attempts to find a mate but unconsciously so arranging them that they are bound to fail, and sometimes even going (again unconsciously) so far as to flee from marriage by becoming homosexual.

With all this and with much more that we are told by Adler and Künkel we may agree. But against them we must again insist that the experience of inferiority cannot be the cause of egotism but is, on the contrary, its effect or expression; we must protest that therefore it is unnecessary to try, sometimes by the most artificial means, to exhibit every egotistic life as beginning in defeat; and lastly we must remind ourselves that not everything about egotism is decided in childhood, and that, indeed, no sharp line can be drawn between what is and what is not childhood—are we not all our lives wonderingly waiting to have the feeling of being ' grown-ups ' unless we decide some time or other that we can never have it because only those who are older than we are ' grown-ups ' or because the state is altogether mythical?

VI. The Ultimateness of Egotism in relation to Appetition

Egotism in the child

It might seem that egotism, involving, as it does, essentially comparison, or the notions of higher and lower, greater and less, the self and its position in relation to other selves, could not belong to early childhood. But the comparison involved need not be that of clear thinking, and can easily be present in the form of feeling. Any nurse or mother and even some fathers

will assure you that a babe a few months old knows—that is, feels—what it is ' to get the better of you '—that is, to assert itself over you or bend your will by the elementary method of weeping and yelling and thus appealing to your feelings as well as to your nerves; that it can be obstinate, angry [1] and defiant; and, most significant of all, that more even than any mature ascetic it will deny its most vital needs or appetitions, refusing to eat, drink, sleep, breathe or perform its natural functions, simply in order to frighten or spite you and feel its power or hold over you. Certain it is that as it grows up it most early and most easily acquires from its entourage (if it is acquirement and if the example of others is always necessary) jealousy or envy, vanity, resentment, competitiveness, possessiveness and exclusiveness, combativeness, or, as a lamentable correction of these and a cure certainly worse than the disease, self-complacence or priggishness.

' The declarations of mere nanny wisdom and of rough mother wit, these!' it may be objected, ' grotesquely exaggerated at that and unworthy the serious consideration of Philosophy or Psychology.' But it is through elaborating and systematising precisely such declarations as these that Adler has developed a most successful ætiology and psychology for dealing with neurotic troubles. True, all sorts of different psychologies claim, and even achieve, success in the same sphere. But whereas these grossly contradict, Adler's psychology has the great merit of being in accord with, not only nanny wisdom and mother wit, but also mankind's experience of human nature both childish and adult, as mirrored in the common talk as well as in the richest literature of all ages. And Philosophy and Psychology, considering how much nonsense about human nature one philosophy or psychology is convicted of talking by another, can scarcely afford to despise all this.

[1] If animals are really angry and jealous then they are so far egotistic.

EGOTISM À PRIORI

But the chief reason why we do not resist this obvious interpretation of experience is that we have no motive for doing so. Such a motive we might have if we believed egotism to be derivative. But we believe, and have tried to prove, that it is as primary as appetition (which certainly belongs to children) and that it is not derived from appetition nor necessarily subservient to it. What we have called its forms or categories are '*à priori*' like those of thought. These also cannot be shown to be derived from anything: all we can say is that they emerge *pari passu* with the emergence of intelligence, and that in fact their emergence is the emergence of intelligence. Only, in their case we describe nothing by saying that we are born with them; indeed, we should be indulging in patent falsehood or absurdity if we said that a child is born with the notion of number, for example. On the other hand, the categories of egotism, being categories, so to speak, as much of feeling as of thought (they are cognitive-affective-conative attitudes), may be said to be present and operative as early as feeling is, developing their conceptual side later as intelligence develops. Adapting McDougall's terminology, we may say that the 'self-regarding sentiment' (our 'egotism') is present germinally at least in the form of self-feeling even in children and animals.[1] Since even in the maturest arch-egoist it is always 'unconscious,' and since Uranian egotism or the egotistic tendency in itself is bare resistance to consciousness, it is not fantastic to speak of it as operative even in unconscious matter. Certainly of the child we may safely say in answer to Wordsworth that, if it does come "trailing clouds of *glory*," the "Heaven" or the "imperial palace" from which it comes is that of the Uranian egotist.

If, as we shall maintain, egotism is evil or the chief source

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

of evil, it is that of which Kant says that "its nature must be cognised *à priori* from the concept of the Bad." It is *Original Sin.*[1]

EGOTISM IN THE RACE

Granted that egotism in individuals and communities may be shown neither to arise from appetition nor necessarily to subserve appetition, but to be to the latter only an ally who can also be an enemy, it may still be urged that in the history of the race at any rate it has arisen from, and in the service of, appetition; that in the form of competitiveness and combativeness, for instance, entailing as it does destruction, it nevertheless arose as a means of preserving the race if not the individual, even though now by an unfortunate and unreasonable deviation it has come to be a threat to the existence of the race as well as to that of the individual. In other and in technical words, though we have defended egotism from ontogenetic explanation, we have still to clear it from phylogenetic explanation. But why should we seek to derive egotism from anything at all, and in particular from appetition? One answer might presumably run as follows: 'Appetition, as here defined, is striving for life-processes, it is self-preservation. The latter is intelligible, in some sense rational and needing no explanation. Egotism, on the other hand, as here described, essentially makes for destruction, stagnation, negation. It is irrational, in fact very unreason, and needs explanation. It cannot be primary. It must somehow, by some accident, error or deviation, have arisen from the very striving of the race after self-preservation.' To which our retort would be this: 'Man or the race of man can only have deviated or made an error because it is in his or its nature to be able to deviate or to make errors. Unreason cannot arise from reason, nor non-appetition from appetition. If the two are found together, all

[1] *Op. cit.*, ii. and iii.

we can say is that they are found together, that if man acts both reasonably and unreasonably this is because he is both reasonable and unreasonable; what we cannot say is that he acts unreasonably because he is reasonable, which is what the phylogenetic explanation seems to attempt to say.'

EGOTISM IN 'THE UNIVERSE.' (See pp. 172, 225-227, 237-239.)

We do not hesitate to make the same retort with respect to Nature or 'the Universe' to those who speak of these as wholes or unities, thinking that they are denoting thereby something significant. If there are destruction, stagnation, negation in Nature animate and inanimate or in 'the Universe,' they are there because they are there, because they are part-expressions of the nature of Nature or of 'the Universe.' How could they be there as results of, or as phases of, creation, progress, positivity—that is, how could they be there if Nature or 'the Universe' were merely creative, progressive, positive? And how can they be introduced from outside, since *ex hypothesi* —for the whole of Nature or 'the Universe' means the All, presumably—there is no outside? In short, to explanations which are only confusions we prefer incontrovertible tautologies.

CHAPTER VII

EGOTISM AND MORALITY

I. The Confusion between Egotism and Morality

EVIDENCES OF THE CONFUSION

'Reasonable' and 'rational' have been used above as synonymous with 'appetitional.' But of course it is far more appropriate to use these two terms to denote morality proper. May not then egotism be rational or at least a by-product of rationality in this, the properly moral sense? Is not what we have called egotism simply morality or a result of it? Many modern satirists will cynically answer with an emphatic affirmative, those who delight to point out how much better a world there would be, one containing fewer massacres, miseries, oppressions and persecutions, if only mankind had no morality, no ideals, no notions of right and wrong and of good and evil, no after-taste of Eve's apple, but, instead, led a Paradisal life of healthy instinct or appetition. Quite seriously and with no cynical intent one eminent psychologist at least maintains that without the 'self-regarding sentiment,' without self-respect and pride, there would be no effective or active morality, and that "moral advance consists, not in the coming into play of factors of a new order . . . the moral instinct or conscience, but in the development of the self-regarding sentiment and in the improvement and refinement of the 'gallery' before which we display ourselves . . . until the 'gallery' becomes, . . . in the last resort, one's own critical self standing as the representative of such spectators." [1] This

[1] William McDougall, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-221. In case it has not yet been made clear what is here meant by egotism, we wish to assert that all that is described in these pages of McDougall's is egotism, even though it should, as in the case McDougall imagines, lead the egotist to risk his life in the teeth of public disapproval in order to save a child from burning.

alleged morality is that which includes what has here been treated of partly as Mrs Grundy's Absolute, partly as pharisaism or fanaticism or idealism. It is the sphere of ' noble ' or ' proper ' ambition, pride, defiance, rivalry, hatred and scorn. It is the morality to which apply La Rochefoucauld's golden sayings: " The vices enter into the composition of the virtues as do poisons into that of remedies," and " Virtue would not go so far, if it were not accompanied by vanity."[1] It covers probably most of what has ever been preached, theorised about or practised as morality. In refusing it the name of genuine morality we shall probably have to deny genuine morality to most who have been held up to us as not only the greatest but as the best men, at any rate if it is true that their inspiring motive has been that egotism even which consists of the ambition for the fame which

> " . . . is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
> (That last infirmity of Noble mind)
> To scorn delights and live laborious dayes."

We may also have to admit that the genuinely moral man (one devoid of all egotism) is superhuman.

Such, however, is the position here maintained. This alleged morality we refuse to call genuine morality because it is informed by egotism. And egotism we do not admit to be either an ingredient or a result of morality. We do not think that the " last infirmity " is anything but an infirmity. We do not admit even that egotism is morality gone wrong, in the sense that it is a genuine reaching out after morality, vitiated only by a mistake as to what is moral; nor can we admit that the egotist who loves himself and thinks himself perfect or desires to be thought such by himself and others really shows his love for Goodness in his very self-love because he can love himself *sub specie boni* only (a truly consoling and tempting hypothesis about human nature!). All we can allow is that there is a

[1] *Maximes*, clxxxii. and cc.

confusion between egotism and morality both in practice and in thought.

CAUSE OF THE CONFUSION

We can also point to the cause of the confusion. It is this: the aim of morality is to replace egotism *completely*; but, owing to the resistance it meets, generally little more results than certain limitations of egotism in respect of its outward expressions. Egotism, on the other hand, fights fiercely against any fundamental replacement, but, being panurgic, it is comparatively indifferent as regards its own particular expressions; some limitations in respect of these it accepts from morality in the form of certain virtues and general rules of conduct; it accepts them all the more readily because some limitations of itself are necessary for its own life, for the life of the Great Leviathan or of the community, as we have seen. There result from these acceptances the various social codes and pharisaisms. These, but, above all, its own ultimate forms or categories—namely, absolutising or the laudatory and culpatory attitudes—egotism tries to substitute for morality, as the All and therefore as also morality itself. This attempt at substitution goes on not least of all in Moral Philosophy and in various religions and theologies.

II. The Distinction between Egotism and Morality[1]

PRAISE AND BLAME MORAL?

The attempt is furthered whenever it is maintained that morality includes, or consists of, or presupposes, what we have

[1] The reader will best understand what we are driving at in the apparently extravagant statements contained in this and in the next section if he reflects all the time on the utter moral absurdity of Milton's *Paradise Regained*. The root of the absurdity lies in representing Jesus (the moral man) as a seeker after a kind of super-greatness, super-merit, super-glory, super-praise, super-distinction, as a pharisee or idealist competing with great men and with Satan

called the laudatory and culpatory attitudes (valuing and disvaluing), that they are present in morality just as they are present in egotism except that in the former they are moderated and have the 'right' objects (valuing the 'right' things, not overvaluing or absolutising anything, having only 'noble' pride and ambition and hatred and scorn for the things which 'justify' or 'deserve' these).

Do these attitudes presuppose morality? Are they presupposed by it or included in it?—these are the questions. In them is the crux of the whole matter. This treatise would rightly be called a mere collection of moral commonplaces, and not philosophy at all, if it made no attempt at establishing through these commonplaces some far-reaching generalisations. It does, however, make such an attempt, and one generalisation it has essayed is in its treatment of these attitudes.

We have said that they presuppose only position or power and not morality except in so far as egotism accepts from morality certain virtues and rules. We have tried further to exhibit them as not merely states which egotism can enter and vitiate but as the very forms of egotism itself, forms of absolutising, forms of self-love or sentimentalities—in the ultimate analysis, forms of madness. Our description of them is peculiar, if at all, only in this vituperation. Otherwise it keeps fairly close to that given by Hobbes and by many modern thinkers who define the 'right' and the 'good' and the content of morality as that which is approved or esteemed or willed especially by society.

But it is this very vituperation that may be questioned. 'What proof,' it may be asked, 'is there that in any prizing or praising or esteeming the esteemer always identifies himself with the object and absolutises or idolises it, and that in scorning or despising or disprizing he separates himself to the point

himself. He is represented (partly by Satan, partly by Milton himself) through inappropriate notions, as inappropriate as would be those of geometry. (See especially ii. 432 ff. and iii. 43 ff., which are scarcely modified by iii. 71 ff.)

of wanting to destroy it? ' There is no proof. But the questioner can be invited to think of all these attitudes as forms of loving or hating (which they are)—that is, as states of emotion and action or tendency to act and not merely of judging; to think of them as they are found in primitive, unsophisticated, unmoralised people, and to bring to bear upon them the imaginative penetration or inspection which the dramatist or novelist, for example, uses. He may then see that the aspects we have enumerated are there and always do go together, and, further, that the object is idolised in respect only of some such attributes as we have enumerated (*e.g.* rarity, difficulty, or certain relations to the subject or to his history)—that is to say, of course, if the case be not one simply of appetition or biological desire for a process *qua* process, in which case there is nothing that answers to prizing, valuing, etc. Most important of all, he may see that we fully value or prize an object only when, as the common phrase significantly has it, we are ' *mad* about it,' and that we fully disvalue it (hate it), again, only when we are ' *mad* about it.'

' True,' the doubter may then admit, ' these aspects do go together and they are egotistic. But the absolutising proper and the madness only come in when any of these attitudes is extreme. Moralisation consists in its modification, above all in its moderation. These attitudes modified and moderated are morality.' But ' extreme ' is only a term of refuge, employed when we refuse to go any further in an inquiry. Any of these attitudes is ' extreme ' simply when it is pure, or just itself. It is moderated when it meets, or becomes admixed, with something not itself. Now it is true that egotism can modify and balance egotism. But it could not do this were it not for the presence of what is not egotism—namely, appetition and morality. Appetition is different in kind and not merely in degree (in moderation) from egotism (from any laudatory or culpatory attitude). Morality must therefore also be different

in kind and not merely in degree (in moderation) from egotism. Madness cannot be moderated simply by other madness. The nature of morality therefore cannot be summed up in moderation or in the Delphic motto: "Nothing in excess."

MODIFICATION AND MODERATION. (See pp. 244-246.)

Modification and moderation may consist in effecting a difference in degree. Thus, respect is much less idolising or absolutising than is infatuation or worshipping or what the Eighteenth Century called 'enthusiasm.' (The Eighteenth Century, like the Greeks, rejected enthusiasm, and its favourite laudatory term was 'respectable.') The respecter, unlike the enthusiast, balances each one of many items of the Absolute against every other and distributes his absolutising over all, observing a certain proportion. But the two are alike 'in spirit': both of them do absolutise and presuppose the chimerical notion of the Absolute. No one could deny that the Eighteenth Century and the Greeks, just like 'enthusiastic' or fanatical ages or peoples, had their idols (very mad ones, too) and, complementary to them, their separations or limitations or *tabus*. Their ideal, we may say, was 'to see life steadily and see it whole.' But this, like every other ideal, is chimerical or impossible. For 'life' is an infinity of items and an infinity cannot be seen whole. The *soi-disant* synoptic view of the Greeks and of the Eighteenth Century was illusory or fictional: they absolutised and identified themselves with certain items of life, which they willed were the whole of life, and they rejected and separated themselves from other items, which they willed were not life. The only way of being *truly* catholic and synoptic is to view, not 'life' (a collection of items), but the one truly catholic or universal spirit, namely Goodness.

The modification may be in respect of the expression—in the ultimate analysis, in respect of the physical externalisation of

the attitude. But here, again, the man who separates himself from the other fellow (condemns him or wills that he is not) by stabbing him with a look does not act differently ' in spirit ' from the man who separates himself by stabbing with a stiletto.

Or the change may be in the object to which the laudatory or culpatory attitude is taken up. But, once more, he who absolutises (prizes) certain ' moral ' virtues or rules of conduct (pity, courage, temperance, almsgiving, truth-telling, for example) does not differ in spirit from, and indeed can turn out a no less dangerous madman than, the man who absolutises riding or soldiering or talent or writing. And he who separates himself, or turns away in spirit, from the wicked is in no different state from him who turns away from the good or the innocent.

These changes are purely external. To speak *Hibernice*, none of these attitudes can be really changed except by being completely removed. The hybrid life in which they exist in a modified or moderated form—the ordinary social or pharisaic life—cannot be the moral life, and the moral *nisus* cannot aim simply at this moderation: it aims at substitution, revolution or conversion. Genuine morality is an affair of the spirit. It has also, it is true, appropriate externalisation (appropriate actions) and in so far as the social or pharisaic life has borrowed some externalisations from morality it has borrowed *something* from it. But until this life is changed in spirit it is no more moral than a poetaster is poetic who has borrowed all the technique and words of Virgil.

PREACHING AND STATEMENT OF FACTS

But, not to be pretentious, whatever may be the case with other writings on Moral Philosophy, our argumentation and analysis are nothing more than preaching.[1] One of the things we are preaching (more correctly, we are repeating others' preaching) is objectivity; the moral life, we say, is the purely

[1] See pp. 27-28.

objective life; the genuinely moral man is not concerned even with the question whether *he* is moral or good or objective, whether *he* is non-egotistic or saved, whether *he* is doing right, but only with the question whether the right is being done. Now, if we look at the already oft-cited work of McDougall we find it stated that all the attitudes here called laudatory and culpatory involve self-feeling or the self-regarding sentiment—concernment that is, with oneself and one's position.[1] Further, after doing our best to recollect any representations of them we have met with in imaginative literature or any analysis of them in philosophy or psychology, we must decide that McDougall's description of them is true. As preachers, therefore, we say outright that there can be no room for them in the completely objective or moral life.

We are, however, also making (or claiming to make) statements of facts. We are stating that the laudatory and culpatory attitudes are in themselves madness, that one of the limits which to a certain extent actually restrains them in ordinary life is the moral *nisus*, that this *nisus* if allowed to work unrestrained leads to complete sanity, and that this sanity is identical with what is here called the moral or objective life.

MORAL TERMINOLOGY

What right have we to call this life we preach 'moral'? We have none, and the question is unimportant. If some like to call insanity 'morality,' then we must call the life we mean 'immorality,' since it is the opposite of what they denote. The fact is that there is no special terminology for the genuinely moral life. As soon as one is invented it is appropriated and

[1] One striking quotation must be given out of many possible ones: "It [scorn] is, I think, very apt to be complicated by positive self-feeling—we feel ourselves magnified by the presence of the moral weakness or littleness of the other, just as on a lower plane the physical weakness or smallness of those about one excites this positive self-feeling, with its tendency to expand the chest, throw up the head, and strut in easy confidence" (*Op. cit.*, p. 116).

infected by egotism or pharisaism as one of the means of usurping the place of the moral life. The continual process of this infection and disinfection of words constitutes largely the history of the change and growth of language.

Though we mean to say very little directly about the moral life itself, and though this little must be kept for the last chapter, yet at this point we must say something about it in order to show that the laudatory and culpatory attitudes are not of it. This we will now proceed to do. That is, we will proceed with preaching undiluted.

III. Genuinely Moral Attitudes

Attitude to Goodness

The genuinely moral man [1] seeks to be at one with Goodness, to be inspired by Goodness, to embody Goodness. At-oneness is not identity, which is neither sought nor imagined by the moral man. Goodness is not society, nor Humanity, nor Nature, nor the Universe, nor part of any of these—not anything with which the egotist generally identifies himself because it includes him or is continuous with him. The moral man does not think Goodness is his higher or real self or Will, because he knows he is only one self and that he is most really himself and just himself, though, to be sure, a very empty and nihilistic self, when he turns away from Goodness. This knowledge is in fact the indispensable beginning to any moral experience.

There being no identification, neither is there any laudatory attitude.

The 'Religious Experience'

Does the moral or objective life exclude, then, worshipping, awe, reverence, veneration, all of which have been called

[1] *I.e.*, what the writer feels he himself ought to be and what he thinks some people are and have been in varying degrees.

laudatory attitudes? Does it exclude that of which these are ingredients, the so-called 'religious experience'? It only does not exclude that at-oneness with, and inspiration from, God experienced as Goodness or Love, which is spoken of by some of the so-called mystics—only by some, for many of them are extreme egotists who speak of themselves as God or as identified with God, God who is not necessarily Goodness. That at-oneness, if it is describable at all, is certainly not describable nor described by the terms 'awe,' 'worship,' 'reverence,' 'veneration,' 'the sense of the numinous,' as these are ordinarily used. The attitudes generally denoted by them are not of the objective life: they involve either self-abasement (servile egotism) or self-glorification (despotic egotism),[1] and they belong to people who, whether they say so or not (often they do say it), are identifying themselves with society or Humanity or Nature, or an institution or creed, and are loving, or sentimentalising about, themselves. Above all they are attitudes to God conceived in the egotistic categories of power or position —the Omnipotent or Almighty, the Supreme Being or the All-inclusive Being. (Goodness is certainly not all-inclusive, and it is no more power or supreme than it is green or square or odorous.) Such a 'God' when described concretely (as by Milton, for example) turns out to be the Arch-Egotist and the father of all egotists and egotism. He is made by the egotist in his own image and is the egotist himself; hence he can be wrathful or offended or shocked at blasphemy just because the egotist can be wrathful and shocked by blasphemy against himself. Such a 'God' is just the idol of the tribe, the tribe

[1] *Cf.* McDougall, *op. cit.* (p. 113), on awe and reverence. Many will be shocked by what they may consider our dogmatic blasphemy. But, after all, it is only blasphemy about words, and words should certainly not be deified. If these words can describe objective attitudes then they can describe the moral life. What is serious and goes beyond mere words is the assertion that all religion which centres round the notions of power, absoluteness and supremacy is sheer egotism. It is for this that the writer is prepared to be judged and sent to the stake.

itself, identical with his worshippers. Hence, whatever he may be in name, in fact he can never be universal. At moments of crises he splits up into a legion of enemies or militant egotists: into the British ' God,' the German ' God,' the French ' God,' etc. At present he is being set up as of unimpeachable German descent with unimpeachable political principles. It is such a ' God ' (one who is power or omnipotence) who has caused all the troubles in theology.

MORAL LOVE

The moral man embodies Goodness in individual situations of which, because they embody or express Goodness, rightness holds. Goodness alone is good. But in a derivative sense the situation and all its elements as therein integrated, including the agent as ingredient therein, are good. The situation involves directly or indirectly other persons. By being immediately at one with Goodness the moral man is mediately at one with these persons also so far at least as they will allow it: he is at one with them in spirit. This at-oneness is communication or communion or intimacy without fusion or confusion or identification; distinctness without separation and without seeking for ' distinction.' Since it is a three-dimensional attitude, cognitive-affective-conative, it may be called love. But it must be called ' *moral* love ' to distinguish it on the one hand from egoistic love dependent upon special association or community of origin, of tastes and of interests (moral love is between persons simply *qua* persons), and on the other from the polemic egotistic love which is identification-separation.

Moral love is not a laudatory attitude. It does of course involve the recognition of rightness and of goodness, and if the mere recognition could be taken apart from the affective and conative aspects we might call it approval, prizing, valuing, etc., and liken it to egotistic approval, valuing, etc. But we cannot thus separate one aspect from the rest; if we do, we get

nothing but confusion. What characterises a laudatory attitude is, we have maintained, identification, and this is absent from moral love. In case, however, all that we have said about identification be considered doubtful, we will here emphasise other aspects of the question.

MORALITY AND INDIVIDUALITY

The vast difference between the moral and the laudatory attitude is in respect of their objects. The object of the former is always individual and the attitude is also individual on each occasion. Outside the individual situation nothing is good except Goodness itself. But individuals we cannot compare, grade or rank. And all lauding (that is, valuing, prizing, esteeming, etc.) involves comparison and grading. When we try to rank or compare individuals we do it in respect of generic attributes; we abstract from, and leave out, the individuality. But to leave out the individuality is to leave out all the goodness —that is, to leave out that towards which the moral attitude is.[1] Individuality may, however, be left out if we are considering merely efficiency or utility or power: in respect of this one individual is equivalent to, or identical with, or higher or lower than, another individal, simply because individuality does not count. Whenever there are grading and comparison and, with them, prizing or valuing, power is in effect always the object. The peculiarity of the laudatory attitude is, however, that this fact is not recognised (hence also the peculiarity of its affective-conative aspects): power is not recognised simply as power, it is sought as an end and not as a means, end and means are identified; the generic (subservience to the same end) is identified with the individual or the individual is identified with his power; hence one individual is identified

[1] The same applies, only perhaps in a lesser degree, to poems; the more individual—that is, the more poetic—they are the less can we grade or prize them. We can only do this with them in respect of their non-poetry.

with another, or he is ranked as higher or lower than another, and it is imagined that this ranking is a judgment about his individuality; individuality is in reality neglected altogether or irrelevant. All these peculiarities belong to the laudatory attitude even when it seems to be most moral, when it is towards 'moral' virtue: for 'moral' virtue, like any other virtue, is just what the Greeks, to the superfluous astonishment of some moderns, called it: *aretē*—prowess or fitness or efficiency.

The laudatory attitudes are, we have said, impersonal. The moral man also has impersonal attitudes. He too compares and estimates Virtues, Dominions, Thrones, Principalities and Powers—to adapt Milton's language. But he recognises them for what they are. His judgment, because it is free from the confusion and the affective-conative aspect of the laudatory attitude, is not laudatory—it is estimating but not esteeming: just so we estimate the heights of mountains and the horse-power of engines, but we do not esteem, admire, prize or value these.

A striking fact about the moral man is that his personal attitudes are not impersonal and his impersonal attitudes are not quasi-personal. There is no confusion with him between generality or abstractions and individuality. He has eminently the sense of individuality.

CONFIRMATIONS

For the rejection of the laudatory attitudes support may be found from some admissions which, if not universal, are at least of a certain generality. Many would agree that in any question of deep personal morality, as soon as we go beyond public standards or beyond what can be measured as service or disservice to a common end, in fact as soon as we pass beyond the staple of chairmanship oratory, the notion of merit and, therefore, also the attitudes correlative thereto of prizing,

praising, valuing, grading, are incongruous. But all real morality is deep and personal, because it is deep-rooted, comes from the whole personality and involves a sense of individuality. It is this even when its externalisation on a certain occasion is quite commonplace, just as commonplace words are poetic when used by a poet. It is also admitted that individuality is 'inestimable,' 'priceless,' 'invaluable,' 'incalculable.'

Further, the moral attitude, we have said, is a kind of intimacy between person and person. But there can be no intimacy with abstractions (qualities, attributes), which are the objects of valuation. Nor is there intimacy with persons whom we esteem, respect, honour, praise, admire, or otherwise laud (that is, we laud their attributes or 'characters'). The barrier may be in us or in them; but certainly it is in the laudatory attitude itself, as we find if we look closely; not until this attitude is transcended is the barrier removed. Still less is there any intimacy or communication with a person with whom we are infatuated or whom we idolise or worship: when in that state we have communication only with ourselves, or rather with our image or ideal of ourselves, with that which we will we are.

NEGATIVITY IN MORALITY?

If, however, we go on appealing to some kind of general consensus, as we have just been doing, we shall have to admit that the negative or the culpatory attitudes are present in the moral as in the egotistic life, even if with a difference. The difference is generally expressed by saying that the moral man hates or scorns or condemns or blames or is indignant with the sin or sinful action but not the sinner. This sounds plausible until we use our imagination. Let us imagine ourselves in any of these attitudes towards the action or the character of one who tramples over all that we hold dear or precious. We see

at once that, while we are angry, condemnatory or hating, the idea of a distinction between the agent and his action or character is both impossible and insufferable: he and it are then one and we want them both separated from us—in plain words, we want them both in hell for ever. But once the distinction is made the culpatory attitude is transcended. There is then left only the recognition of the wrong as wrong and of the evil as evil. This recognition cannot be called culpatory if it is not attended by the culpatory affective-conative aspect—namely, separation or turning away. This separation is impossible for the moral man for the simple reason that he lives in the real world, which is one and not bi-cameral like the egotist's fictional world with an Upper and Lower Chamber or with a real reality and unreal reality. In the whole of this world he must embody Goodness. He does not turn away from the sin or sinful action, but rather turns towards it passionately; he does not expel it but includes it within the one world and makes it good by healing, reforming or simply by bearing and forgiving. He seeks communication with the wicked even as with the righteous; only, the former will have no communication except war or identification-separation, and hence the moral seeking for communication with him may take the form of the violent battering at the gates which is punishment.

The culpatory attitudes are negative, and the moral life, which is wholly positive, can have no room for negation, not even for the negation of that negation which the sin may be said to be; for the negation of a negation is positive only in the grammar of certain languages but not in life.

These negative attitudes are already transcended, we have said, even in true and therefore sympathetic knowledge of sin or evil, which is already a kind of at-oneness or love or turning towards, and which is certainly impossible with even the mild culpatory emotion attendant upon the mildest of all culpatory attitudes which is known as mere blaming.

REMORSE AND REPENTANCE

Certainly the self-culpatory attitudes—self-condemnation, shame, remorse—the general consensus does assign to the moral life: above all, remorse. Of the latter McDougall rightly observes that it "has been commonly regarded by moralists as the most intense of the effects produced by the activity of that peculiar entity 'the conscience.'" [1] But all of them, and in particular remorse, we hold, are purely and grossly egotistic —they are forms of concernment with oneself. We have tried to exhibit them as accompaniments of the war between the inferiority-feeling and the superiority-feeling, between self-love and self-hatred, between the two selves which the egotist sets up within himself. Remorse attends not the thought that wrong has been done, but the thought that *we* have done it. Although the wrong may be righted or healed, the fact that we have done it and that we are 'that kind of person' (*i.e.* such as to have done it) remains for ever. And the tendency of remorse is also to endure for ever. It endures at any rate so long as we are preoccupied with that fact about ourselves. To say *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*, or even *vidi meliora probavique, deteriora secutus sum* is impossible for us without anguish. In spite of all the symbolical undoings invented for him by society or by religion the egotist can never really *forgive* himself; he can only try, or pretend, to *forget*. As McDougall says, "Even the doing of penance, though it yields some satisfaction to the baffled impulse [anger directed against oneself], does not heal the wound to one's self-regard caused by the recognition of the irrevocable failure to realise one's ideal of self. . . ." [2]

Now, in a moment of genuinely moral living a man will recognise that on many past occasions, perhaps even on all or

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 136. See also pp. 126-128. Without intending to do so he makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that self-culpatory attitudes cannot be anything but egotistic.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 136.

most, he has acted wrongly or sinned. Being for the moment moral, he does not, like the man who is either permanently or for the time being egotistic, forget or try to forget. His recognition is firm and clear and not, like the egotist's, equivocal. He recognises that it is his very own one self that has sinned and not some second, secondary, quasi-unreal and lower self. Unlike the egotist, he will say not that he was merely mistaken as to the right, but that he wilfully deceived himself as to what was right, or else that he acted in violation of his knowledge of what was right. But his recognition is made under the inspiration of Goodness and not under that of self-preoccupation. He is not concerned with his own worth or his place in a scale of worth; he has no "ideal of himself" to "realise"; he knows, and he takes it for granted, that he is a "miserable sinner." Hence he does not experience the acute pain of the struggle between inferiority-feeling and superiority-feeling, which constitutes shame and remorse. He knows neither shame nor remorse but only *repentance*, which is forgiveness and not condemnation, positive and not negative, prospective and not retrospective, liberating and not imprisoning, creative and not sterile; which is, finally, joy (not of course at having done wrong but at the fact that the right has been found) and not pain, however much it may be preceded by pain. This pain is, however, not inherent to repentance but only to the struggle of egotism against its own breakdown and against the attainment of repentance or the proper acknowledgment of sin; it is in fact the shame or remorse we experience while we are still egotistic and before we have reached the moment of genuinely moral living. When a man can unequivocally say to himself and to others: 'I have sinned'—a thing the egotist can never do without hedging and without torment or anger—and experience not pain and conflict—that is to say, not shame or remorse—but joy and peace, then in that moment at least he is genuinely moral and not egotistic. Thus, shame, remorse and

self-condemnation are seen to be not parts of the genuinely moral life but barriers—sometimes the penultimate barriers—against it.

'RIGHT,' 'OUGHT,' 'DUTY'

If what has here been said is true, there remains only a similarity of words between the genuinely moral man on the one hand and the collectivist or pharisaic egotist on the other. In the language of both the moral man and of the egotist the important terms are 'good,' 'right,' 'ought,' 'duty,' 'obligation.' We must say that when the moral man feels it is right or that it is his duty or that he ought or that he is obliged to act in a certain way or to do a certain thing, he hears, receives or accepts or obeys a call, urge, summons or inspiration from Goodness. This urge or inspiration is its own explanation or reason, or it is reason itself. He accepts it in a way analogous to the artist's acceptance of his inspiration. On the other hand, when the egotist feels or says these things he receives a categorical imperative ultimately from his own will. He wills that this or that action or rule or virtue is its own reason or reason itself; his attitude is sheer willing. In his case 'right' and 'good' mean really 'position-making.'

THE HYBRID LIFE

Society's life, or Humanity's life, or any one individual's life, taken as a whole (it cannot really be taken thus in any of these cases, because in none is it a whole), is not moral (though, of course, it can be). When it asserts itself to be this we hear either the arrogance of the Great Leviathan or pharisaism. Actually it is a hybrid resulting from the struggle between morality and egotism—it is something tinctured, but not instinct, with morality. The complexity of this hybrid is such as to baffle all simplicity unless it be that of the most penetrating wisdom and love. Hence comes the inadequacy of any mere black-and-

white portraiture of men—the impossibility of segregating them into goats and sheep; hence the injunction not to 'judge'—the inappropriateness of calling any man 'good' or 'bad.' Hence it is that the simplicity of those 'moral' or 'religious' preachers or propagandists who would have us look upon the world as a stage on which is played a melodrama consisting of the struggle between pure saints on the one hand and foul sinners on the other may rightly be considered to be itself a sin, the simplicity of egotism, its arrogance, arbitrariness and fondness for violence and short-cuts; and hence it is that patience, untiring and all-suffering, listening, subtle, penetrative and insinuating—the patience which enables us to enter into, and in a sense to become, all men—is one of the chief instruments of the genuinely moral life. If we have spoken most of the time of the genuinely moral man on the one hand and of the egotist on the other, we have done so for the sake of simplicity of exposition; we intended no more than to contrast the genuinely moral life on the one hand with the egotistic life on the other, or rather a moment or phase of the one with a moment or phase of the other. The genuinely moral man, one who is genuinely moral from the core, through and through and always, if we find or have found him, we may significantly say is superhuman, a new man, man transformed —indeed, Goodness itself embodied.

IV. The Virtues and Rules, or the Bridge between Morality and Egotism

MORALITY INVADING EGOISM AND EGOTISM

The genuine morality that we commonly find is an enclave in the territory of egoism and egotism, or, to vary the metaphor, streams or rivulets flowing on beds of egoism and over boulders, and between craggy banks, of egotism. Leaving metaphor, we will say that there are very few men whose lives are a hundred

per cent. genuine morality, or are dedicated to embodying Goodness: there are few who are dedicated even to one or two tasks or who have felt the urge of a vocation at all. Nevertheless it is perhaps not too optimistic to believe that there are quite a large number of 'decent people.' There are, firstly, those on whom genuine morality has a negative hold, who, in an individual situation and acting with insight into that situation and from none of the motives which we have described as either egoistic or egotistic, refuse to commit at least any flagrant violation of the more obvious requirements of Goodness; these are they who have a 'conscience'—the function of 'conscience' being negative in the main. The case of such a one is admirably described by Kant, in spite of his using on other occasions for morality the language appropriate only for egotism. Kant imagines "an honest man whom men want to persuade to join the calumnators of an innocent and powerless person": an honest man who, in spite of the offer of gifts and of threats of losses both to himself and to his nearest and dearest, in spite of the entreaties of these and of the anguish caused in him by the thought of their and his predicament, who, moreover, is not inspired by any "pretension to a supposed inward greatness of mind or noble meritorious sentiments" and whose motive is, therefore, not "alloyed with self-love" and has no "assistance from the side of sensibility," yet remains "true to his uprightness of purpose, without wavering or even doubting"[1] —that is, refuses to join in the calumny. Such a man would undoubtedly, in that moment at least, be acting with genuine morality, if only negatively. Nevertheless, it might very well be the case that apart from such crises the main tenor of his life is on egoistic or egotistic lines, that he is egocentric rather than agathocentric—that is, centred about the self and not about Goodness.

Then there are those who have, indeed, at a certain stage

[1] *Methodology of Pure Practical Reason* (Abbott's translation).

of their history chosen Goodness as their centre but who stray frequently away from that centre and are more apt to stray in circumstances of a certain kind than in circumstances of another kind. There are also those rarer ones who, having chosen their centre, stray infrequently or not at all but who yet have to deal with promptings in themselves which come not from Goodness but from egoism or egotism.

EGOISTIC AND EGOTISTIC CONSTANTS

Now, in all these cases we have genuine morality. But it is genuine morality slowly invading and permeating a life moulded egoistically and egotistically. Goodness in itself is one, and the moral *nisus* in itself is one. But the egoistic life consists of many instincts or habits or fixations, many constants, many similar reactions to similar *stimuli* or occasions. Thus, given circumstances all of a certain kind (*e.g.* such as to threaten my life), I shall react to all of them in a similar way (I shall be afraid and tend to run away); given the presence of food when I am hungry I shall tend to grab the food. The egotistic life on the other hand is not made up of, and does not spring from, many separate instincts or impulses or habits; it springs from ambition or egotistic self-love which, like the moral *nisus*, is one; hence it is wrong to speak, as do many psychologists, of many different and independent egotistic instincts or impulses (the instinct of self-abasement and the instinct of self-assertion, the instinct of pugnacity, the instinct of destruction, the instinct of self-display, etc.)—these being in fact, as we have shown, merely the different expressions, evoked by different circumstances, of one and the same attitude. But though there are many men who lead lives almost completely egotistic or egocentric most men are not thus always and everywhere egotists. Their egotistic attitude will come into play only on certain occasions or with regard to certain things only or in answer to the egotism of others only; or they will be egotistic

only in certain modified and qualified ways. Thus, however little egotistic they may be otherwise, most men will react egotistically—that is, with resentment, anger, hatred, vindictiveness—on occasions on which they are injured, wronged or insulted. We thus get egotistic constants or fixations, brought into operation by occasions of a certain class.

CLASSIFICATION BY MEANS OF THE CONSTANTS

Now, one and the same moral *nisus* will operate on a number of different occasions by embodying one and the same Goodness. The embodying consists in organising elements in a situation, integrating them into an organic whole. In all the situations the moral *nisus* is one and the same and the Goodness is one and the same; and yet each situation, when integrated, is unique, and each element, once integrated into the situation, belongs to it organically, so that it cannot be separated so as to be compared with another element integrated in another situation and be declared the same as that other element or similar to it. So far then comparison and classification are excluded. But we may compare the occasions looking at them *before* the integration and after the integration, and we may classify them by means of some of the constants that presented themselves as problems to the moral man. Thus we may group three of the occasions together and say that they resemble each other in that on each of them the constant or fixation fear was present and on each of them the moral man controlled his fear in the sense that he did not run away or that he did something which imperilled his life. We say that his action was the same or similar on all the occasions, that on all he performed courageous acts, and, looking at more than three such occasions, we say that through acting so often in a similar way he develops a habit or capacity, that of controlling fear, and we call it courage. In this way arises the notion of a virtue—in this case the virtue courage. There arises also a prescription or rule for our

conduct on all such occasions, a 'moral' rule or law—*e.g.* 'Do not run away from danger.' Similarly we classify six other occasions on the ground of the presence in each of the urge of the bodily appetites and of the control of this urge, and within this class we form a sub-class of three occasions which resemble each other in that in each the appetite was that of sex. Thus we get the notion of the virtue temperance and, as a species of it, sexual continence; we also get rules relative to the satisfaction of the bodily appetites in general and of sex in particular. Again, by grouping together other occasions on all of which anger or resentment or hatred was present and controlled we get the idea of the virtue of clemency or mercy or forbearance and of the rule relative thereto.

We then say that acts of courage and the goodness exhibited in them are similar to each other and different from acts of clemency and from the goodness exhibited in acts of clemency, and that one may have the virtue and the morality of courage without having the virtue or the morality of clemency. Finally we proceed to make true what we say or think, by attaching our attention and desire and practice not to Goodness in itself and the moral *nisus* in itself, not to the inner unity and life of the matter, but to its external body and multiplicity, to these entities born of classification—by aiming, in the words of Kant, at a "moral culture" which begins with "improvement in morals" and not with "a transformation of the mind," by contending "against vices singly, leaving the general root of them untouched." [1] We cultivate one habit without cultivating another, or we cultivate all the virtues—in so far as there can be an all in a matter in which each of an infinite number of classifications yields an infinity—without getting a scintilla of the one spirit.

In this classification and in its results there is something fundamentally vicious. Because there are classes of vices or of

[1] *On the Radical Evil in Human Nature* (section 5).

what is not good, we think there are classes of goodness; because we can classify ways of not being moral, we think we can classify ways of being moral; because there are classifiable arrests, obstructions or truncations of genuine morality and Goodness, we think there are many species of Goodness, that Goodness is a collection or system of virtues and that morality consists in practising these virtues or acting in conformity with the moral laws: in short, because Goodness and morality manifest themselves in invading and permeating a life egoistically-egotistically organised, and because such a life is a multiplicity of significantly classifiable constants, we think that Goodness and morality are themselves such multiplicities. But, in fact, when we classify the virtues we are simply classifying egoism and egotism and not genuine morality or Goodness. For neither the ground of the differences nor the ground of the similarities which are exhibited by the classification is to be found in genuine morality or Goodness. Not the ground of the differences: for the moral *nisus* or the Goodness on occasions of courage is exactly the same as on occasions of clemency. Nor the ground of the similarities: for one occasion labelled 'occasion of courage' is not the same as another occasion similarly labelled, nor similar to it, if we take each as an organically integrated whole (and only as such a whole does it exhibit morality or Goodness); the standing steadfast or the risking of one's life, taken by itself, has no moral significance; this significance it possesses only as an integrated element in the organic whole; but, when thus integrated, it is not really similar to the standing steadfast or the risking of one's life in another situation. The ground of the similarities, like that of the differences, lies wholly in the egoistic or egotistic constants, in the fear or the hatred.[1]

[1] A similar question arises in Æsthetics. When we are philosophising about the differences and similarities in the beauties of stone-sculpture and wood-sculpture, of painting and of literature, of the romantic and the classical, etc., we

VIRTUE NOT MORAL OR GOOD

But not only is not Goodness or morality in itself a collection or system of virtues; the virtues in themselves are not essentially moral or good. Are not courage and loyalty and many other virtues found in the veriest tyrant or bully, in lives and in situations which, as to form if not as to content, are completely egocentric and not at all agathocentric? Are they not found abundantly in Satan himself as depicted by Milton? If we *admire* and *approve* the virtues both in Satan and wherever they are found, this is not a sign that they are genuinely moral but only that, as we have maintained, admiration and approval are not genuinely moral but only egotistic, and their object is not morality or Goodness but position or power. Virtue is prowess or efficiency, for good but also, as in Satan, for evil. It is panurgic.

In the egoistic and in the egotistic life the virtues do indeed occupy much room.

In the egoistic life they may be cultivated as means to attaining the experiences or processes desired, and, once established as habits, they maintain themselves there by their own power and in their own right, like any other habit, tendency, disposition or capacity; thus, having for whatsoever reason become an ascetic, one goes on being an ascetic because one likes asceticism as an experience—because one likes one's experiences qualified in the way in which they are qualified by being tempered and not carried beyond a certain point.

The egotist on the other hand pursues the virtues as so many powers. Thus, at the beginning of our account of egotism

are really philosophising about marble, wood, pigments and words and the *ethos* of the age or writer, and not about Beauty or Art. A good deal of the confusion rampant in Æsthetics is due to not recognising this and to trying to find the grounds of the similarities and differences in Beauty or Art itself and not in the material.

we showed how the egotist commonly practises the virtue of asceticism to the point even of mortification. We have also shown how for its own existence, especially for its existence as the life of society or of the Great Leviathan, egotism must accept limitations of itself. It can accept the very denial of itself and yet live on that denial: the egotist may feed his pride by contemplating his lack of pride or his humility and by performing acts which are taken to be of humility. Now, if the virtues are limitations of Goodness and of genuine morality, they are also limitations of egotism. It is as such limitations that egotism adopts them. It is in this sense that egotism, in itself empty, can be said to borrow its contents from its second great source of supply, genuine morality. It borrows—with a borrowing which is, however, also a making—the virtues and the rules relative thereto. Or rather it stops genuine morality at the point most suitable to itself, it selects from it, it cuts it up into virtues and rules and ideals, and these, petrified and rigid, it takes over. It then subsumes them under its characteristic notions and attitudes: praise and blame, approval and condemnation, etc.—in other words it turns them into what we have called 'the symbol or currency.' This, we have said, may be done with anything. But the virtues are peculiarly suited for this *rôle*: in the first place, they present themselves as obvious ways of having power—power over oneself and power over others; secondly, they are difficult of practice and rare of acquisition, which acquisition and practice, moreover, allow of degrees; in all these respects, therefore, they serve admirably for differentiating, grading, ranking. Once established as the symbol or currency, they are inculcated and maintained with all the power of appeal which egotism exercises over normal human beings. More particularly the young are trained to adopt virtues and rules of behaviour by the appeal to their competitiveness, to their desire for praise, approval, respect, admiration, and to their fear of the opposites

of these.[1] Thus egotism is the strongest maintainer and propagator of the virtues, small and great—of all that is commonly received as ' morality.'

V. The Substitution of Egotism for Morality

REASON FOR THE SUBSTITUTION

Egotism does not merely borrow from Goodness and genuine morality. It substitutes itself for these. Why does it do it and how?

The reason for the substitution is this: the egotist must feel that he, or that with which he has identified himself (his class or community, his code, system of values, or ideals, or symbol or currency), is final, ultimate, supreme, the All; in other words, he must absolutise; in this consists his egotism. But to him also, as to everybody, comes the call or inspiration of Goodness. To the genuinely moral man it presents itself as its own reason and explanation, as, indeed, Reason itself; there is no question of high and low or higher and lower, of superior and supreme, of authority, because these are not his categories. But the egotist thinks of it or feels it in precisely these, his characteristic categories. It is to him an uncomfortable imperative, an external authority, a rival claiming superiority over him, a reminder that he or that with which he has identified himself is not the All, is not final and supreme; at the mildest it is a suggestion of something unfinished, unlimited, indefinite and unrounded-off, of the open and unexplored, a threat ever of the new and the more. This is to him a thing not to be borne. He must silence it.

MODE OF SUBSTITUTION

The most effective way of doing this is to say to himself and to others, loudly, firmly and vehemently, that he or that with

[1] Quintilian, a classic educator who approves of this method of education, says: " licet ipsa vitium sit ambitio, frequenter tamen causa virtutum est " (*Instit.*, I. ii.).

which he has identified himself is Goodness or the Good and that the urge coming from his idol is the same as the call of Goodness. He wills that this is the case. With reference to that urge he uses the terms of genuine morality: 'right' and 'wrong,' 'ought' and 'ought not.' There is no message, no philosophy, no bible of genuine morality which he does not in the long run adopt and misapply. Thus armed with the panoply of genuine morality as well as with his own, he is all but absolutely proof against every attack; he is master of all he surveys—and that of which he is not master he will not survey; he is the Prince of this World.

EXAMPLE OF THIS SUBSTITUTION

This adoption-substitution process is identical with the historical process; it goes on continually, unnoticed and unconsciously; to it every egotist—that is, every mother's son—contributes his share. It has however outstanding moments when we can say more particularly that *virtue* has been *honoured* —that is, genuine morality has been turned into virtue and brought under the egotistic notion of honour. At a certain moment in his history we can, speaking literally or metaphorically, say of an inspired personality that he has already been officially canonised, beribboned or bemedalled, approved, stamped and sealed, as the hero, leader, founder or pattern of a community or sect. The effect of the operation is always to substitute for him or for the spirit working in him a selection of words and deeds and virtues, a code or a creed: the senate has sat and decreed his apotheosis, the substantial significance of which lies in the fact that it covers certain *acta* or laws. Henceforth the person has become a new being, an official entity, the creation or creature of the collectivity. If he is still alive and insists on going whither the spirit leads him, even away from that which he has been declared to be, then woe to him! The senate is in perpetual session. It will try him for *læsa majestas.*

In literature this adoption-substitution receives its clearest as well as its most succinct expression in the saying "*nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus.*" [1] This seems to be an abnegation of egotism or snobbery, but the abnegation is of the sort on which egotism lives; it is the very apotheosis of snobbery, made by a Roman of Romans, which is to say a snob of snobs. If *nobilitas* means rank, and *virtus* means Goodness or genuine morality, then the sentence is the literary equivalent of conferring the Iron Cross on God.

THE ETHICS OF POWER

The hybrid or miscellany consisting of the enclave of genuine morality, of egoistic or appetitional living, of genuine morality petrified into virtues and rules and ideals by egotism, and of the results of egotism balancing egotism, is the life of humanity in the mass. It is a wild confusion in which the categories of egotism and those of genuine morality are all but inextricably intertwined, and in which the term 'good' is found used in all the three senses: egoistic, egotistic and genuinely moral. It is because most, or at least very many, writers on Ethics will study that miscellany without making the necessary distinctions that Ethics suffers from such dire confusion. What unity the miscellany has is given to it by egotism, since men in the mass are predominantly egotistic. The ethics which is about that miscellany, if it is ethics at all, is therefore the ethics of egotism; it is the ethics of Power or of Values. In it the substitution of egotism for genuine morality reaches its culmination.

A VIRTUE EXAMINED: PATRIOTISM

'How paradoxical,' it will be objected, 'to call egotism a nullity or nihilism and yet to place it at the root of all that mankind has ever done and been, at the root of every glory that was ever a Greece and of every greatness that was ever a

[1] Juvenal, *Sat.*, viii. 20.

Rome! And, anyhow, if egotism can do all this, let us have this nullity by all means!' To this objection we must reply that we have never admitted that egotism creates anything. It merely arrests, truncates, immobilises; at the best it conserves, but with a conservation which is also stagnation and ultimately death—the fate which has overtaken *tabus*, for example. It cannot originate, for the simple reason that it is panurgic or can be satisfied by contraries; all its contents it borrows either from the appetitional life, which we by no means intend to exclude from the genuinely moral life, or from the genuinely moral life itself. It is from the latter that the virtues, after all, come. They are not genuine morality itself but they are distantly connected with it.

To clear ourselves of the charge of paradox-mongering and to do away with the risk of misunderstanding, we will illustrate what we have said by one concrete instance, an instance, moreover, which is the object of the widest interest to-day. Let us take the virtue of patriotism, more particularly the modern mystical and perfervid brand of patriotism which is so different from the more pedestrian virtue of classical Antiquity.[1] It is fashionable nowadays to talk of patriotism as though it were a mere vice, always "the last refuge of the scoundrel." Here it will be treated as a virtue, and indeed as one of the highest, which in fact it is. As a virtue it is a limitation in two directions: a limitation of the egotism of the individual effected by genuine morality and only accepted by egotism, and a limitation, effected by egotism, of the universal love unlimited by frontiers which is preached by genuine morality. The function of egotism here is merely that of immobilising and mutilating. It does not contribute any positive content to patriotism. The content comes on the one hand from the appetitional life, more particularly from the gregarious

[1] The modern patriot, unlike the ancient, must believe the enemies of his country to be sinners.

instinct, and on the other from genuine morality. This latter contribution can be established as an historical fact. Modern mystical patriotism is the love preached by Christianity—the love of God and, in and through that love, the love of all mankind—with God left out or replaced by country and with territorial frontiers brought in. The mark of egotism is seen in the fact that patriotism flourishes best by opposition to an enemy, by hating or at least fighting and destroying him, and in the fact that patriotism does not replace the individual's egotism by something else, as genuine morality would, but, on the contrary, is based on it, merely limiting and modifying it. Egotism in patriotism, as everywhere else, is mere negativity. Hence, if we say that in the genuinely moral life patriotism would vanish, we do not mean that anything positive would be lost; only the limits or the walls would vanish, and the imprisoned spirit would be liberated. There can be a very concrete love—not abstract, diffused, watery or vague—for all countries, all men, and indeed all that exists, a love which is always the same and is yet individualised (but not limited) by the individuality of one's country and of one's relations to it. Even now while loving our country we can have a special love for our native city or village, though we have no special name for it, just as perhaps we should have no special name for the love of our country if the universal love were established. To imagine that in losing patriotism in this sense of losing we should lose anything positive is to think that mankind or any one country would be worse off than it is now if all men of all countries co-operated always as devotedly in constructive work as the men of one country now co-operate in destroying another country and thus nearly their own also!

CHAPTER VIII

EGOTISM AND EVIL

I. Some Views on the Cause of Evil

THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN MORALITY AND EGOTISM

So far is egotism from being the servant of Goodness and the ally of the genuinely moral life or a factor in it, that it is the main source of evil or is evil itself. At any rate it is the contrary of Goodness and morality, so far at least as such a contrary can exist; as far as this is possible, ambition is the very contrary of the moral *nisus*. The similarities between them—similarities which we have found so dangerously misleading—are therefore not to be wondered at. For, apart from the similarities that are bound to arise from egotism simulating the genuinely moral life, ambition and the moral *nisus*, being contraries, must resemble each other at least in belonging to the same genus—the genus of desires for form or structure or situations or relations as contrasted with that of desires for processes. Thus, black and white resemble each other in both belonging to the genus 'colour,' while neither resembles 'square' which is not the contrary of either of them.

PHILOSOPHY'S IMPEACHMENT OF THE BODY

We have given egoism or the appetitional life its due share as a cause of evil. How does the share of egotism compare with it? In this question of estimating the respective contributions to evil of egoism and egotism there has always been a very marked divergence between philosophical ethical reflections on the one hand and the ethical reflection to be found in ordinary conversation and in literature on the other. Philosophy will have it that the chief cause of evil is appetition and,

moreover, pre-eminently or exclusively appetition of a certain kind, that connected with the body, or the bodily appetites. Thus, Mr Ross states that most bad actions are selfish actions (selfishness, we have said, is a species of egoism) and are due to the agent's desire for his pleasures, as a rule for the pleasure of the senses.[1] Mr Ross does not expand, illustrate or justify his statement. But a kindred statement is expanded by the poet Lucretius. He puts down *all* evil to desire for life (appetition for biological processes) or rather to fear of death (death being regarded as a cessation of life-processes or as itself an unpleasant process). As forms or effects of this fear he considers avarice, ambition for power, for supremacy, for status and for renown, the resentment of inferiority (*contemptus*) and of poverty (because they "seem states nigh to death"), hatred, envy, and even boredom. To it he attributes all strife and competition, civil and fratricidal war, all crimes, every violation of decency, of loyalty and of affection, and, paradoxically enough, even suicide.[2] Because he expresses this view with all the vividness and concreteness of a supreme poet, its absurdity becomes at once patent, as does also the necessity for finding some other motive for evil than the desire for life and the fear of death. The prevalence in philosophy of this idea of the appetitional origin of evil is due perhaps to Plato more than to any other one man. Although, as we have seen, he carefully distinguishes "spirit" from appetition, and recognises the possibility of evil springing from "spirit" unaided (the evil arising from anger and love of strife, of victory and of honour [3]), yet he prefers to think of "spirit" as normally the ally of genuine moral vision, and when he talks of evil he makes this come almost exclusively from the bodily appetites. What is to him the worst type of man, the tyrant—an obvious egotist, accord-

[1] *The Right and the Good*, p. 166.
[2] *De Rerum Natura*, iii. 59-90 and 1060-1070.
[3] See above, p. 86.

ing to us—is, he says, hounded on to power, tyranny and oppression by a mad bodily lust. And yet Plato was intimate with at least one tyrant and he might have known from the history of Greece that, whatever might be the case with those who succeeded to an established tyranny, the men who had had to win it and establish it had not been the slaves of bodily lusts, but lovers of power, honour, supremacy—in short, egotists. If only he had elaborated the 'madness'—the psychology of megalomania—and left out the 'bodily lust,' how different would his account of evil have been![1] As it is, it is to him and through him to Greece and not, as is popularly supposed, to Christianity and through Christianity to the East, that we are chiefly indebted for the conception of the body as the chief source of evil and for the asceticism consequent upon that conception which has for so long exercised such a powerful influence over the whole Western world.[2] But it is a very attractive one, this notion of Plato's. It leads to optimism and to a faith in the perfectibility of man by external means. For there goes with it the conviction that the causes of evil lie outside of man—in Nature or matter, at the worst in his body and at the very worst in the temporary deficiencies of his intellect which is, after all, not himself in the same sense as his will is. Let us but master the necessity for the struggle for existence imposed on us by Nature, that niggardly dispenser who has so fashioned our bodies that the identical food which mine consumes yours cannot consume, and through not giving enough to go round makes it necessary for me very regretfully

[1] *Republic*, Book IX. from the beginning. Apart from his reference to the body, Plato describes the tyrannic desire pretty much as we have described egotism, even in respect of absolutising and madness. He is also remarkably modern and psycho-analytical, making use of the evidence of dreams, referring to neuroticism and giving, implicitly at least, the theory of the unconscious and of suppression. His theory about the transition from democracy to tyranny is also extremely relevant to modern times.

[2] This conception and asceticism have always been alien, as is well known, to the Jewish people—the only 'East' in question here.

to kill or to starve you; let us also spread enlightening information; and hey, presto! the problem of evil will vanish. In fact there is no problem of evil ("in the Victorian sense"), we have learnt from Mr Shaw; all that is needed are a few able political economists like Sydney Webb to give us some really good lectures and to guide us.[1] It is this conception of human nature that seems to have inspired, along with the father of them all, those peculiar children of Plato, the creators of Utopias—imaginary worlds in which at a mere retouch of the political and economic machine, after a few readjustments of a few bolts, screws or levers, all evil or all serious evil is no more.[2]

COMMON SENSE ON EVIL

But it is a far different story of evil that we get if we listen to the ordinary unphilosophic man daily carrying on his "proper study" of Man—criticising and grumbling about his neighbour. We find that it is not by his greeds and lusts and pleasure-seeking that he is impressed, but by his ambitions and vanities and conceits; by his desire to get the better of others or to get even with them, or to get his own way, or to get the upper or the whip hand, or to be cock of the walk, to shine or not to be outshone; by his obstinacy, pigheadedness and defiance, by his abjectness or obsequiousness or servility or snobbery, by his envies and jealousies and grudges and malice and rancour both petty and great, by his kinks and crankinesses and prejudices and superstitions and fanaticisms and idealisms. If he finds him more dangerous than the wildest of wild beasts, this is not merely because he sees that, like any wild beast, he hunts for his food, but because he sees that, unlike most wild beasts, he hunts also for greatness and glory and victory and distinction; that he lives not simply by or for bread alone, but, in a sense, by and for nothing, the nothingness

[1] See the prefaces to *Back to Methuselah* and *Saint Joan*.

[2] For one of the latest of these see H. G. Wells' *The Shape of Things to Come*.

of pride and fanaticism, of *idées fixes*, of causes and ideals; that he is interested not merely in the preservation and increase of life but predominantly in something that is not life or process at all but is empty singularity, moreness and mostness; that, in short, he has the distinction of being *Homo Insipiens*, the irrational or mad animal.[1]

IMAGINATIVE LITERATURE ON EVIL

This story is borne out by the tale which is literature or by that aspect of it which is a criticism of life. Tragedy, the supreme species of literature, has for its matter evil, but evil of a special kind, that which is connected with egotism: the tragic hero, as Aristotle insists, must not be just genuinely moral but one who falls into calamity through some fault in himself; this fault however must not be vice or depravity (appetitional evil) [2]; the extant Greek tragedies show it to consist not in any bodily or non-bodily appetition (greed, incontinence, sensuality, selfishness, cowardice) but in some form or other of *hubris* or egotism: in pride, megalomania, self-will, stubbornness, contentiousness. Nor is the case different with non-Greek tragedy. Indeed, it cannot be different. We may say that in proportion as an author turns his attention away from the egotism of man, or denies its existence, he fails to deal with evil and fails therefore to write tragedy or even any very deep comedy. As a signal example of such a failure one might cite Bernard Shaw, in strong contrast to Ibsen whose apostle he once constituted himself at the beginning of his career.[3] Nor are we thinking of exceptional, great or exotic literature only, or of the drama only. Take a novel, a quiet, pedestrian, level-headed novel like

[1] It is, however, probable that in this respect man is not distinguished from the rest of organic and inorganic Nature.

[2] *Poetics*, xiii.

[3] When Shaw has to represent any form of egotism (*e.g.* vindictiveness, resentment to slights, obstinacy, prejudice) he treats it as merely an intellectual error due to a wrong theory or to misinformation and easily dispelled by a bright lecture from some sensible woman. Cf. *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*.

Trollope's *Barchester Towers* depicting the very prosaic life of the clerical world of an ordinary English Cathedral town. We find there Slope, who is selfish, indeed, and sensual (appetitional vices) but in whom the desire for power, authority and importance, and, above all, for victory over Dr Grantly (the representative of another camp or collectivity differentiated from Slope's by certain minutiæ of ritual), is so overwhelming that under its influence he risks the loss of everything that as an appetitional being he desires to obtain; there is Squire Thorne, who after the repeal of the Corn Laws creates for himself a purely imaginary esoteric and mystic world in which his political ideals or prejudices are victorious; there is the Signora, who, devoid of sexual appetition, yet delighted in the exercise of her power for sexual conquests and spitted Slope " as a boy does a cockchafer on a cork, that she might enjoy the energetic agony of his gyrations "; there are all the oddities of snobbery among the squire's tenants who measure greatness by whatever is of the ' gentry '; there is everything but the predominance of bodily or non-bodily appetition. Indeed, what we are maintaining is a truism. Literature in its *rôle* of the critic of life sees that evil comes chiefly from men as characters. Character is not imprinted by appetition, still less by bodily appetition, but by egotism; it is the immobilisation and limitation affected by egotism upon the spontaneity of appetition on the one hand and upon the spontaneity of the moral *nisus* on the other. Etymologically the term means " a mark engraved or impressed on coins and seals "; it denotes an engraving effected by egotism upon material hardened by egotism.

COPERNICAN REVOLUTION IN MORALITY

If it is true that Christianity has brought about a Copernican revolution in morality, this revolution must have consisted not least of all in emphasising pride as the chief root of evil and

in showing its nature and extent. Confusedly and crudely apprehended by the popular consciousness of Antiquity, which called it *hubris*,[1] pride was either neglected by ancient philosophy or else treated as an integral part of morality itself. Modern philosophy has followed suit,[2] leading with it, or else led by, religion, or at least Protestantism. But the notion of pride still remains with us—in ordinary consciousness more or less simple as in Antiquity, and in literature in its subtler and more complex later form. Falteringly sometimes, and without an adequate general philosophy, Adlerian psychology has been trying to establish it in the field of Psychiatry. It ought to have the central place in philosophical Ethics.

II. The Vitiation of Appetition by Egotism

ALL NATURE LIMITED BY EGOTISM? (See pp. 160-165, 172, 187, 237-238.)

It may even be doubted whether egotism is not the sole source of evil, whether egoism or appetition by itself, unaided by egotism, can really be the cause of evil, as we have implied it could. An appetition is simply a desire for an experience or process. But no desire for any experience—no desire other than that for egotistic position and for the experience of that position or for the experience or process symbolic of that position—no desire, say, for drinking, for eating, or for sex-experience, can in itself be the occasion of my doing wrong. It can be this only when it is so overwhelming and insistent or pleonectic and extravagant that I proceed to satisfy it even when I ought not, or beyond the point where I ought to stop.

Another quality in it that may turn it into a temptation or stumbling-block is its rigidity or lack of plasticity or its being able to be satisfied only in a limited number of ways. There

[1] The notion was considerably refined by Æschylus, especially in the *Agamemnon*.

[2] "The moral virtues are the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride" (Mandeville, *Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*).

are degrees in this rigidity. Thus, downright lust cannot be content with anything but bodily satisfaction and is more rigid than the sexual desire which can find satisfaction in mere friendship with members of the other sex; the need to breathe is more rigid than hunger or thirst; hunger and thirst are more rigid in the human organism than in an organism as such, but even in an organism as such the number of ways in which they can be satisfied or of the things which can satisfy them is limited; in general, life as such (biological needs or cravings and their satisfactions), though fairly plastic, is yet rigid because it can go on only in certain conditions. But one cannot *a priori* see any reason for any rigidity; one cannot see why life should express itself in a system of processes so related that one of them cannot go on without the others, or why certain conditions should be indispensable to life; still less when we particularise can we see why man should have to eat meat, for example—indeed, we see that he need not.[1] Now, may not the imperiousness or compulsiveness and the extravagance and the rigidity of certain appetitions be the work of egotism, effected far back in the history of the race? In other words, may not hunger or thirst and the sexual appetite be fixations, prejudices or *idées fixes* like neurotic compulsions, the results of the absolutising, petrifaction and immobilisation of egotism? They certainly resemble very closely those results of its operation of which we can study the genesis from beginning to end especially in Psychiatry.

A third characteristic of appetition which turns it into a stumbling-block is its exclusiveness or separation, or rather the exclusiveness and separation of the processes it makes for, the separation into *meum* and *tuum* of our processes, the fact that my process is not also yours. For it is obvious that if my eating and process of nutrition could also be yours there would be no occasion for conflict between us in that respect. But we have

[1] This is not meant as an argument for vegetarianism.

suggested that this characteristic is not inherent in appetition or process as such and that some special act is needed to explain both its genesis and maintenance.[1] May not the exclusiveness and separateness in question here be that which we have seen to be the mark of egotism all the time? Its especial instrument would seem to be matter, more especially the material body, and it is to the bodily appetitions that both compulsiveness and rigidity more emphatically belong. But may not all matter be the petrifact made and maintained by the arresting, immobilising, absolutising action of egotism? May it not be life which has egotistically immobilised itself into separate, exclusive and mutually repellent centres just because it wanted to do so?[2] May not the so-called laws of nature be egotistic fixations?

If all these questions can be answered in the affirmative, then it would seem that appetition in general and more particularly bodily appetition cannot by itself be the occasion for evil, and that still less can it be the cause of egotism's being such an occasion; that when either of these appears to be the case we have simply another illustration of the tendency of egotism which we have been illustrating all along—the tendency to impress appetition into its own service; that if the body (or bodily appetition) is especially connected with evil this is because egotism has long since corrupted and enslaved it.

EGOTISTIC CORRUPTION EXEMPLIFIED

All this is speculation,[3] the truth of which cannot perhaps be

[1] See above, pp. 61-62.

[2] The statement that the tyranny of the body may ultimately be the tyranny of egotism itself is not inconsistent with the statement made above (pp. 89-91, 163) that it is precisely the egotist who most resents and hates it. After all, it is not his own tyranny. Though, for that matter, it is quite possible for an egotist to resent and hate his own tyranny. If the genuinely moral man is most patient with the body and does not hate it, this is because he meets all egotisms with patience and not with hatred.

[3] We are indebted for it partly to Lossky (see especially *Freedom of Will* and *Die Grundlehren der Psychologie*), partly to Bergson (*L'Évolution Créatrice*). But it may be that neither writer would approve entirely of our illustration and application of it.

proved. But it is interesting—and for this interest only do we mention it—because of the observable facts to which it might point for verification. These facts show us egotism at work both in conferring compulsiveness, extravagance, pleonectic traits, rigidity and exclusiveness upon free, non-bodily appetitions so that they become like bodily appetites, and in carrying to a further stage these same characteristics in bodily appetitions in which they already exist; it is this that suggests the idea that egotism is the originator of these characteristics. The second operation has already been illustrated and will be further illustrated incidentally in what follows. The first it will suffice, after all the description given of egotism, to illustrate by two instances.

Let the first instance be the desire for æsthetic experience or for the enjoyment of beauty—a free appetition and non-bodily or sufficiently such for the purpose of the illustration. It is by nature non-exclusive and non-separatist at least in the sense that, although my æsthetic experience is not yours, you and I can both at the same time enjoy the same object (poem or other work of art) whereas you cannot eat the identical food which I am consuming. The egotist proceeds to make it exclusive and separatist: he resents the fact that others should have the æsthetic experience at all, still more that their experience should be like his own or that they should enjoy similar beauties; he proceeds to cultivate a narrow, esoteric, exotic, cliquey taste and to pride himself on the number of his dislikes ; cliques and coteries arise, and warfare between them—the manifestation of collective egotism; the æsthetic desire may even become degraded to a desire for rare *objets d'arts* which can be fought for and around which ambition, envy and strife may rage as they do around money; the pleasaunce of beauty and of freedom becomes the jungle of the wild beasts of egotism. With exclusiveness and separatism comes also rigidity: the æsthetic desire is by nature infinitely plastic, for any one of an

infiinite number of beauties can satisfy it; but by the time the egotist has finished with it only a very small number of rarities can answer its demands. It is also by nature non-pleonectic and non-extravagant: in art, Plato says, we do not, as in money-making, desire simply to go one better, or one more, than our neighbour, nor do we desire simply to be different. This would undoubtedly be true if besides being artistic we were not also egotists; but actually what, alas, is the history of art and taste but the sorry tale of people ambitiously attempting either to go one better than their predecessors or contemporaries, to be still more romantic or still more classic, to out-Homer Homer, to out-Wagner Wagner, to gild the lily and to paint the rose, or else to be simply different from others? Lastly, the æsthetic desire is non-compulsive: we enjoy beauty whenever we get it but there are no special occasions on which we must have it; yet the egotist can make it compulsive and we can see him priding himself upon the possession of a compulsive æsthetic craving. He ends up with an æsthetic desire which has all the characteristics of a bodily appetite; what is more, it may remain in him as an egotistic petrifact even when he has adopted the non-egotistic attitude and has expelled most egotisms from his system, just as compulsive hunger may still remain in the saint.

The second instance, taken from a more commonplace sphere, is even more strange. It shows egotism establishing not merely a quasi-bodily appetition but actually a bodily appetite. The instance is that of the craving for tobacco. We begin smoking from egotistic motives: because it is 'manly' or a distinction, or the thing done or the thing forbidden. By the time these motives have disappeared we are left with a mere appetite, rigid, pleonectic and compulsive. This craving seems, further, to be a creation *ex nihilo*; or if it is a variation upon a pre-existent appetition the latter must be something very plastic or variable and probably non-bodily.

III. Gross Evils

ONLY PARTLY APPETITIONAL

Suggestive as such instances are, they are nevertheless not conclusive; they do not prove anything. In order not to proceed as though they did, we will, then, merely say that egoism or appetition can, indeed, be the occasion for some evil, but only because of its quasi-egotistic characteristics which may or may not have been ultimately established by egotism; that this evil is small in proportion to that coming from egotism; and that most evil comes from egotism, using, it may be, appetition and intensifying the quasi-egotistic characteristics which appetition already has.

We will look first at the two classes of evil which shock most the Puritan conscience and which most obviously seem (especially to Puritanism) to be connected just with appetition and more particularly with bodily appetition. Sometimes they are this, but rarely and then only in their mild forms. These evils are those of intemperance (in drink) and ' immorality ' (in sex).

DRINK

Of course a man may taste intoxicating drink, find he likes it and go on drinking. But men rarely become drunkards just because they like the experience of drinking. Or rather the experience is liked not just as an experience but as an experience of egotistic position, this position being the real object of the desire. Drink is a refuge from various forms of the inferiority-feeling: from defeat, disappointment, despair, shame, remorse, boredom; it creates an imaginary compensatory world in which the drunkard triumphs and feels his powers enhanced, all his inferiorities removed, and all bafflements annulled. In such cases the desire itself is initiated by egotism or is egotistic, and then it gradually becomes fixed as a bodily appetite.

SEX

Sex-lust (the compulsive desire for sexual experience) can undoubtedly by itself be the cause of much evil. But we have already shown [1] that sex plays its important *rôle* in life—and it is in this *rôle* that it causes most evil—not simply as an appetite or desire for the sexual experience, but as an egotistic desire for conquest by means of sex, in coquetry and Don Juanism, neither of which is at all closely connected with lust. Here we shall merely add, without comment, the conclusions reached by two eminent psychiatrists from their careful examination of the histories of many individuals and used by them successfully in coping with such individuals. F. Künkel holds that lust itself is the creation of the egotism of sex or of sex-warfare: the egotist, obsessed by the *idée fixe* that as a man he is superior to women, but haunted also by the fear (due to special incidents in his past) that as a particular individual he may prove inferior in the test of married life, develops the idea or ideal, and ultimately also the fact, of a violent passion which needs many women to satisfy it; he thus gets both an excuse for not marrying, without any offence to his *amour-propre*, and also the added glory of being an exceptional man—this all the more easily in an age in which the condemnatory term 'lust' has been entirely replaced by the laudatory term 'passion.' It is for similar reasons, he suggests, that sexual perversions like homosexuality, etc., are developed. Adler explains prostitution also as a result of the sex-war: the woman feels she is triumphing over the man in degrading him and in exercising her power over him to get out of him what she wants, while the man feels he is triumphing over the woman by using her as the instrument of his pleasure. One may perhaps criticise such explanations for not allowing sufficiently for individual differences. But it is certainly significant that it is precisely the sensualists of sex who,

[1] Above, pp. 136-137.

even when they are otherwise not at all theorisers, indulge most passionately and persistently in that queer egotistic game which consists of philosophising about the ultimate, mystic and unbridgable difference between the sexes, about the abjectness, animality, primitiveness, fickleness, treachery, etc., of woman, and the immense superiority of man.

MONEY NOT MERELY APPETITIONAL GOAL

The love of money is notoriously the mother of most evil. And the domain of money, it would seem, is obviously that of appetition: we love money because of the things it can buy—the means to certain experiences, chiefly bodily, eating, drinking, etc. This is what Plato thinks, and he uses 'love of gain' and 'love of money' as synonyms for 'the appetitive principle.' Nevertheless, if we look beneath the surface, the life of money (the economic sphere) is precisely that in which we can most clearly see egotism at work: we can see it operating upon appetite so as to turn what at first is only quasi-egotistic into what is unmistakably egotistic only.

When we think of the love of money we think of the love of riches, and when we think of the love of riches we think of fondness for luxuries and of extravagant and pleonectic traits.

LOVE OF LUXURIES

A luxury is essentially a rarity, that which only few can have; as soon as it can be had by most people or by all it ceases to be a special object of desire—unless by then it has become a necessity (the object of a craving) or something the non-possession of which is a mark of inferiority. The tremendous *rôle* in life of this love of luxuries or rarities—it is the constant object of the ridicule and indignation of the Roman moralists and satirists—is happily expressed by M. Bergson: "For years the civilised peoples of the world devoted their external activity largely to the procuring of spices. It is astonishing to realise

that this was the supreme object of navigation which was then so dangerous; that thousands of men risked their lives for it; that the courage, energy and the spirit of adventure, from which resulted by accident the discovery of America, were essentially employed in the search for ginger, cloves, pepper and cinnamon. Who cares for these spices which were once so delicious, now that they can be got for a few pence from the grocer's round the corner?" Motor-cars also, he suggests, may in time, owing to the same causes, sink from their place of high esteem.[1]

But rarity is not an experience or process nor the quality of an experience or process; it is a relation and is used as a mode of distinction, separation and exclusion; as such it is the object not of appetition but of ambition. The part played by appetition may be infinitesimal: it may be necessary that the would-be possessor of the ginger, or at least that those who are to envy or admire him, should to some small extent like the *taste* of ginger. But even this is not always necessary. George Eliot, describing a banquet of which the "crowning glory" was that "classical though insipid bird," the peacock, and at which everyone cordially disliked the bird's "expensive toughness," preferring "the vulgar digestibility of capon," says: "In fact very little peacock was eaten; but there was the satisfaction of sitting at a table where peacock was served up in a remarkable manner, and of knowing that such caprices were not within the reach of any but those who supped with the very wealthiest men. And it would have been rashness to speak slightingly of peacock's flesh, or any other venerable institution."[2] In fact the eating of the peacock was a purely 'symbolic' experience egotistically valued or esteemed as such and as such only.

In the love of luxury we have then a clear instance of egotism or ambition working independently or using and modifying

[1] *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion*, pp. 327-328.
[2] *Romola*, chap. xxxix.

appetition. In so far as the rich man accustoms himself to find satisfaction for his appetities only in luxuries, this love exemplifies the tendency of egotism to rigidify appetition. It also illustrates the power of egotism to establish new appetites (for ginger, for cinnamon, etc.).

LOVE OF MONEY PLEONECTIC AND EXTRAVAGANT

When we spoke of the appetites as ' pleonectic ' we meant to use that epithet in a very limited sense. My hunger is pleonectic only in the sense that it will not be satisfied with food short of a definite quantity—the quantity varies with different people—so that even when there is only one loaf to be divided amongst twenty people it will insist on having more than a twentieth part. But it is not interested in having more than others simply for the sake of moreness. Such an interest, however, is precisely what the love of riches is. It is pleonectic, a desire for the more for its own sake; it is a desire for a relation or situation or mode of exclusion; it is, therefore, an ambition. Plato—followed in this by a host of uplifting moralists—does, indeed, like to talk about the insatiability of the appetites and of the desire for pleasure. But one finds that the point of satiety is reached only too soon by the appetites—in animals, significantly, sooner than in man (notably in the domain of sex). As for the desire for pleasure, hedonists and most of all Epicurus himself have always pointed to lack of moderation as its deadliest enemy. Insatiability belongs not to appetition but only to ambition. We need but study the history of any people developing from a simpler to a more pleonectic and extravagant way of living—evolving " a higher standard of life," as the egotistic phrase has it—to see that the so-called mad hunt for pleasure is simply a form of snobbery or egotism; one can mark the stages, give the epochal dates and name the setters of fashion. And looking at our own world, we find people going wearily through the routine of countless pleasures or indul-

gences, as 'a duty'—a duty to their station or position. The fact is that, beyond a certain point, experiences, processes or pleasures are pursued simply as symbolic. The *rôle* of appetition is simply to serve as a starting-point or to give the direction. Sometimes it seems not to do even this, unless it be very remotely. For the forms taken by extravagance are sometimes very extravagant indeed, such that no appetition could suggest. It is no caricature to say that the rich man may pride himself on not being able to use his hands, his senses or his wits—the point being of course that such inability is symbolic of his superior position as the paymaster of others who will do the necessary work for him. "Am I already sitting?" Seneca represents a rich young noble as asking of the army of slaves who have placed him on his sedan.[1]

MONEY AN EGOTISTIC SYMBOL

If ambition had always to use appetition and experiences or processes, the love for riches would not go very far. Not many would be found to desire to become multi-multi-millionaires if they knew that success would mean their being forced to eat all the edibles their money could buy or, speaking more generally, always to indulge in some experience symbolic of their position. Since the experience or process is itself symbolic we can dispense with it. We can have a pure symbol (almost a purely mathematical one) to symbolise the position. This symbol is money. With it comes infinity—the possibility of more and more *ad infinitum*—and, with infinity, insatiability. The egotist can now aspire, even if he himself is satisfied with an ascetic's or a miser's life, to possess more and more and more of the means to the means to any processes (such at least as are bodily) that anyone can desire, and to possess more of them than anyone else—to hold a position which no one else holds.

[1] *Ad Paulinum*, 6. He also speaks of the rich as neither eating nor drinking "*sine ambitione*," without ostentation and love of glory.

PROPERTY

The proprietary desire or the desire for ownership is itself an ambition and not an appetition, for ownership is a position or status and not an experience or process. The ambition is only slightly connected with appetition or appetite. In virtue of appetition I do, indeed, desire and seek my own eating rather than yours; but only *rather*; I do not desire that you shall *not* also eat; on the contrary, if I am really fond of eating, I generally desire you to eat also and I like to see you eating. But the proprietary desire is precisely a desire that others shall not have the identical thing which I have, and—in its extremest form—that others shall not have anything at all, that I alone shall have everything. As is the case with all egotism, it and its object, both being negativities, are best defined negatively: I own a thing when I have the power to exclude others from its use or enjoyment; I do not own the free and common air. Property is exclusive position.

THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE AS AN END IN ITSELF

It is this egotism, this negativity, this ambition for exclusion, this desire *that others shall not have*, that is at the root, if not of all economic evil, at least of modern economic evils; it is this also which makes them intractable—at least by superficial means.[1] It is no use economic experts demonstrating to us egotists that there can be enough to go all round: their reasoning, if it does not leave us cold, alarms us; it brings before us the threatening vision of an insipid life with all the fun and pep taken out of it—a life in which every Tom, Dick and Harry might have everything as he now can have the common air. Should such sufficiency become an established fact, we should

[1] It may of course be that, having become sole possessor, the egotist will proceed to satisfy his egotism by giving away all he has, if various factors combine to determine him to that expression of his egotism. But even if everyone fought everyone else simply with the desire for the unique position of sole and universal dispenser, the struggle and its evils would be not a whit less evil than they now are.

undoubtedly proceed to undo it by destroying some of the all too plentiful supplies, unless the desire for exclusion could find adequate satisfaction in other spheres. As it is we certainly do our best to prevent it becoming an established fact. For, granted that the economic struggle or the struggle for existence is simply due to material Nature and not to our own egotism, we are now masters of that Nature (so experts assure us, meeting in World Congresses); we have or can have the sufficiency as far as production is concerned; we need only devise the proper method of distribution. But no one pretends that we are not clever enough to devise it. The trouble is that it will work *only if human nature, human motives, could be changed*; the change, however, would consist in doing away not only with intra-national conflict and substituting for it co-operation but also in doing away with inter-national conflict and separation; and rather than that should occur, nations would sooner perish.

IT IS A SYMPTOM OF THE MILITANCY OF EGOTISM. (See pp. 172, 187, 225-227.)

It is in connection chiefly with the economic struggle that the innocence of man is generally asserted and that all evil is put down to matter or to Nature. The latter, it is supposed, makes necessary the struggle for existence, the modern human form of which is the economic struggle which in turn leads to national warfare. When it is shown that the struggle is no longer necessary, its persistence is explained mysteriously by the invocation of the term 'atavistic.' The truth, however, would rather seem to be as follows. The conflict which is the life of inorganic Nature may itself be due to an egotistic or absolutising tendency, and it cannot be seen to be necessary. Conflict is carried a stage further in the stuggle for existence in the animal kingdom and in the economic struggle amongst men. But the earlier stage cannot be seen to have necessitated the latter but only to be used by it: matter makes conflict and

destruction possible, and men and animals fight and destroy each other for it and by means of it, but they might have so evolved as to live on air without any strife; the fact that they have not done so is just a brute fact. However that may be, economic conditions now at any rate, so it would seem, no longer necessitate any struggle of man with man and least of all national wars[1]; they are, however, specially distorted to serve the cause of those wars, just because war is desired for itself. At each stage, then, the conflict is an end in itself. By humanity it is carried further forward—the previous stages being preserved and employed for the later—into purely immaterial spheres: into the emotional (as when we fight for someone's affection), into the æsthetic (the war of coteries, the jealousy of artists), into the intellectual (the struggle to be first in a discovery, or to impose one's theory on others or to defend a thesis). The progress from stage to stage is the career of always militant egotism, the Dance of Death. That the conflict is not necessary is obvious at least at the later stages; that it is loved for itself is evidenced by the indignation, as at a supreme blasphemy, which is aroused in most men by the statement that it is not necessary. War, in very truth, is worshipped as " the father of all, of all the King."

THE 'MATERIALISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY'

Not to have recognised this truth but to have made the economic struggle (after attributing it to matter) the source of all other conflict instead of seeing it as merely one symptom (parallel to, but neither caused by, nor causing, the other symptoms) of the militancy of egotism—this is the blackest sin of the 'materialistic interpretation of history,' one of the Utopian views of human nature of which we have spoken

[1] " Thus the solution of the question [of war] is not to be sought in the economic field but, on the contrary, in the sphere that is served by economy—*i.e.* in what man wants or imagines he wants " (E. Heckscher in *What would be the Character of a New War*, p. 330. Gollancz, 1933).

above. Itself an expression of egotism, it exemplifies on a vast scale the evil of egotism. It has resulted in Russian Communism —the antithetical egotism to the egotism of Capitalism, an antithesis which, trying to deal with evil without touching its centre, and indeed by strenuously denying it, has brought about evils a hundredfold worse than those of the thesis: the struggle in the economic sphere has been replaced, nominally by the class struggle, actually by strife, hatred, suspicion and oppression of every man against every man in every sphere of life.

CRIME

With the economic problem chiefly is associated the evil of crime. It forms a very tangled and controversial problem and calls for a careful preliminary definition of terms, but in a mere passing allusion to it like the following it will suffice to say that by ' the criminal ' both here and in the next chapter is meant ' the habitual or professional criminal.' Crime then, according to the prevalent belief, is due chiefly to appetition: it is hunger (so most people imagine) that makes the habitual criminal. Such an idea is no doubt true in many cases, but universally it can be held and spread only by those who can count no criminals in the circle of their friends or acquaintances. It is true enough that hunger is one of the factors determining the choice of the career of crime; but such a part-determinant it is with respect to any career—that of the philosopher, artist, politician, business man, butcher, baker and candlestick-maker, for we must all earn our living. But it may be doubted whether the *rôle* of hunger is more important in the life of the criminal than in the lives of these. The criminal, like most people, chooses and pursues his career, as an ideal, and from ambition, pride or revenge—from some egotism: he is proud of outwitting and getting the better of all his fellow-men (except that sometimes as a member of a gang his egotism is limited in relation to the other gangsters by the gang's collective egotism

or by ' honour among thieves ') ; he is proud of his persistence, courage, determination—of his virtues; if he is of the peaceful sort, he is proud of his cunning and of his superiority to the rest of society—the ' mugs ' ; if of the violent sort, he is proud of being ' tough ' or of ' having guts ' in contrast to the ' softies ' ; he is a romantic and idealist, and the idealisation of his career is begun by himself and is not merely the affair of the popular cinema; he is, in short, no better and no worse, though much more inconvenient to society, than the respectable law-abider. The reasons for his choosing criminality rather than law-abidingness as the expression of his egotism are to be found in his education, history and environment, and to this extent it is true to say that his crimes are due to causes external to himself; but his egotism, the root of the evil, is in himself.[1]

The core of criminality is given most impressively by St Augustine. From the fourth to the tenth chapter of the second book of his *Confessions*, with many passionate appeals to God, he turns the whole might of his mature intellect upon the investigation of a boyish prank in which he joined some other youths at the age of sixteen. Together they robbed a neighbour's very inferior pear-tree. Most of the pears were thrown to the hogs. He did not need or want them, for he had abundance of much better ones at home. Of those that he did taste " the sweetest sauce was the sin itself " (the experience was sought as a symbol). The delight was in the sin as an end in itself and it was enhanced by company, the young pilferers exalting themselves together over the owner (collective egotism). What is the nature of this delight in sin itself? It is, Augustine suggests

[1] Cyril Burt's *The Young Delinquent*, which deals with the genesis of the criminal, emphasises the large class of ' substitutional ' or compensatory crimes (crimes committed for glory, revenge, or from disappointment and inability to discover any other mode of self-assertion).

See also *Behind the Green Lights*, by C. W. Willense, an American policeman of many years' experience with criminals: " Life-taking comes to mean a small matter (to young would-be gangsters) if thereby they can ' get out of the rut ' and cut in on the glory " (p. 251).

(chap. vi.), a delight in at least a fictional opposition to the right (*facere contra legem saltem fallacia*), in doing unpunished what one ought not to do, in an imitation of godlikeness, in a shadowy symbol of omnipotence (*tenebrosa omnipotentiæ similitudine*), in the search for a shadow—in short, in the romantic adventurous quest for absoluteness.[1]

IV. Egotism in Itself Evil

Egotism the contradictory of goodness and morality

But this quest is also the core of the whole of egotism, as we have all along maintained. To that core we must now return. For just now we have been speaking of the evil of egotism only in some kind of association with appetition or egoism, and of evils which can also be due to appetition itself though only because of its quasi-egotistic characteristics; we have also spoken of egotism as being the cause of evil. But egotism is not simply the cause of evil. It is in itself evil, whatever deed it leads to, and even if it leads to the doing of nothing at all. Our myth of the Uranian egotist too proud to do or to be anything is a myth of supreme evil.

Only of egoism or appetition can we speak as merely the cause of, or an 'occasion' for, evil. For even with its quasi-egotistic characteristics it (*e.g.* hunger, thirst, the sex-appetite) is not in itself evil; even a whole egoistic life, like Tito Melema's, regarded in its positive aspect—that is, as regards the experiences it seeks for their own sake, though not as regards the means adopted—is not in itself evil. The evil is merely in the violation to which it leads of the call of Goodness—which violation is, however, itself only a disregard or neglect but not

[1] "Burglary was an art, the finest of the fine. Darkness and Silence, the primary conditions, were the medium of my efforts; bringing me, as I believed, into a closer contact with the Absolute than was permitted to the mere poet or painter" ("The Burglar's Urge," by H. E. Degras, in *The Spectator*, 10th November 1933).

a denial. For Tito Melema does not pretend that what he does is right, nor that he or his life is good or Goodness; he can say *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* But since even a Tito has some spark of egotism, he can do this only for a while. In the end he begins to justify himself, to create a philosophy for himself, to deny that the *meliora* exist, to affirm that he and his life are the *meliora* or Goodness and the right. He is now the egotist, who, we have said, cannot say *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor* but substitutes himself (or that with which he has identified himself) in the place of Goodness, though, it may be, after borrowing much from it, and denies that there is anything more—denies, therefore, in effect, that there is Goodness. Such a denial is quite different from the egoist's attitude. Nor is it anything to which egotism merely leads, but is egotism itself. It is not yet the contrary, but only the contradictory, to Goodness and the genuinely moral life, but even as a contradictory only it may be called evil in itself.

'GOOD, BE THOU MY EVIL'

But the egotist goes further than this: the *meliora* present themselves to him as the entities of hypocritical fiction, etc.; he thinks of Goodness in his own favourite categories as a claimant to a higher position than his own, as a rival and an enemy; it presents itself to him as the opposite to his own good and right and god—which opposite it indeed is; he calls it evil. The Devil is he who calls God the Devil, and it is this which makes him the Devil. Thus the egotist is the contrary of the genuinely moral man. At least he gets as near being the contrary as it is possible to do. For to be the exact contrary he would have to say: 'Evil, be thou my good,' and this it is impossible for anyone to say. But it is possible to say and the egotist does say—in deeds if not in words—'Good, be thou my evil.'

His saying of it we may find only too abundantly illustrated.

It can be seen in the sphere of personal relations. "A proud man," says Spinoza, "hates the presence of noble people." [1] This we may amplify. The egotist hates the genuinely moral man: he hates him for not flattering or worshipping him or his idol, for not cringing before him, for not fighting him, for not resisting him, for not hating him [2]—in short, for not playing the egotistic game. It is enough for the egotist to feel unconsciously that this game is not likely to be played; he finds the mere atmosphere of the genuinely moral man alien, ominous, offensive; he proceeds to think and to speak of him and to treat him as a cynic and blasphemer, as a rebel, as a coward, as a sub-man—in short, as immoral and evil.

PERSECUTION

Best of all we may see the egotist's saying, writ large, in persecution—an affair this of collective egotism—when the new truth and the new right are condemned and punished as falsehood and wrong, in philosophy, science, religion, ethics, art, politics. This persecution is not always due to stupidity or inertia—besides, it may be that stupidity and inertia are themselves always forms of egotism; it is often led by those who are the most intelligent and energetic of their generation and foremost in their society, who are certainly intelligent enough to see the truth of the new doctrine—generally simple enough—who, moreover, like Paul, a by no means unique example,

[1] *Ethics*, Part IV., prop. lvii.

[2] Whatever be that spiritual gesture denoted by the phrase 'turning the other cheek,' and whatever its expression, it assuredly causes the egotist to rage furiously and does not, as some romantics imagine, soften his heart.

'Non-resistance' and 'turning the other cheek' both denote here an attitude of the spirit which may not be inconsistent with the use of physical force in defence. It may be right in an individual situation not to resist physically also, but there can be no universal rule prescribing physical non-resistance any more than there can be any other universal rule for morality. It is significant that what the egotist resents in the moral man is that the latter is not egotistic whether using force or not; in another egotist he resents, while also valuing, his egotism.

do suspect its truth and are infuriated by the suspicion, and who may even be on the point of breaking through their egotism and of acknowledging the truth. The persecutor's inspiring motive may not always be the crude fear that he himself may lose face or position or be 'brought down a peg,' by having to acknowledge himself to have been in the wrong (though in most cases we shall hit the truth if we attend to the crude motive); but it is at least the fear that his collectivity (class, country, group of scientists) in its determinate form of the moment, or the doctrine, code or ideal or other idol, with which, as supreme or the All or the Absolute, he has identified himself, may suffer *lèse majesté* or derogation to its *ne plus ultra.* It is this fear which, by a most complex interplay between the unconscious or subconscious and the conscious and by a most subtle rationalisation, culminates in the condemnation of the true and right as the false and wrong. Even when, as is often the case, the persecuted are martyrs to a lie, we shall generally find that it is the grain of truth present in them as in all men, and not the falsehood, which most infuriates the persecutor.

V. Incompatibility of Egotism with Morality.

(*Cf.* pp. 152-155, 188-196.)

Contrast with egoism

Because of their different relations to evil, the egoistic or appetitional life and the egotistic life differ widely from each other in respect of the possibility of inclusion in the genuinely moral life.

The appetitional life can not only be included in the genuinely moral life, but is indispensable to it, is in fact its basis. For though no pursuit of any number of processes is itself moral, and though no single process is indispensable to the moral life, yet we cannot have the moral life without processes and the desire for processes. For processes are life and the moral life

is life; to desire the good life we must live and desire to live. Only, in the completely moral life appetitions would lose all their quasi-egotistic characteristics—their compulsiveness, rigidity, extravagance and separatism—and their number would be infinite. Thus the appetitional life is not only included in the genuinely moral life, but it is a result or incident of the latter that the former becomes more abundant—only however a result or incident, for life more abundant is not necessarily moral, still less is the desire for it the same as the moral desire.

Egotism, however, since it is at least the quasi-contrary of the genuinely moral life, can in no shape or form, in none of its aspects or expressions, be included in that life. When it seems to be included in the shape of 'noble' pride, ambition, scorn, etc., as in pharisaism, the case is not one of morality including egotism but of egotism distorting and limiting morality.

THE SUBLIMATION THEORY

But mankind's love for egotism—the strongest love in it—is undying, and recently it has begotten for itself a powerful helper in the psychology of instincts and impulses and of their 'sublimation.' We hear even of the 'sadistic instinct or impulse' being 'sublimated' or taken up into the moral life. Now, of the egoistic or appetitional life, we have maintained, it is true to say that it is a plurality of separate and at least quasi-independent impulses (hunger, thirst, need for exercise, etc.); and here modern psychology is right both in this respect and as regards sublimation. But by 'sublimation' should be meant only the elimination of quasi-egotistic characteristics (rigidity, exclusiveness, etc.); for in what other sense can the hunger even of the most perfect saint be different from that of the ordinary man? As for the 'sublimation' of the hunger for roast meat into the hunger for righteousness and of the sexual appetite into the desire for beauty, this is mere mythology—

not to say sheer nonsense—confusing things which are distinct, and due to the desire to show everything as 'evolving' from one or two primitive instincts. Egotism, on the other hand, is always one and the same thing, one and the same attitude expressing itself in different forms according to circumstances. These forms or expressions cannot be treated like the appetitions, as separate and quasi-independent impulses (the instinct of submission and the instinct of assertion are one and the same); here the psychology in question is fatally wrong. There can be no question here of a plurality or of the assumption or subsumption of its items into the genuinely moral life, whether by means of 'sublimation'[1] or of something else. What is needed is not evolution or change but substitution or revolution —a Copernican revolution resulting in the agathocentric view replacing the egocentric outlook, in the love for goodness replacing the love for the empty self or for nothingness. Egotism can no more be taken up into the genuinely moral life than ancient mythology and cosmology have been taken up, whole or in part, into modern Physics and Astronomy.

VI. The Nature of Evil

EVIL NOT SELF-SUBSISTENT

We may now return to the question with which the book began—the question of what Evil is. Evil is not co-ordinate with Goodness; if Goodness is substance or a principle or a universal or *the* universal, then evil is not any of these, unless nothingness can be a substance or principle or universal. Goodness is, whether we embody it in attitudes or situations or

[1] 'Sublimation' here is generally nothing but a fallacious misnomer for the change introducible into the egotist's 'symbol' (life-saving may be substituted as 'glorious' instead of life-taking). This change does not 'sublimate,' or qualitatively change, the egotist's attitude; it is purely external and is introduced by someone other than himself (the sublimational psychologist proposes to introduce it for him).

not; therefore we can embody it and seek to embody it. Evil, on the other hand, is not, except in attitudes and situations and relations between persons [1]; therefore we cannot embody it or seek to embody it, we cannot desire or pursue it.[2] Since we have spoken of Goodness embodied in situations as rightness, we can speak of the wrongness of the opposite situations simply to denote them as opposite, and we ought perhaps to say that there is wrongness only but not evil. But ' wrongness ' seems to denote a universal, something which all the wrong situations have in common; we must therefore point out that it cannot denote this; for the only thing the wrong situations have in common is that which the right situations also have in common —the sole Goodness which the former neglect or deny and the latter affirm. Evil then—this wrongness—is purely negative and comes from a desire for nothingness. This however must not be taken in the dangerously misleading sense that there is nothing there: there are superb ability, intelligence, virtue, idealism, blocking the progress of Goodness.

EVIL A FIGMENT?

We may even find an important truth in the fatally misleading statement that evil is a mere figment. For though evil, or rather wrongness, is a mere limitation or negation to the mind of the genuinely moral man, evil as we generally think of it, as something positive, as something hated and condemned and to be hated and condemned, as something which *persons* can

[1] When we say ' persons ' we do not mean to exclude the possibility of even electrons being persons—persons egotistically immobilised into the monotonous, bored and boring attitude of mere repulsion or exclusion. (See Lossky and W. A. Stern, *opp. citt.*) We can embody Goodness also in right relations to things (ultimately electrons) — perhaps in knowing them and in æsthetic appreciation.

[2] As the antithesis of Goodness we can only desire and pursue power and position—in the ultimate analysis, nothingness. W. B. Seabrook in his *Adventures in Arabia* remarks that the priest of the Yezidees or devil-worshippers explained to him that Melek Taos or Satan whom they worship is not the Spirit of Evil but the Spirit of Power.

be, is a figment of the egotist's imagination. But in the sense that cruelty, oppression and destructiveness are other than they are; that could we but see everything we should see them as essential moments of goodness itself; that the negation, limitation and the appearance or the setting up of the figment are really parts of Goodness; that egotism and Goodness subsist together in one perfect whole or unity—in this sense the statement is the crowning lie of egotism.

A 'NOBLE' EGOTIST

It will be useful to sum up in a concrete instance what has here been said about the relation to evil of even the 'noblest' egotism; this instance may also point to the reality distorted by the melodramatic conception of an Iago with his impossible motto: "Evil, be thou my good." [1]

Brand in Ibsen's play of that name is a man of very many and very high virtues: passionate sincerity, the highest courage, generosity, devotion, tenderness, selflessness in the ordinary sense; he is truly heroic, a man of men; indeed, it seems inappropriate to describe him in virtues, for his life is all but an embodiment of that Goodness from which the virtues are carved out by the limitation of egotism. But in virtues we must describe him just because that limitation is in him. For egotistic he undoubtedly is: he is proud and scornful, hating, extreme, impatient; he worships sheer willing and power—the power of the will, a panurgic power; he is a fanatic. His Absolute, his 'symbol,' his ideal or idol or god, is a rigid, ruthless rule: "All or naught," and 'Sacrifice, more Sacrifice and more Sacrifice,' from a paradoxical kind of pleonectic lust. This ideal he has adopted in contemptuous antithetical reaction to the contemporary egotism which interpreted the doctrine 'God is love' so as to make of God merely a pillow for the egotist's weary head or a being whose sole *métier* was to *pardonner*.

[1] See above, p. 36.

To his idol he sacrifices his own career, it is true, but also his child, his wife and the welfare of all about him. Against the suggestions that, after all, there may be some truth in the doctrine ' God is love,' however much this has been perverted; that there may be some truth even in the humanitarian, his scorn for whom might be said to be right if scorn could ever be right; that Goodness cannot consist in empty extremism and power of will; that it cannot demand always heroic sacrifice, but may also require prosaic, unheroic patience and adaptation to the individual case and even something very like compromise or the scorned *via media*—against these suggestions, especially when he is just on the point of accepting them, he fights with all the might and fury of his really heroic will; *he calls them the voices of Evil and of the Devil.* As he progresses in his sacrificial career his heroism assumes increasingly a striking likeness to the madness of the girl devotee of the Northern gods of physical power, who also brings out the ambition for greatness lurking in him. Finally it culminates in desolation for his followers, whom he leaves empty in larder and in soul and more enslaved than before to physical needs and to the lie of the humanitarians from which he had tried to save them; while to himself it brings destruction from that mere might which he had worshipped, now manifested in its extremest form—in the material shape of an avalanche the roar of which competes with the sound of the voice once more proclaiming " God is love." [1]

The most disastrous type of agent is, as Plato said, the tyrant. Only, he is not, as Plato thought, the tyrant in the merely political sphere, nor one enslaved to vices; he is the tyrant in the domain of the spirit—the angel who is the Devil, or a magnificently virtuous fanatic-prophet like Brand.

[1] This interpretation is all the more significant if, as is likely, Ibsen himself did not intend it. It may be that his own egotism inevitably limned forth its features *malgré lui* or in spite of his not taking it for egotism with his conscious mind.

GOODNESS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

There are not many egotists of Brand's stature, and hence extreme perversion or Goodness shown as evil is comparatively rare. But the world is full of egotists of a lesser breed. To all of them Goodness is, if not evil, at least not good enough. Indeed, to nearly all of us, in respect of the particular demands addressed precisely to us in individual situations, Goodness appears—singularly flat.

CHAPTER IX

MORAL ERROR AND PUNISHMENT

I. Moral Error

A DEFECT OF VISION?

'But,' it may be asked, 'may not a Brand, if not Ibsen's Brand himself, be one who is actuated purely by the moral *nisus* or the desire to do the right or to embody Goodness, but who is mistaken as to what is right or required by Goodness? In general, may not what has here been called the replacement of genuine morality by egotism be simply genuine morality itself, distorted merely by wrong vision or by moral error?' An affirmative answer, it will be seen at once, will compel us to admit the contention which we have tried to deny—namely, that egotism can be a form of, or a derivative from, genuine morality, differing from the latter only by a non-moral defect such as would be a defect of vision as contrasted with a defect of the will or desires. Such an answer, it is also obvious, is exceedingly optimistic, flattering and welcome to our *amour-propre* or egotism; for it affirms that, in spite of the multitudinous wrong which we undoubtedly do, we are, all or most of us, inspired by the desire for the right, and that the wrong or evil, although done by ourselves, is something for which we are not responsible since it has its origin in something comparatively external to us, in our vision which is not we in the same sense as is our will. We may therefore suspect it as a defensive stratagem which egotism devises in order to secure its usurpation of the place of genuine morality. For indeed it is only egotists that it can cheer. If we care more for Goodness than for ourselves, this same optimism is the blackest pessimism: it means that even if we love Goodness with all our heart, with

all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, we or some of us may yet never be able to get at it, since it may be inaccessible to our *mind*. Worse still, if this love for Goodness is really the driving force behind fanaticism, behind any 'fighting *ad majorem Dei gloriam*,' then we must subscribe to the gloomy paradox that our love for Goodness or righteousness is the most disastrous thing in us, the chief cause of evil; for assuredly all other evil is as nothing compared with that present in or issuing from such strife for such glory.

The problem can be put in such a way that it all but compels an affirmative reply: 'One ought to do what is right or what is one's duty or what one ought to do (and to do this is to embody Goodness). But to do it one must think it right (or one's duty). One must therefore do what one thinks right. And even if that which one thinks right is really not right, yet in doing it, provided one thinks it right, one is acting rightly, morally, actuated by the "Good Will" or by the desire to do the right; for one is acting as one should and, doing what one ought even in doing what one ought not to do and what is not right.' The classic example given is that of the conscientious and high-minded Inquisitor who sent thousands to the stake for what he thought was their ultimate good, acting from a rigorous sense of duty; we are defied to say that he did not act rightly or morally, that he was not actuated purely by a desire for the right. Such an example unfortunately makes the question seem remote and academic whereas actually it is one of the commonest, nearest and most living moral issues, raised almost daily by innumerable articles or letters in the newspapers. On the one hand sympathisers of the Nazis (or of the Bolsheviks) while deploring the excesses or wrongdoing of the party are at pains to point out that it consists of men who are idealists ready to sacrifice even their lives for their ideals; on the other hand others feverishly protest that it is a pack of mere criminals, cut-throats and robbers. Both sides seem to

agree that there is a tremendous moral difference between the 'mere' cut-throat and robber and the idealist who cuts throats and robs idealistically, and that to decide to which category the favoured or abominated party belongs is a real moral issue.

The question we have formulated must be answered affirmatively unless we can show that thinking right what is wrong is not a moral error but an immoral lie; that it is no thinking, judging or believing but only that kind of 'thought' which is fathered by the wish; or at least that it is no mere thinking, judging or believing but a doing, a matter of the will, a wilful turning away from Goodness, something for which the agent is responsible as much as he is responsible for anything.

ALL ERROR PRACTICAL?

The best way of showing this and also the most convenient —since it is not easy to distinguish between 'moral' and other error—would be to prove that all error (and error, be it remembered, is not mere ignorance or incomprehension, but is assertion), even 'purely theoretic' error (philosophic, scientific, historic, perceptual), is practical rather than theoretic, a lie, an affair of the will (we err because we want to or because it pays us to err), something of which the root is to be found in our emotional, conational or volitional make-up—in our inattention, lack of interest,[1] purposeful forgetting or turning the blind eye, haste or impatience, vanity or conceit, reluctance to have our self-confidence or cocksureness disturbed or to change that which we have absolutised as final; that it does not spring simply from a defect in our intellectual mechanism, whether this mechanism be conceived as the brain or as a system of mental functions or as an 'apperceptions-system.' In support of such a theory there is much that one can point to. On the one hand, if we look at an individual, we can trace one after

[1] I take it as agreed that attention and interest are conative. See especially Lossky's *Die Grundlehren der Psychologie.*

another of his most purely ' theoretic ' errors to some conational element in his present or past life till we get the impression that they all subserve, or are necessitated or caused by, the life-policy which he has espoused; moreover, since we find him generally unwilling to have his errors corrected we conclude that he was willing to make them just as he is willing to persist in them. On the other hand, if we look at the history of thought in the large, we see error of the most ' purely theoretic ' or scientific kind (*e.g.* about the shape or position of the earth or the fixity of species), in the form both of old orthodoxies and of new heterodoxies, clung to, fought for—and presumably, therefore, also made—in some practical interest, the interest of some institution, group of men, favourite *Lebensanschauung*, sometimes only of another theory which is itself supported by some practical motive. We find, as we have said, persecution (which is always of the will and directed against the will) in every sphere, if not always by burning (a practice recently revived for books at least), then by ridicule and the refusal of the means of subsistence; we are tempted to conclude, therefore, that most of the so-called thought of any age is simply the blinkers voluntarily donned by that age to enable it to go on undistracted in the way of life which it has wilfully chosen, or the panoply put on to resist the assaults of true thought. For peculiarly gross confirmation of such a surmise we can point in our own times to the ' Marxist or Dialectic Materialism ' forcibly foisted upon every sphere of theory in the interests of Communism, and to the nascent condemnation of the Relativity Theory as ' un-Aryan and un-German ' mathematics. Moreover, in support of the hypothesis of the practical nature of all error one can point to many illustrious advocates, the Stoics, Descartes, and in our own day Croce.[1]

[1] Arnold, *Roman Stoicism*, 148; Descartes, *Meditations*, iv.; Croce, *Logica* (4th edition), pp. 253 ff.; *Pratica* (3rd edition), pp. 33 ff.; *Eternità e storicità della filosofia*, pp. 27 ff.

MORAL THOUGHT PRACTICAL

This problem is however too large to settle here, and perhaps we do not need to settle it. For here we are concerned only with one kind of thought—namely, with practical thought, with thought and with error about what one ought to do. Now, the differentia of practical thought is precisely that it is practical; it has its express and complete being in doing, the doing consisting in the self-direction of the whole personality which terminates ultimately in a change in the physical universe. Only in the doing is the thought completely present and only in the doing can it be properly apprehended; if by precept is meant exposition of the practical thought, then we may say not only that practice is better than precept but that practice is the best, the only adequate, precept. The act, then, is the thought and the thought is the act, and we should not speak of the thought causing the act; we may, it is true, distinguish between the earlier, immature phase of the history of the self-developing whole and the later, mature phase, calling the first the mere thought and the latter the deed, but one phase does not cause the other. We should not therefore speak of a man with a desire for the right, which desire is got hold of by a wrong thought as to what is right (or by a thought that what is wrong is right) and caused by this thought to issue in a wrong action. The man's wrong thought is already his wrong action; it is the incipient action of directing himself away from the right or from Goodness; and if he turns away from the right this cannot be because he desires the right but because he desires to turn away from the right; he has never desired the right only, but something else also in addition or in preference to the right. True, there are in him as in everybody else both a *nisus* towards the right and true thought about the right, which *nisus* and thought are also action, acting in him as an inhibition upon the action on which he is embarking; it is

precisely to overcome this inhibition that he *says* rather than thinks that what he is doing is right; his saying is a practical act, the use of an incantation to lay a *daimon*.

It is because we had in mind the special nature of practical thought that we have tried never to speak of a mere thought as to what is right or wrong being the cause of an action. We have tried to speak always of concrete cognitive-affective-conative-active attitudes: of *loving* Goodness, or turning towards Goodness on the one hand, and on the other hand of *loving* oneself, substituting oneself for Goodness, of separation and exclusion and turning way. We have not spoken of men simply thinking the wrong right but of men who in their pride or self-love *call* right whatever they do and will to do. Our contention is that the man who is said to think the wrong right and therefore to do the wrong differs from the man who thinks the right right and does right, not merely in thinking but in desire, will, centre and direction, in being egocentric where the other is agathocentric. It is either the egoist or the egotist, we have said, who is interested in thinking or rather in saying that the wrong he does is right—the former in order not to have the equanimity of his life disturbed by a troubled conscience, the latter for the many reasons we have given. The more interested party by far is the latter, we have seen, since for the former it is sufficient not to attend to the suggestions of the moral *nisus*. We shall therefore confine ourselves in this question, as we have already done, to the egotist.

WRONG MORAL JUDGMENT MADE UP OF WILLING AND SAYING

Of the egotist we may say, and have said, that his thinking the wrong right (and the right wrong) is, properly speaking, not a thinking at all; it is a willing. The proper way to describe his state of mind is to say, not that he *thinks* that wrong is right, but that he *wills* that wrong is right. Nor does he bring this state of mind to bear upon only questions of right and wrong;

there is no fact or truth, scientific, mathematical, historical or philosophical, that is inviolable to it, as we have abundantly seen, provided it touches his tender spot. Hence the difficulty of distinguishing between 'moral errors' and errors as to matters of fact; all we can say is that if there is any region which for the time being does not impinge upon his egotism, then in that region and for that time the egotist may think freely and truly. More generally, therefore, we must say that the egotist wills not merely that wrong is right but also that black is white and white is black. This willing makes use of words which have the form of a proposition or statement, sometimes extended to a whole quasi-philosophy, quasi-science or quasi-history. This proposition is however not a real proposition; it is not an expression of thought or truth, but a barrier against these; or it is something that would *make* truth. It is bred in the heart rather than in the head ("The fool hath *said* in his heart: There is no God"), a *cri du cœur*, a spell or evocation like poetry without the latter's concern for beauty, a slogan, a mobilisation order mustering battalions of necessary images and emotions; it is a *Machtspruch* or a *sic volo sic jubeo*. For greater effect it is generally uttered multitudinously in chorus, with the Minister of Education or the Minister for Propaganda as choregus, and with the printing press and the wireless as would-be-truth-making, actually truth-suppressing, instruments.

SELF-DECEPTION. (See pp. 96-97, 125-133.)

An alternative description of the same facts is as follows. We have said that the egotist is not *mistaken* but *deceived* and *self-deceived*. In the sentence 'The egotist deceives himself' we have a complete epitome of all the inconsistencies, contradictions, paradoxes, that go to the making of egotism. It is better to concentrate on the implications of that sentence taken from ordinary speech rather than on any technical philosophic

or psychological account of the matter. For such an account is apt to be distorted by the rationalist fallacy that a description to be true must not use even apparently contradictory statements, so that it ends by presenting even the irrational as though it were rational. Best of all is it to attend to some presentation in fiction of the procedure of self-deception. Such a presentation is Meredith's account of Willoughby's attempt to delude himself about the defeat he has suffered at the hands of Clara and to make himself believe that the grapes are sour. We see a picture of chameleon-like changes of states of mind, of a continual shifting of the ground, of half-a-dozen contradictions both simultaneous and successive, of an *inextricabilis error* or labyrinth of emotions, conations, images and would-be beliefs, which, transcending mythology's conception of a physical maze, seems in its complexity a chaos of utterly unrelated parts, but through which we may nevertheless guide ourselves with the help of the one thread running through it all, Willoughby's inexorable purpose to salve the wound of his *amour-propre*. The picture is one of a madness which, like all madness, is governed by a rigorous method.

Put most simply, the matter comes to this: The self-deceiver does not believe (does not think true) what he says, or he would not be a deceiver. He does believe what he says, or he would not be deceived. He both believes and does not believe (thinks and does not think), or he would not be *self*-deceived.

THE DECEIVER AND THE DECEIVED

By a complicated description we may say that the self-deceiver or the egotist splits himself into two persons. One is the doer, the executive or the Government; the other is the talker, orator or diplomat, press-agent or whitewasher, advocate or apologist or propagandist, poet or purveyor of images,

hypocrite or stage-player, comforter or false paraclete. The talker's function is to negotiate with, or to keep the peace and preserve the appearances in relation to, some 'ought' (or 'ought not') which actually is not lived up to or actualised. This 'ought' may have been posited by the agent's own individual egotism: thus, according to Willoughby's own ideal or Absolute he ought not to have been turned down by Clara Middleton; but since in fact he has been, it becomes the task of Willoughby the talker to say that this is not really the case, that it is Clara who is being jilted, that the responsibility for the disharmony lies with her. Or the 'ought' may have come from the collectivity's egotism and have been accepted by the individual who for the moment does not really obey it: the general who as a doer is actually working only for his own prestige or glory, when the patriotism which he has espoused dictates his resignation says as a talker that his country cannot win without him and that it is his duty to stay on. Or the 'ought,' dimly suspected, may be that of genuine morality: the man who is really working for his country's prestige or supremacy and for his own only in so far as it coincides with that, and who is doing this against the dictate of genuine morality, says as a talker that his country's glory is the *maior Dei gloria*; the persecutor says that the institution or sect or doctrine with whose victory he has identified his own, is Goodness or God or the representative of Goodness or God, and that to believe anything else is sin.

Our account of the situation becomes more complicated if we try to say that one of the two-persons-in-one is the deceiver and the other the deceived. Though the purpose of the talk is to deceive, it is not the talker who deceives, as might be thought, for the talk is prompted wholly by the doer. It is the doer also and not the talker who needs and craves to be deceived; indeed he will sometimes do things purely for the purpose of giving colour to the talk and support to the talker: he will

bring about in himself some illness or excruciating pain (*e.g.* trigeminal neuralgia) merely that the talker may be able to point out how much more the doer might have achieved but for the illness or pain or his fate.[1] Thus the doer is both deceiver and deceived, believer and unbeliever, two in one: for however much the deception may be meant for some imaginary audience it is also meant for himself.

THE CONSCIOUS AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

Equally or still more complicated is the description if we attribute to one of the persons the province of the conscious and to the other that of the unconscious. The latter term, which is otherwise ambiguous and often abused, is more useful, certainly, in describing self-deception than in describing anything else. We shall keep closest to the ordinary language for recording very common observation about human nature, if we employ it to denote whatever is unknown in the sense that it is kept secret, unexamined, unthought-through, unscrutinised, unconfessed. Thus, we speak of a man's unconscious lust for power, or unconscious hatred or envy, meaning that he has these and acts from them but does not know them—that is, will not examine them, admit them to be what they are and call them by their proper names. Now, the egotist's unconscious consists of very miscellaneous contents which are not all egotistic. There are present there, for example, the moral *nisus* and some awareness of the real requirements of Goodness (they must somehow or somewhere be present to him since he turns away from them and replaces them by something else); on the other hand there also is present the ideal of his own soleness, absoluteness or omnipotence which every egotist cherishes but which none allows to come to the surface unless he approaches the condition of the megalomaniac, and side by side with that ideal are present the awareness of the failure to live up to it and also

[1] Adler, *Individual Psychology*, vii. and *passim*.

of its impossibility, the awareness also of the failure to live up to any 'ought' which is not lived up to; in general, there is present the truth about every situation which the talker misrepresents. But such being the case, if we take the egotist simply *qua* egotist or if we imagine one who is nothing but an egotist, must we not say that all his consciousness is unconscious? For which of the two or four or six in one is conscious? Certainly not the talker: it is not his function to think-through (which is what we mean in these cases by being conscious) but merely to talk. Nor is it the doer; his part is to do, and indeed it is to him that the sphere of the unconscious is commonly assigned. This unconscious itself is however also consciousness: we have had to speak of the presence in it of awareness and truth. The matter would seem to come to this: Though talk is not always thought or belief (witness the talk of the egotist's 'talker'), thought or belief (unless it be purely practical) is explicit or complete only in talk (in declaration or confession) though the talk need not always be in physical sounds or signs. With the egotist or self-deceiver, however, his talk is not thought and his thought is not talk—that is, it stops short of confession or declaration. Or, having regard to the practical thought, we may say that his thought is expressed only in his doing and not at all in his talking. Thus, whatever formula or description we use, we always come round to the same point. The wrongdoer who says he is acting from a sense of duty, or that he thinks right that which he is doing, is merely talking; that is, if genuine duty and genuine 'right' are referred to, for of course some 'ought' he may be really obeying, that of individual or of collective egotism. His talking is not thinking or believing, but merely an act or expression of the will. It is like the neurotic's 'rationalising' of his life. In actual fact he is substituting his own or some collectivity's egotism for genuine morality and for Goodness, and, what is most important, *he means to do this.*

CONFIRMATIONS OF THE THEORY

That this so-called error is an expression of the will and of the egotistic will is evidenced, we have said,[1] by the fact that it is defended and fought for with anger, resentment and, most significant of all, with other lies. 'We may defend the truth thus,' it may be objected, 'simply because we think it, not because we want it, to be the truth.' But it has been well said that whenever we act thus on behalf of a true doctrine we do so, not because it is true or because we see it to be true, but because it is ours [2]; as held by us it is, in an important sense, no longer true. We have here a case of egotism's borrowing from morality and perverting the borrowed: truth is adopted and turned to un-truth.

For further confirmation of all that has been said above we must go first of all to introspection, or rather retrospection. It is true that while we are engaged on doing wrong we may say that we think what we are doing right. But afterwards, on looking back, do we not, after a struggle perhaps with the maudlin suggestions of self-love, say that we wanted it to be right, that we purposely deceived or blinded ourselves? Next we must look at others. Two examples are outstanding: Paul the persecutor and Augustine the thinker and teacher. It is obvious that Paul was an egotist, if not an individualist, at least a collectivist egotist—proud of his city, of his Roman citizenship, but above all of his people, the Chosen People, and its code or Law. It was in defence of his people's absoluteness, with which his own was identified, in defence of its threatened soleness and exclusiveness, that he persecuted, as may be judged from the fact that he afterwards made it his special mission to do away with that soleness and exclusiveness. In

[1] Above, pp. 125-126.

[2] *Cf.* Pascal: "L'homme ne s'attache à la vérité qu'il défend que parce qu'il la défend."

his own words, when looking back upon his persecution, he connects it with his zeal for the "traditions of his fathers" [1]; only by others is he made to say that he thought he *ought* to act in the way he did.[2] Augustine's case is for many reasons perhaps the most instructive which one can cite on this subject. In the first place, we have his own account of the matter, an account by one who is consumed by a great curiosity about all points of moral psychology and who, though he puts many questions, is not easily satisfied with an answer. Secondly, his would seem to have been a purely theoretic error (a metaphysical one). Finally, his enunciation of it, we are inclined to think, must have been *bona fide*, made with the belief that it was true—such is the impression we get of his deep-seated passion for truth. Now, the very account from which we get this impression uncompromisingly tells us that his adoption of Manichæism and his persistence in the championing of it were due to his conceit, to his reluctance to acknowledge imperfection and evil in himself[3] as well as to his unwillingness to do certain things which but for that doctrine he would have been impelled to do. His confessions are not so much an *Odyssey* of the eager adventurer after truth as an *Iliad* of an obstinate fight against the truth—an epic paralleled only by Francis Thompson's account of the flight from the Hound of Heaven:

> "I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
> I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
> I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
> Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
> I hid from Him, and under running laughter."

In all that we have said we do not mean to assert that a Brand, a Bolshevik, a Nazi, an Inquisitor, is not an idealist. He is this, but in his idealism lies his sin. Nor is his ideal always

[1] Galatians i. 13, 14.
[2] Acts xxvi. 9.
[3] *Confessions*, especially IV. xv.

merely his *own* victory or supremacy; it may be that of a collectivity, institution or doctrine, with which he has identified himself. For that ideal, we do not deny, he will sacrifice his comfort and even his life. But we have said that every egotist, *qua* egotist or in proportion to the strength of his egotism, will do this. For ambition, we have insisted, is not biological; it neither cares for life nor fears death. Let but death be victory (glory) or symbolical of victory, and it has no sting for the egotist; indeed he rushes into it.

RESPONSIBILITY AND FREEDOM

Nor do we mean that the egotist is always or ever wholly responsible by himself for the particular expression of his egotism. The symbol or currency or idol may have been invented not by himself, but established and handed on to him by others who were themselves influenced in the choice of the expression by others' egotistical expression akin or antithetical to their own. That his ideal expresses itself in treating the commoner as dirt or the bourgeois as "manure for the soil,"[1] or the non-Aryan as a back for flexible steel rods, the young aristocrat or Bolshevik or Nazi owes to his educators, just as it is thanks to his entourage and environment that the criminal chooses law-breaking instead of law-abidingness for his egotistic ideal. But no egotism can be communicated to anyone who is not already an egotist, who has not adopted the egotistic attitude and chosen the egotistic way. And for being an egotist one is responsible; it is indeed the one thing for which one is really responsible and on which all other responsibility depends, if there is any other. For to be an egotist is to do an action and make a choice: it is to turn from Goodness to nothingness, to choose the path of glory rather than the path of Goodness. It is certainly not to have a mere thought or presentation.

[1] The phrase of Vishinsky, the Public Prosecutor in the recent trial of Englishmen in Soviet Russia.

To the question about responsibility as it is usually put, in egotistic terms: 'What may a man be *blamed* for?', the answer must be that no man is responsible for anything. At the level of genuine morality, however, where blaming is meaningless, we may safely say that every man is responsible for not being perfect.

There is no room here, however much it may be desirable, to discuss whether responsibility implies 'being able to help' one's choosing or willing or character, nor to consider the meaning of that difficult phrase. But the hypothesis we have used all along and (so we would maintain) have verified as a 'working' one in the use, is that the ultimate subject is bare potentiality and the chooser between the biological (egoistic) way, the egotistic way and the way of Goodness. The choice is not 'determined' (*i.e.* caused) by anything within or without him; it is simply made and repeated or maintained by him. He is not possessed by any character, though he may possess one. He can envisage and stand away from or over against what character he does possess. This he partly inherits, partly makes himself. But whether inherited or made by himself it does not determine any choosing of his; when we say it does, we mean that in his new choosing he reaffirms or maintains also his past choosings, or that he chooses now in the same way as he did in the past. He can also unmake his character though, perhaps, only step by step.[1]

To the following, it would seem, we are committed by all we have said. We must maintain that every subject can, if he will, not merely envisage his character but also see beyond it and see his way out of it; that insight into Goodness and the prompting of Goodness are always waiting for him to attend to them. To get out of the labyrinth created by our own or our fathers' egotism is, indeed, difficult; we can only do so painfully, step by step and corridor by corridor. But it is hard

[1] *Cf.* Lossky, *Freedom of Will.*

to believe that if we will to escape we have not the insight into the first step to be taken and then into the next and the next. The probability is rather that, lovers of distinction, we do not wish to leave that distinguished piece of architecture for the common world of the genuinely moral man who loves, not distinction, but commonness or catholicity.

The lack of insight in question, did it exist, would be like blindness or imbecility. We have not proved that it cannot exist and perhaps it is impossible to prove this. What we have tried to deal with is something different—wrong vision and not absence of vision. The non-existence of this too we have not proved. In spite of all we have adduced, it may very well be that there are persons who have freed themselves from all egoism and egotism even in the comprehensive sense in which these terms have been used here, and who yet are afflicted with a wrong vision as to what is right. To show that this is impossible one would perhaps have to establish a special theory of all error, including 'theoretic' error. Meanwhile we can only point to experience. We do, indeed, find, first of all in ourselves, and next all around us, men who do untold wrong but yet say, supported in this by their admirers, that they are acting from a sense of duty; but quite unsophisticated people and sometimes even children can at once see into or feel their trouble and say, though in different words perhaps, that this trouble is hunger not after righteousness but after self-righteousness. Nor have we found in fiction any convincing portrait of a wrongdoer really in love with the right.

II. Punishment

We punish only the criminal not the idealist?

Why do we think it necessary to give a different account of the idealistic cut-throat or robber from that accepted for the 'mere' cut-throat or robber? 'Because,' the answer is, 'our

attitude to them is different.' Not different in practice, be it noted; unless the following is a serious difference: those who would 'merely' rob us of our lives or property we imprison or hang individually, while those who would take from us our lives, property, country or liberty, in obedience to God or for the sake of Humanity or to establish their culture, we imprison, blow to pieces, bayonet or poison, *en masse*. 'Still,' it may be urged, 'our attitude is different if not as regards practice at any rate as regards feeling and thought: the first class we blame and our treatment of them is punishment, while the second class we do not blame—for they are not responsible for their opinions—and our treatment of them, though it may be the same as, or worse than, that of the others, is not punishment.' With the question of the idealist's or fanatic's responsibility (by no means for a mere opinion) we have just now tried to deal. As for 'blaming,' it is not, we have all along argued, the concern of genuine morality but only of egotism [1]; we need not concern ourselves with it when we are trying to determine the nature of a genuinely moral attitude. We have not, however, denied that there may be genuinely moral punishment. We must therefore inquire what is its nature and whether it entails an attitude on the part of genuinely moral men towards the criminal different from that towards the idealist or fanatic.

PRIVATE REVENGE DESIRE FOR POSITION

It will be useful to make the usual attempt to connect moral punishment with revenge—an egotism; not because anything genuinely moral can be a growth from, or a development or sublimation of, egotism, but because the juxtaposition of the

[1] All accounts in Ethics of the blameworthy as distinguished from what is wrong but not blameworthy are dismal failures because they are attempts to find a rational principle in what is essentially irrational because egotistic. The only account that can be given of it is an historical and descriptive one of the egotism of different groups and different individuals—of their currencies or symbols.

two in this case will illustrate and verify strikingly the assertion that genuine morality arises not by evolution from egotism, but by revolution against it and as a substitution for it, being consequential upon its utter breakdown.

I thirst for revenge upon a person when I conceive that he has lessened or lowered my position—my thirst is all the keener when my imagining is supported by the declaration (actual or implied) of others that I have been 'wronged'—that is, when both my position and the assault upon it are acknowledged by society or the public standard or code. I desire to 'punish' him—that is, to lower him and to elevate myself, or to redress the disturbed balance of power, to be '*even with*' him. According to the training which our egotism has received, I and he and others may conceive the redress to take place when I inflict or help to inflict, or when others or fate inflicts, on him or his a certain pain or loss or bafflement—the loss, for example, of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth (preferably two eyes for one or an eye and a tooth for one eye); or when I exchange pistol-shots with him, or extract an apology from him, or give him a certain look and execute a certain gesture in his presence, or heap coals of fire upon his head by doing him a kind turn.[1] It is superficial to say I desire to inflict on

[1] There is no rational or universal principle deciding which of these shall be the received symbol of revenge. Nor is there any rational principle by which we can separate vengefulness from the more general egotistic unease at any imagined deterioration in one's position, whether brought about by others' success or their involuntary interference with one or simply by fate or the weather; nor is it rationally separable from the *amok* desire to reassert one's threatened or damaged power and to reassure oneself about it by exercising it destructively upon any and every one, even upon those who have done one no wrong; primitive revenge, Steinmetz holds, is undirected (quoted by McDougall, *op. cit.*, p. 121). Nor can we rationally distinguish between vengefulness and 'moral indignation': on the one hand the egotist is always apt to regard any blow to his prestige, however caused, as a 'wrong,' while, on the other hand, 'moral indignation' is always egotistic, appertaining to collective or pharisaic egotism. What distinctions there are in all these cases are due to a fusion (or rather confusion) of genuine morality which tries to do away with revenge completely and egotism which tries to keep it if only in a 'sublimated' form; the distinctions are, therefore, themselves confused.

him pain or loss or death, as an end in itself. Primarily I desire no process (no doing on my part or suffering on his), but only a position: the balance of power redressed. Only in so far as any doing by me or by others and suffering in him or others are deemed 'symbols' of this position do I desire them. I do, however, desire them, generally at least; and I do so because they are deemed symbols. But for symbols to exist there must be conventions, if only presumed 'natural' conventions, such, for example, as the one about the taking and losing of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. In my vindictiveness, as in the rest of my egotism, I can persist only with the help of my 'talker,' who in chorus with others shouts loudly that, now that I have taken an eye for an eye or killed my adversary, the position is restored, the matter settled and honour satisfied, and by his din prevents me from thinking-through these statements.

CRITICISM AND CONVERSION

Suppose, however, that though an egotist of egotists and obstinate in my vindictiveness to the bitter end, I nevertheless insist on thinking-through, introducing in a fatal moment into the sphere of my egotism a habit I have acquired in another domain—in that of scholarship, for example. I may then realise that the talkers are just talking or lying, and that my opponent (whom we will suppose an egotist worthy my mettle), through his very apology or acceptance of my retributive kindness or of suffering or loss or even death, has defied, despised, mocked and triumphed over me; I may even be so nice as to recognise that even when he himself thinks himself beaten or less than I he cannot be this and that his thinking is a mere talking.[1] If I go so far as this, compromise between absolute egotism and the truth or genuine morality is no longer possible:

[1] One can point to many characters both in life and fiction who are bored with revenge and with the 'attainment' of any of their egotistic ends because they secretly realise that the attainment is not an attainment and that their demands are impossible.

I must absolutely choose between the two. I may choose the former by choosing to go mad, flying to the last refuge of egotism which is also the Capitol of the celebration of its triumph; the poison of truth is then expelled from my system, and all my fictions (*i.e.* talk), including that relevant to revenge, are facts to me. Or else after an agonising struggle my egotism breaks down completely; I recognise the madness of the notion of position and I accept the vision—present to me all the time in my 'unconscious' and now reinforced perhaps by that of another—of an order in which there is no higher and lower and no position unless it be the functional one of the members of an organism, the moral order in which my opponent and I are, not one above or beneath the other, but at one in embodying Goodness; I then undergo a revolution or conversion, as a result of which I come to see that I must assert not myself but that order and must help my opponent to the same revolution, if he has really been acting egotistically towards me and his assault has not been simply the figment of my egotistic imagination. This conversion, and this alone, is genuinely moral punishment—a process in which both the punisher and the punished are chastened or chastised or punished. The great pain which invariably attends it is the pain of punishment.

PUBLIC REVENGE OR PUNISHMENT

This vengefulness may be aroused in me not only by an assault upon my own position but also by an assault upon the position of anyone or anything wherewith I have identified myself: a friend or my fellow-countrymen, a religion, or a code, a tradition or institution, or the code or Law (written or unwritten) of society. In all these cases, but especially in the last, to which we shall confine ourselves, the thirst for revenge is called 'moral indignation.' (It is called this even when on my own behalf, if the assault is recognised as a 'wrong' or a violation of a 'right' and so an offence against the received

or social morality or the code written or unwritten.) When the revenge is exacted by, or on behalf of, or with the support of, the community, the exaction is called punishment proper, more particularly when it takes place through officials, which happens only in cases of offences against the written Law; the authors of these offences are called criminals.

Here, as in the case of individual vengefulness, the fundamental desire—that of collective egotism—is for a certain position: the supremacy or majesty of society or of the Law must be vindicated or reasserted or re-established. The processes sought (flogging, imprisonment, hanging) have purely symbolic or conventional significance, at least as far as this, the fundamental, retributive purpose of social punishment is concerned; social punishment has, however, also the utilitarian purpose of deterrence or prevention, and this largely determines the choice of the symbol.[1]

CRITICISM AND REVOLUTION

Now, it is possible for the process towards revolution or conversion, which we have imagined in connection with private revenge, to occur also in the case of public revenge. Many or even (by a miracle) most of the members of a society may come to the explicit realisation that the supremacy or absoluteness of the society in its factual being never is asserted in fact as contrasted with fiction or talk, and cannot be asserted, over the spirit of the criminal or of any other individual. They may then rush into collective madness: State atrocities will be

[1] Deterrence or prevention is the egoistic aspect of punishment: society in this respect uses punishment simply as a means to secure its well-being or the possibility for the satisfaction of its appetitions. Retribution is the egotistic aspect: society in this regard has recourse to punishment as end in itself, but only because interpreted as symbolic of the restitution of its own majesty or supremacy. Retribution is always behind social punishment whatever other purposes go therewith: it is retribution which determines, if it does nothing else, that the offender rather than somebody else should be used as the deterrent example or warning.

multiplied and glorified as is now happening in some countries. Or else they will substitute in their hearts for their earthly city the Heavenly City, and this substitution will be a revolution or conversion in them. Then they will try both to convert the earthly into an image or embodiment of the Heavenly and to convert the criminal, not to acknowledging the earthly city as absolute, but to recognising this Heavenly City and to co-operating in an effort to establish an image of it on earth. They will then be engaged in genuinely moral punishment—a chastening or punishing of themselves, of society and of the criminal. Social vengeance will be replaced by social conversion or revolution. Nor is this simply a matter of the future. It is a process which is continually occurring. To it is due, partly at least, the continual alteration of society's customs, laws and penal practices. True, each time the spirit is petrified anew and yields simply other customs, other codes, other idols. But this is only to say that there has not yet been a conversion in all regards of all the individuals in any society and that the day of egotism is not yet past.

MORAL PUNISHMENT = CONVERSION AND PAIN

This, then, is moral punishment: the conversion of the offender and of the offended (individual or society), of the punisher and the punished. But if punishment is conversion, conversion is punishment. For it is not pleasant: it is preceded, and must be preceded, by a thinking-through of all our shams, of all our most cherished illusions or ideals. Hell is the place of egotists thinking-through their fictions, Künkel was told by a patient whom, in order to cure him of a neurotically caused impotence, he had set upon the path of such a thinking-through.[1] Re-birth, like birth, takes place only in exceeding pain.[2]

[1] *Einführung in die Charakterkunde*, pp. 183-184.

[2] Revivalist or corybantic 'conversions' which are just merry orgies are nothing but outbreaks and revelries of egotism.

This pain, however, is not externally caused. Nor is it the cause, but the effect or concomitant, of the re-birth or rather of the thinking-through which precedes this. The egotist's bafflement also is not external, nor is it the cause but the effect of that same thinking: the egotist persists in his egotism to its extreme limit and realises its failure and the impossibility of success. It is not therefore the aim of genuinely moral punishment to inflict pain and bafflement as an end in itself. Indeed, such infliction, we have seen, is not the aim even of private or public revenge except as a symbolic or conventional affirmation of the individual's or of society's position or power. But genuine morality or Goodness cannot require us to affirm it symbolically or conventionally or fictionally or insanely and nonsensically. It requires true affirmation, which is true conversion. The only categorical imperative of genuine morality as regards the duty of punishment is: Convert to be converted.

Sometimes, however, even if externally caused, any bafflement with its suffering is learning which leads to conversion. But not always. Indeed, we have seen that even the thinking-through with its attendant intrinsic bafflement and pain may lead only to the triumph of egotism, madness—a warning to us, this, that though conversion is a duty we must be careful when and how we attempt it and whether in a particular case it should not be left to the work of eternity. It is no wonder, therefore, that penal pain and bafflement generally make only worse criminals or egotists.

Unimpeded success with its pleasure does, however, generally encourage the egotist to persist in his ways, lending as it does colour to his fictions. But not always. It may sometimes bring disillusionment: the egotist succeeds to the extreme limit set by the nature of things itself (he succeeds, for example, in inflicting pain or loss or death) and then he may realise that his secret demand has all along been that black should be white, and that in the nature of things it is impossible of fulfilment.

This realisation may lead to conversion. But on the other hand it may also lead to madness, wherein the egotist openly confesses and accepts his demand, and this has happened to many who, placed in a position of absolute power, have had the opportunity for unimpeded success. Thus, success, like failure, may bring about either the breakdown or the triumph of egotism.

Hence, neither penal atrocities, which set bafflement and pain at the end of the criminal's path, nor penal amenities (prison concerts, amusements, lectures, humane treatment, etc.), are sure means to conversion. Penal amenities may be a help to conversion sometimes, by evidencing to the egotist a readiness to meet him non-egotistically. But even turning the other cheek, we have said, may simply rouse his contempt or even infuriate him—that is, make him more egotistic.

Both penal amenities and penal atrocities may in rare cases succeed in effecting a certain 'reform'—that is, in turning the egotistic law-breaker into an egotistic law-abider (inducing him to 'live on the level') or in making him change the expression of his egotism. But this is no moral conversion.

CONVERSION FOR THE CRIMINAL AND FOR THE FANATIC

The counsel of perfection is, indeed, that we should all of us devote ourselves with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength to converting the criminal (and others) in order that thus we ourselves and our society may be converted. But conversion is difficult, rare and miraculous. It cannot be brought about *en masse*. In each case it occurs in an individual way and through individual means—as is to be expected, since it is the conversion of an individual.[1] Psychiatry based on a true philosophy—that is, a true ethics—

[1] It is not a general acceptance of God or Christ or Christianity or an ethics but an acceptance uniquely specified in each case, so that, for example, for one man it may mean the espousal, for another the rejection, of the life of scholarship or politics.

will do much. As yet we have not sufficient insight into the way to effect it, but neither have we yet the will.[1] Assuredly when there is the will there will be the way. The conversion of the criminal is so difficult because it is not different from the conversion needed by the fanatic or idealist, by the high-minded Inquisitor, by a Plato, Paul, Augustine, Nietzsche. For conversion is the moral treatment appropriate to these as to the criminal. No one would maintain that conversion in their case is easy. But the criminal is not essentially different from them. He too is a philosopher, theologian and idealist, although he may express his philosophy, theology and ideal in very unacademic language—by calling his victims ' mugs ' or ' softies ' —or only in practice.

In the eyes of genuine morality, as indeed of any sound Psychology, the criminal or the ' mere ' cut-throat or robber is on the same level as the idealistic cut-throat or robber or his teacher, and on the same level as the tame egotistic law-abiding citizen, as the neurotic and madman, as an Alexander, Cæsar or Napoleon. One and all they are—*convertends*.

[1] Deep down our will is that the criminal and, in general, the sinner should remain a criminal and sinner, so that their punishment and our superiority over them should be everlasting—in other words, that they should be damned; though, of course, we want to protect ourselves against harm from them.

CHAPTER X[1]

RIGHTNESS AND GOODNESS

I. The Egoistic and the Egotistic 'Good'

THE EGOISTIC GOOD

Three 'goods'[2] have emerged for consideration: the egoistic or appetitional or biological 'good,' the egotistic 'good,' and the Good or Goodness.

Egoistically 'good' is any desired process psychical or physical (for example, eating), or any quality of such a process, together with its terminal object (for example, food). 'Good' in this sense are all processes sought or 'made for' simply as processes—that is, those which are simply the ends of appetition and not symbols of ambition nor the ends of an appetition established or tampered with by egotism. In the case of man they are all the physical, physiological and psychical processes 'made for' by him and making up his life.

It is clear at any rate that not one of them is bad. Not my eating is bad but my snatching their bread from the mouths of orphans and widows and eating it myself; and then what is bad is a personal relation expressed in these processes. The sexual activity is not in itself bad though sexual prostitution is: what is bad here, at least from the point of view of genuine morality, is a personal relationship or attitude expressed also in intellectual or artistic prostitution, in lying and in all

[1] This chapter, to develop which would need a systematic and very controversial treatise on Ethics, but which is here intended merely as a context for the critical or negative part, is perforce brief, dogmatic and rough. Hence no author is named of any of the moral theories here glanced at. These have developed many subtleties and refinements, here neglected, which are not adequate defences against an attack aimed at their centre.

[2] 'Goods,' that is, which are 'good' as ends; the 'goodness' of means is explained by explaining that of the ends to which they are instrumental.

sorts of toadyism—a similarity which we should never have perceived if we had attended merely to the process or activity itself and not to that which is expressed in it.

At this level there is, strictly speaking, no bad or evil. There is, however, the 'better,' or rather the 'larger good': that which is the end to a larger (more enduring, pervasive or architectonic) appetition, or that which satisfies a larger part of an individual's or a community's appetitional nature or is more contributory towards, or more consistent with, such satisfaction.[1] The lesser 'good,' if and when it clashes with the larger, is called bad or evil. The difference, however, between 'good' and 'bad' is here purely quantitative and not at all qualitative.

Nothing more can be meant by calling a process 'good' than that it is somehow and by someone 'made for.' Hence, for it to be called 'good' it must actually be made for. There must at least be some tendency or capacity for it which, if left unsatisfied, causes or will cause unease; if in the child or savage there is no such tendency or capacity for the activities of the civilised grown-up, then these activities are for him not 'good'; if nevertheless we maintain that they are 'good' for him as for everybody because they are 'objectively good' it will be found that what is meant is not that they themselves are good, but that without them Goodness cannot be fully expressed, that without them—without the wider life—the free and varied communication between persons is not possible wherein Goodness is freely and more fully embodied. At the egoistic or appetitional level of life, 'good' is, strictly speaking, a superfluous term.

MORAL PHILOSOPHIES BASED ON EGOISM

The appetitional is the 'natural' life of free impulse, the life congenial to the so-called 'artistic temperament,' the life

[1] See pp. 76-77.

led by Adam and Eve before their ambitious eating of the apple. The liver of it does not naturally or normally or spontaneously or with any serious meaning use the term 'good,' at least as applied to a man, still less the terms 'right,' 'ought' and 'duty.' Had Tito Melema been more naturally 'alter-egoistic' (endowed with more active sympathy for the sufferings of others); above all, had he been placed in different circumstances so as to remain rooted in a community of his own instead of being an alien adventurer, he would have shrunk by the force of mere habit and *dislike* from his acts of treachery and other baseness, and doing from habit and *liking* and without any conflict all that was required of him by his entourage he would certainly not have come up against any of these terms. There are many such improved Titos who, favoured by their own natures as well as by their education and by their circumstances, and comparatively free from egotism, use these terms neither in an egotistic way nor on the other hand in a genuinely moral way, helped as they are by these advantages to keep slumbering their moral *nisus* which might remind them of something other than the stereotyped requirements of their entourage or of their own appetitional natures. But if these 'innocents' themselves do not use these terms, or use them only as echoes, a *philosopher* may come along who, confining his attention to this 'innocent' life and finding these terms lying about or used by others, will take them up and apply them to the analysis of this life, prompted perhaps by something that is not quite innocent. He will say that 'the good' means 'the desired or made for,' and that this is, in the ultimate analysis, process; he will thus give us the basis for all Naturalistic ethics. Sometimes, however, he will say that 'good' is an indefinable, irreducible, unanalysable quality, belonging, however, only to processes. Saying one thing or the other, he may state either that only pleasure is good, thus giving us Hedonistic Utilitarianism; or that besides pleasure

certain processes as such are good (some experiences or 'mental' or 'psychic' or 'conscious' processes or 'states of mind or of consciousness'), thus giving us Eudæmonistic or Ideal Utilitarianism.[1] In any case he will define the right act or that which is one's duty or which one ought to do, as the act which will produce in the long run (ideally, throughout all subsequent time) a greater amount of these 'goods' or processes than any other acts possible in the circumstances, and the 'good' man as the agent who wills and performs such acts.

THE EGOTISTIC 'GOOD'

Often we shall find two disputants rightly agreeing that the question between them is not at all, or not merely, about a particular activity's being desired but about its 'merits,' or worthiness—whether it (and the genus to which it belongs) ought to be, or ought to be *par excellence*. One champions "paintin' and singin' and readin' and writin'," shouting: "For it's up with the Muses and down with Mayfair," and:

"Chelsea! Chelsea! Home of culture!
Wretches who do not live here
Suffer premature sepulture
And unnoticed disappear,"

while the other bawls:

"Let brainy men addle
Their noddles with strife!
I've learned in the saddle
The secret of life—
Ride straight!
Ride Hard!
And be a white man!"

Each in his own *Machtspruch* is uttering his *sic volo sic jubeo*, proclaiming his will and conceit. No decision is possible or, indeed, desired except by the breaking of heads or some kind of fighting, or by one outshouting the other with: "And, say

[1] This classification is of course very rough and not at all exhaustive.

what they will, it *shall* be so!"[1] Such essentially, a controversy by means only of *argumenta baculina* of one sort or another, is always the dispute about the egotistic 'good' or 'right' or 'god' or 'merit' or Absolute or position and its symbol—even when the nature of the contest does not show so clear as it does here, in *Tantivy Towers*, under the guiding genius of A. P. Herbert. 'Good' and 'right' in this sense, that of 'position-making,' are not only processes (activities and passivities) but all sorts of entities: relations (*e.g.* the possession of money or land or of the favour of the mighty), habits (*e.g.* the virtues), rules of action, physical prowess and beauty, talents, etc., etc. In every case the 'goodness' or 'rightness' or 'merits' of the process (or non-process) is explained partly by its own characteristics, such as rarity or difficulty—in general, by its fittingness for grading or exclusion—but largely by the history which fashioned the individual's or collectivity's 'fantasy.' Only when egotism has been influenced by genuine morality are 'right' and 'good' and 'ought' applied by it, either solely or more emphatically, to the will and to matters dependent upon the will. It does not presuppose genuine morality, but in its contact with the latter it uses the above terms to keep it out of sight.

MORAL PHILOSOPHIES BASED ON EGOTISM

At some ethics issuing from egotism we have already glanced. In order to refer here to some very recent formulations or reformulations we may add this: The philosopher who confines his attention to egotism, or rather to a mixture of egotism and genuine morality (to pharisaism), will say that the 'good' or the 'right' is simply that which is the object of the individual's, but more especially of society's, willing or approval or esteem or valuing or prizing or honouring, and that it is explained by

[1] If not always paintin' and singin', at any rate readin' and writin' generally win in ethical treatises—naturally, since these are written by writers.

the explanation of these attitudes or 'sentiments.' He will be right but inadequate and sinful. Inadequate because he does not examine the ambition for position, which underlies these attitudes; sinful because he will not acknowledge the possibility of genuine morality, of which the explanation appropriate for pharisaism does not hold.

II. Moral Rightness

RIGHTNESS OF A WHOLE INDIVIDUAL SITUATION

Only in the egoistic or in the egotistic sense can a process as such be 'good.' When we seem to call it this in the genuinely moral sense we are using a brachylogy. In order that rightness may hold of a certain individual situation it is often necessary that it be completed by a certain process (action or passivity) becoming an ingredient in it. We then say that this process ought to be, that it is right that it should be, that someone ought to do the act or bring about the state (passivity), that it is his duty to do so. The rightness holds of the whole situation, which is not itself a process (therefore not 'a state of mind' of anybody). But by a natural brachylogy we say that it holds of the process itself, that the process is right.[1] Further, since in the situation Goodness is embodied, every element (including the processes) integrated in the situation is, in a derivative way, good.[2] The process in question, therefore, is also good, and it may be called this even prospectively as we look forward to its integration; but it is good not in itself, nor as a process simply, but as thus integrated.

[1] See pp. 50-55.

[2] We mean what we say. In a situation of which the elements are (*a*) my having slandered Jones, (*b*) my making reparation to him, (*c*) his forgiving me, (*d*) our reconciliation, even my slander is good, having been 'made good' in this integration. If we do not hold this, we must hold that no true forgiveness, healing or 'making good' is possible. But of course my slander or my having slandered is good only as thus integrated in this individual situation. The same, however, applies to all the elements of every right situation.

Of such a situation immediately, and of the completing process mediately, we must say, even as we have said of the appetitional 'good,' that it is an end or object to desire. The desire here is the moral desire or *nisus*. Therefore, when I say: 'I ought to do this,' I do acknowledge that I desire the action though only mediately through desiring the completed situation. This *nisus*, moreover, is present in me even if I do not acknowledge it; only, it is then repressed or unacknowledged; the 'ought' or the duty is also present. But whereas the 'goodness' of the appetitional 'good' is explained wholly by reference to the desire, the rightness, goodness, 'ought' or 'duty' of the right situation or of its completing process cannot be explained by reference to the moral *nisus*, but rather must the latter be explained by reference to the situation, just as ambition is explained by reference to position. Thus, we distinguish between appetitional, egotistic and moral conation by saying that they are respectively: for process, to call which 'good' is simply to call it appetited, for the subject's position (absoluteness, soleness, supremacy or isolation, etc.), and for right situations.

The right situation is distinguished from the egotistic position by being made up of personal relationships (or of relations between persons [1]) such that in them these persons seek and maintain neither mutual separation nor mutual identification, no form of conquest, but at-oneness in distinction, co-operation through complementation, harmony through diversity, communication without fusion or confusion. These terms are inadequate and speak only to those who already know. But so are the terms used for describing colour and all those we have used to give an account of egotism.

The goodness of the situation and of every one of its integrated elements we 'explain' by saying that the situation embodies or expresses Goodness. The rightness is the relation

[1] See, however, p. 247, note 1.

of each integrated element to every other integrated element and also to the whole situation, as well as of this situation to every other situation embodying Goodness. The 'ought' we 'explain' by saying that the situation or its required completion is its own reason since it is the embodiment of Reason, and by referring to the 'call' or inspiration or 'claim' of Goodness. We may have to say that these terms are ultimate and irreducible, that unless we understand them we shall not properly understand anything else, that they are not to be explained by anything else but everything else is rather to be explained by them. But certainly vastly more can be said about them than has been said here; but only the vastly more would be of any use; and it is too much to be said here.

APPETITION PRESUPPOSED BY MORALITY

Amongst the elements integrated in the individual right or moral situation are certainly appetitions and the processes which are their ends. Indeed, without some of these, we have repeatedly said, there cannot be morality; at any rate, since we have appetitions, morality with us uses these and their ends as its matter, just as egotism does. For we are moral or embody Goodness by communicating with each other, and we communicate with each other morally by means of this matter, just as we communicate thoughts to each other by means of words and signs, and beauty by means of words, sounds, pigments, wood, stone, etc.

For some processes we have appetitions: we like them, desire them, want them, need them, tend towards them, make for them; for others (pain, dying, starving) we have aversions: we dislike them, fear them, shrink from them, tend to turn away from them. Some of these appetitions and aversions we have in common with all human beings or with all organisms, while others are peculiar to us as individuals. Any appetition together with its end and any aversion together with its end

can be made good as integrated in the individual moral situation (just as any can be made bad in the wrong situation) —but only on the condition that the appetition remain appetition and the aversion remain aversion.[1] Thus, in this individual situation this pleasure (or this eating, this emotion, this intellectual activity, etc.), thus afforded to me by Jones or thus sacrificed by me for Jones, is good, but a necessary condition is that throughout, even when sacrificed, it remain liked or desired or wanted. Thus also, in this individual situation this pain (or illness or starving or poverty or dying or imprisonment or privation of the opportunities for scientific activity), thus endured by me on behalf of Jones or thus spared to me or relieved for me by Jones or thus inflicted by me on him and by him endured in the healing of body or soul, is good, but a necessary condition is that even in being endured or accepted it remain disliked or an object of aversion: the young subaltern of Tolstoy's story who, all the time green with fear in the trenches, answered the jeers of his comrades by saying that had they been half as afraid as he they would long ago have run away, was embodying Goodness while remaining afraid, and his fear as thus integrated was made good (unless the action was a case of egotism); Jesus's dying and torture on the Cross was supremely good in being supremely the Passion or the agony, shrunk from and abhorred all the time. Hence we are not required to aim directly at altering our appetitions and aversions. They are no doubt altered by practice, notably by continually embodying Goodness: thus, perfect love casteth out fear. But we are not asked to aim at casting out fear but

[1] Especially here it is important to remember that we are speaking only of pure or mere appetition and aversion and not of what is egotism or is established or tampered with by egotism: hatred, anger, malice, envy, jealousy, etc., are not in question here. These are not presupposed as a basis for morality and they must be altered or rather replaced. Yet even they can be made good by being forgiven or borne by the moral man; but this making good of them presupposes their being evil, while the making good of appetitions and aversions (with their ends) does not presuppose their being evil.

only at embodying perfect love or Goodness. As our appetitions and aversions become altered they with their ends can still be integrated and be made good in the individual situation, but in an altered way: if we have come to like pain and to dislike pleasure it may be our duty in a certain situation to forgo the one and endure the other. If we have come to like nothing and to dislike nothing our state is a parlous one, probably one of extreme egotism, from which we must seek to be cured and be brought alive again.[1]

NO PROCESS OR APPETITION GOOD

Every appetition with its end and every aversion with its end can be *made* good. Primarily, or apart from this making, only Goodness is really good, or in itself and always good, or good without qualification, or is that which ought always to be. The individual situation as well as any of its individualised or integrated elements is also good, really, always, without qualification, and is that which ought always to be (now that it is or has been).[2] But it is good only derivatively, through this making, and the making is the embodying of Goodness. But no appetition with its end (process) and no aversion with its end is good without being made good. (Nor is it evil without being made evil.) Even maternal love, sexual love, fellow-feeling or the philanthropic impulse, sympathy, even virtuous impulses—all these together with their respective satisfactions can be bad in certain situations, we have seen. In other words, there is no class of really good appetitions or processes. It is always a question of unique situations and unique elements or elements uniquely integrated and made unique.

[1] All this is in sharp contrast with Stoicism, which foolishly, because hubristically, asks us to become, or rather to be, indifferent to, and contemptuous of, pain and pleasure.

[2] By this can only be meant that its goodness is timeless. Only while the situation is not yet can we say that it ought to be, or that it is right or good that it shall be. Once it has been we can only say that it ought to have been, or that it is right or good that it has been.

TRUTH

There would seem to be two striking exceptions: Truth and Beauty. These ought always to be, it would seem, and they are (so it would seem), if not processes or experiences, at any rate qualities of processes or experiences.

Truth certainly ought always to be. The quasi-contrary of the moral situation—namely, the egotistic situation—always involves, or is, a lie; the moral situation must therefore involve truth—the situation and all pertaining thereto must be truly known (and the knowledge involved is not merely 'moral,' nor can any sharp distinction be made between 'moral' and other knowledge). Further, truth is not merely instrumental to morality, but is an aspect of it or a moment in it: in being at one with persons and things we truly know them, and in truly knowing them we are in a sense at one with them. Knowledge is a kind of at-oneness or love and is certainly objectivity.

But truth is not a quality of experiences or processes. Like rightness, it holds, or is, in respect of a situation: a situation such that there is accordance or correspondence [1] between my cognitive or thinking processes and the facts—a situation of at-oneness. In other and in better words, there is truth in that situation in which my thinking is such that what I think to be the fact really is the fact. To say that truth is really good or ought always to be is, then, the same as to say that morality is really good and ought always to be. It is to say that every situation ought to be such that rightness holds of it, and that an aspect of that rightness is truth. It is not, however, to say that we must always tell the truth or the whole truth; for telling the truth to a man is often making his lie worse; thus, telling it to the egotist may sometimes mean driving him into

[1] These words are chosen simply to denote relationship. We do not mean to commit ourselves to the correspondence theory of knowledge.

madness. Nor is it to say that at all times we must all be or try to be complete scientists: we ought all to try and be perfect but we can only do so step by step; besides, it may be that science is not knowledge proper.[1]

BEAUTY

Beauty perhaps also is really good and ought always to be. One is inclined to say that it too is not a quality of process but something that holds of certain situations in which we have the deepest union with persons and things and their appearances: "Art is the forgiveness of sins," a poet has said. But about beauty in this connection we prefer to say nothing.

MORALITY DOES NOT PRESUPPOSE 'GOODS'

By analysing and classifying linguistic embodiments of thought we come to make dictionaries and grammars, which are very useful because they are never taken as giving us the nature of thought. By analysing and classifying works of art or the individual embodiments of beauty we arrive at much that is useful and illuminating, but also at much that is nonsense because it is thought to give us the nature of beauty. Nonsense, for example, it is when, having analysed a finite number of beautiful poems which synthetise only adulterous or polygamous passion, wine-drinking, the pastoral life, fighting with spears, we proceed to say that these experiences are poetic or beautiful and that monogamous love, cocktail-drinking, the urban life and fighting with machine-guns, which have not been synthetised in these poems, are not poetic or beautiful. It is perhaps the same kind of nonsense reached in a similar way, by analysing and classifying the individual situations

[1] The desire for truth must be carefully distinguished from the desire for intellectual activity. The latter desire is either purely biological—*i.e.* an appetition for an activity *qua* satisfying a capacity for that activity; or it is egotistic—*i.e.* an ambition for mastery or conquest by imposing one's will upon the subject-matter or upon rivals.

embodying Goodness, that we have when we set up a class of really or intrinsically good processes and another of bad processes. Thus, against our concrete presentation of a concrete situation, some will object that we ought not to say simply and unanalytically: 'This pleasure or this affection or intellectual activity here thus arising, thus proceeding and thus terminating is bad,' but should say: 'Pleasure, affection, intellectual activity are always, or in themselves, or as such, good, but in this case the means or concomitants or consequences are bad.' For (so these objectors hold) there must be really good experiences or processes [1] for the will to choose; the goodness of these is presupposed by, and defines, the goodness of the good man or good will, which latter goodness simply consists in willing and producing these good experiences; the will cannot be good by willing itself. Our answer must be that, since there is no process which cannot in an individual situation be made bad as well as good, there is no process which in itself or as a member of its class is good. If anything is presupposed by morality, it is not good and bad processes, but processes which are liked and wanted and processes which are disliked and the objects of aversion.

MORALITY AND THE MAXIMUM OF 'GOODS'

The statement, however, that the right act (or situation) is simply that which will produce in the long run a greater amount of these 'goods' or processes (*i.e.* desired processes) than any other act possible in the circumstances, may be not simply an error arising from classification, but a distortion of an important truth. If the statement is true, then the right or moral act is simply the most prosperous or politic act. The

[1] It is significant that either no list of these is given or, when given, the lists of different authors scarcely ever agree in any other items except the virtues (which, we have argued, are not good in themselves) and truth and beauty (which are not processes or qualities of processes). Often goodness itself is included as an item, by a circular definition.

truth, however, is probably this: The moral act is (probably) in the long run the most prosperous and politic but is not simply this; honesty may be in the long run the *best* policy, but honesty is honesty and policy is policy; the genuinely moral life may result in the most abundant life (abounding in these 'goods'), but the consequences of the genuinely moral life are just its consequences and not its nature; advance in morality, which consists in the deepening, widening, refining and perhaps multiplying of personal relationships, is not just an advance in the 'standard of life' or in 'culture and civilisation,' and, though a passion for the former progress may lead to the latter progress, an interest in the latter will certainly not lead to the former. Just so it may be that only the work of genius turns out in the long run to be the best seller. But its genius is one thing and its saleability another. What is more important, just as insight into salesmanship is not identical with insight into literary genius, so politic insight is not identical with moral insight, with insight, that is, into the rightness of personal relationships. Now, we possess moral insight, but in a conflicting disharmonious world like ours we cannot ever tell which act will in the long run—that is, throughout all subsequent time—turn out the most prosperous.[1] We cannot, therefore, judge of the rightness of an act by considering its prosperity. At the most we can judge of its wrongness if we see disaster issuing from its very nature. More important still, the desire for prosperity (for more abundant life, for the fullest 'self-realisation') is not identical with the desire for morality. If, then, we attach our attention and desire to prosperity, we shall gradually lose all interest in, and appreciation of, morality; we shall seek simply prosperity and practise merely policy. But we have, and can have, no insight into what is the best policy in the long run. We shall therefore fall short of the maximum of prosperity, even if we do not land ourselves in

[1] This has been argued at some length by the writer in *Mind*, xlii. 166.

outright disaster. Thus, it is actually the best policy to stick to, and to cultivate, our moral insight and desire.

What happens actually? Is it not this (put, it is true, in a somewhat *simpliste* way)? One man says: 'Our present prosperous, abundant and cultured civilisation is based on slavery. If we remove this base it may be that much of our prosperity, much of our culture, if not all, will topple down. I hope and trust, but I cannot see, that this will not be so. I can, however, see that the relationship of master and slave is not a proper personal relationship. We must away with it.' He is followed by others, and in the long run, when slavery has been abolished, they or their successors find themselves with a richer, more varied and more abundant civilisation, all unsought for, while attention to mere policy might have led to stagnation or death.[1] Similarly, men who do not believe that living is good in itself or death or disease bad in itself but who see that a situation in which they turn away from the plague-stricken, the 'incurables' and the imbeciles or put them into the lethal chamber, is not one wherein Goodness is embodied or one of communication but one of exclusion or of shutting out and cutting off, whereas devotion to doing something for these is communication, will devote themselves to preserving and curing them even though all efforts seem useless; and in the long run new interests, new sciences, new activities, new powers of procuring 'goods' or fending off 'evils,' will arise, which originally were not aimed at directly.

On the other hand, if we wish to see what the belief that morality is merely the best policy can really lead to—a thing not at all made clear in the philosophic expositions of that belief—we may look at Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World.* True, a world based on this belief might be 'braver' and less 'new' (less of a caricature) than Huxley's,[2] but its funda-

[1] Only after the abolition of slavery can we see sufficient non-moral (*e.g.* economic) reasons why it should have been abolished.

[2] Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* presents us with something that is less a caricature but is yet no less poverty-stricken.

mental defect would still remain. This defect is the poverty of personality and of the appreciation of personal relationships amongst men and women who are brought up to be soulless 'goods'-producing machines. Such a world, it is clear, is very poor in 'goods' even and cannot last long. For an illustration in actual life we may go to Soviet Russia, though here, it is true, the case is complicated and worsened by an egotistically destructive reaction against everything old and 'bourgeois.' [1]

This same question—a most vital one for our own age, the morality of which has been increasingly becoming mere policy (Ethics tending actually to be swallowed up by Political Science, Economics and Sociology)—was answered in a quaint and striking way by Butler and Kant. Both agree that our proper business is morality and that policy is the business of God, who is to see to it that morality is in the long run rewarded by 'happiness,' the term by which they cover all desired processes. Both agree that we cannot see or be certain that morality is the best policy. According to both we have the necessary moral, but not the necessary politic, insight, and it would be fatal for us to seek policy instead of, or as equivalent to, morality—fatal to both morality and policy according to Butler, fatal to morality according to Kant, who rightly considers that in that case morality would not exist and who deems our lack of certainty about the connection between it and policy a special blessing of Providence. Of Kant, indeed, it is scarcely a caricature to say that he postulates God as the politician who is to secure that connection which we ourselves cannot secure or be expected to secure, and that he deems it

[1] " I stand on my own feet now, I am respected and valued as a worker, I am paid for my work. But everything else that is in me is pushed aside as having nothing to do with the business in hand, as unnecessary. Not even pushed aside. . . . Simply my life is not necessary to anyone. All that is needed is my capacity for work." Thus Ludmilla, a woman character in *The New Commandment* (p. 21), a novel of contemporary Russian life by a Communist writer, Panteleimon Romanof (trans. by V. Snow, 1933).

in the interest of morality itself that the existence of this politician should not be certainly demonstrable.[1]

THE THREE LIVES

For the sake of concreteness we have spoken of three lives and of three types of men: the egoistic, egotistic and the genuinely moral or objective. Actually the life of any one of most of us is a motley of the three. A man may be egoistic on one occasion, egotistic on another and genuinely moral on a third; or he may begin a transaction by being genuinely moral and then pass on to egoism or egotism. Still, many people to a certain extent fashion their lives, and they may do so on egoistic lines mainly, or on egotistic or genuinely moral lines. But even the 'purely' egoistic life, we have seen, may have elements implanted in it by the genuine morality or the egotism of others through education (as for example, virtues), or by a particular egotism of the liver himself which has, however, long since left him (for example, the craving for smoking); and the egotist's life must borrow its contents from egoism and from genuine morality. Hence there is continual interplay between the three lives.

'ONE AND THE SAME' ACT IN ALL THE THREE LIVES

That which, regarded externally or in abstraction from a context, may appear to be 'one and the same' act can fit into, or issue from, any one of the three lives. Thus, three men, one an egoist, the other an egotist, and the third genuinely moral, may all keep the same promise to Jones. The first will do so because he is pained by the idea of Jones (or perhaps of anyone) suffering disappointment or loss, or because he is accustomed to keeping promises (has had a virtuous habit implanted in him) and desires to satisfy his habitual impulse,

[1] Butler, *Dissertations*, ii., the fifth observation (*cf.* especially: "The happiness of the world is the concern of him who is the Lord and Proprietor of it"); Kant, *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, chap. ii., last two sections.

or because he considers either that by his keeping his promise now, or that by all observing always the rule of promise-keeping, the maximum of 'goods' (processes desired by himself and others) will be produced in the long run ('policy' morality). The second will act from self-respect: he will keep his promise because he or a gentleman or a member of his family or class must not break his word ('*noblesse oblige*'), because promise-keeping has from various causes come to be approved or established as right or position-making by himself or his entourage or community. The third will act with and from insight into Goodness and into the individual situation and personal relationship: he will keep his promise because his doing so in this case is a keeping of trust or of communication or communicability between himself as a person and Jones as a person, a maintaining of the relation of at-oneness, whereas the opposite would be an exclusion or a setting up of a barrier between one person and another. In his case the action is individual and not simply one of a class. By the analysis and classification which, as we have seen, arrive at the moral rules, the idea of the class of 'promise-keeping acts' may have arisen from the genuinely moral life and have been adopted by the egotist and by the egoist. This would explain the apparent 'sameness' or similarity between the three. But in reality, viewed each as an element in its respective situation in which the agent's whole *Lebensanschaung* is an ingredient, the three actions (doings of what Jones was told would be done) are very different. Further, though all the three agents may speak of 'good,' 'right,' 'ought' and 'duty,' they do not mean, and do not quite mean to mean, the same thing by these terms.

'ONE AND THE SAME' ACT DONE EGOTISTICALLY AND MORALLY

The difference, though not always on the surface, is particularly significant between the egotist and the genuinely

moral man, and a glance at it will illuminate the perplexing problem of the keeping of rules and of justifiable exceptions to them in the moral life, as also the meaning of personal relationships. In the case of the promise-honouring egotist we can be quite certain that he will do that which by him or by him and his collectivity is received as an instance of the rule of promise-keeping, though our and Jones' ideas on the nature of this may not at all tally with his or his circle's. We can also be certain that the action will be a 'letting *down*' and a 'getting *the better*' of Jones if only in a purely fantastic, figurative or symbolic way which has significance only for the imagination of the egotist. For the latter's aim all along is simply to keep himself high or a 'superior person' (to use a Chinese expression) in his sense of 'superiority'; it is never a question of keeping trust or communication between himself as a person and Jones as another; Jones might be a stock or stone—there would still be the egotist's 'honour' or 'religion' or 'principle' or 'duty,' which alone he cares for; his transaction or concernment is essentially unilateral. The egotist will keep his promise in the letter, even if it is in such a way that it can have no meaning for Jones; it is a case of *tabu*. At the worst we cannot be certain that he will not cut Jones' throat after or while keeping his promise, unless we know of some appetitional impulses in his nature or some other *tabu* which will inhibit him; for egotism as such, unrestrained by other egotism or by egoism, is essentially panurgic. At the best the relationship is not personal but simply one between him as the occupant of one station in the tribe with the duty or *tabu* attached to it and Jones as the occupant of another station with its duty or *tabu*. In the case of the genuinely moral or good man we cannot be certain that there will be what we and Jones will *prima facie* recognise as an act of promise-keeping. But even when there is apparently a violation of the promise we can be certain that there is no 'letting down' or 'getting

the better' of Jones; that beneath the surface there is a treating of Jones as an end in himself, a keeping of the promise and of trust 'in the spirit' if not in the letter, a keeping of communicability or at-oneness in *spirit* between two persons *qua* persons, and that even though the agent be a Chinaman with personal temperament and tastes, and with traditions, social ideas and *tabus*, entirely different from those of Jones.

EQUIVOCALNESS OF 'GOOD,' ETC.

It follows therefore that Moral Philosophy must study not isolated actual or imaginary acts apart from a context, but at the very least possible types of whole lives; still less should it simply analyse isolated sentences in which 'good,' 'right,' 'ought' and 'duty' occur.

The question how 'good' and these other words came to be used in different senses must, as befits a question on moral matters, be answered in moral terms. *Cui bono?* To whose 'good' or benefit is this equivocation? To the egoist's and egotist's. By means of it they manage to keep genuine morality out of hearing and sight. 'Good' itself (as perhaps also 'right') may have come from morality or, as is more likely, from egoism or egotism (probably from its use to denote the efficiency of an instrument). But the question as to the origin is unimportant: if you wish to muddle yourself and others you may achieve your purpose either by describing morality in the terms of egoism and egotism or by describing these two in the terms of morality.

DESIRE IN ALL THE THREE LIVES

The genuinely moral action cannot be distinguished from the egoistic and egotistic by saying that it does not spring from desire while they do. All the three of them come from desire, if by 'desire' we denote any urge, 'making for' or 'hormic

drive.' [1] The distinction is in the nature of the desires, which nature is defined by that of the *desiderata*. The egoistic (which means also alteregoistic) desire, being for processes, is to be called subjective for the reasons already given. The egotistic desire is, indeed, primarily not for processes but for a situation, but it may be called subjective because the significance which the situation has lies in the position of the self. Only the genuinely moral desire is properly objective because primarily and immediately it is always a desire that Goodness be embodied in the situation and only secondarily and mediately is it a desire that it be embodied by oneself, just as only mediately is it a desire for a process; the action springing from it may be called fully objective.

THE NOTION OF PURE MORALITY 'À PRIORI'

Where is there such objective action? A simple imaginary example we have just given—the genuinely moral keeping of the promise to Jones. For a richer example we may repeat the instance already cited from Kant [2] of the man who, contrary to all his egoistic impulses and without any idea of merit or greatness (without egotism), insists, we will say in order to make the case positive, on giving true evidence to save the innocent man from his calumniators. But we may agree with Kant [3] that of any actual situation it is impossible to say that it is an instance of pure morality. We will say with him that it is sufficient that we have an *à priori* notion of such action as action which ought to be ours. This notion is immanent in the criticism of egoistic and egotistic action—a criticism which has been carried on here and which is to be met with abundantly in literature and in the conversation of daily life.

[1] This statement is a truism, for desire (in the wide sense) is action, and action is desire. ' Mere ' desire is the action truncated of its two important later phases of willing and physical externalisation. See p. 26.

[2] Above, p. 207.

[3] *Metaphysic of Morals*, second section.

III. Goodness

GOODNESS NOT PROCESS OR EXPERIENCE

Goodness is that which we embody in individual right situations or in situations which embody Goodness. The circularity is intentional to show that no definition is intended.

Of Goodness itself there are many things which we can say it is not. Above all it is not a process, an experience, a state of mind, consciousness, or a collection or system of processes, any more than a person is any of these.

ITS UNIVERSALITY

The chief thing which we can say of it affirmatively is that it is universal or *the* Universal.[1] A person is also a universal. It is not however universal in the sense that it is present in all things. It is present in all things only in so far as they embody Goodness. Nor is it the spirit of the Universe, for the Universe (the real ordered whole) is not; in so far as the Universe is, Goodness is its spirit or regulating, ordering or architectonic principle; when all beings will have been ordered by this principle, when they will have turned to the one Goodness instead of to mere differentiation, separation and conflict, then, and only then, will there be the Universe.[2]

Nor is the universality of Goodness to be described by saying that Goodness is formulated by, or is the source of, universal rules—the moral rules or laws; or that the good man acts in conformity with universal laws. The only universal law that comes from Goodness and the only ' maxim ' of the good man is: Always embody Goodness.[3] The universality of his action

[1] Here, as throughout, we are adapting, though not interpreting, Kant.

[2] If by ' the universe ' we denote Being as such, it is doubtful whether we are using significant language.

[3] Contrast Kant (*Metaphysic of Morals*, second section): " There is therefore but one categorical imperative, namely this: *Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law*," and " *Act as if the*

(situation) is described by saying that it is rightly related to, refers to, is consilient with, claims and has support from (in virtue of embodying the same spirit or Goodness which they embody), all right actions (situations), actual or possible, past, present and future, of any beings (including 'things') in Heaven or on earth, in this or in any other actual or possible world. But, of course, he is not in touch with, he does not refer or adapt his action to, each of these situations individually; nor is he in touch with the totality (if we may speak of a totality) by means of generalisation or classification; he is in touch with each and all, mediately, by being in touch immediately with the organising spirit or Goodness. (He loves all men and all that is or that has been or will be or may be, by loving Goodness.) There is nothing miraculous or 'mystic' in this. The present writer is now in touch with what will be the end of this sentence and with all the sentences that have preceded this and all that will follow it, as well as with the whole book, mediately only, if he is in touch immediately with the one organising thought; if there is no such thought he is not in touch with them at all, and they are 'unified' only by the paper on which they are written.

The universal moral rules are got at through the analysis and classification which yields us the virtues.[1] An infinite number of classifications is possible, each of which can yield an infinite number of virtues and rules, and the similarities and differences which each exhibits are not grounded in Goodness itself. The information obtained is about the a-moral or pre-moral, about situations which require to be made good or moral, and also about the different ways of not being moral. The rules are helpful only in the same way as rules

maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal Law of Nature." His other formulation is much nearer the mark: "So act in regard to every rational being (thyself and others), that he may always have place in thy maxim as an end in himself"; "all beings" would perhaps be better.

[1] See pp. 208-211.

for artistic creations are. They can be of pædagogic use.[1] If they are absolutised they become egotistic petrifacts.

GOODNESS THE UNIVERSAL INDIVIDUAL

Goodness, then, is not something which right situations have in common in the same way as members of one class or instances of one universal have something in common. Its presence in them is perhaps unique or *sui generis*. But if we want analogies we may compare it to the presence of the organism's life in its limbs or cells or vital functions; or of thought in the sentences; or of a meaning, poem, symphony or picture in its 'parts'; or, best of all, of a personality in his actions. Goodness is the universal which is also the individual. It is the concrete Universal.[2]

GOODNESS IN ITSELF

Goodness is, whether we embody it or not, whether it has ever been embodied or not; its being is not merely in the embodiments; for we turn to it before we embody and when we are about to embody. It cannot be that then we turn simply to past embodiments (past actions or situations), find out by classification what they have in common and so produce something like them; for they are all unique, and classification, we have said, gives us similarities and differences which leave out Goodness. "Imitation," says Kant, "finds no place at all in morality,"[3] just as, we might add, it finds no place in art.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOODNESS IN ITSELF

We know Goodness in itself best when, with all egoistic (including alteregoistic or altruistic) impulses, not indeed

[1] But not so much as many moralists aver. We do not really train children by inculcating general rules; we make them attend to individual situations and infect them with a spirit. We can of course bring them up to rules and turn them into little Kantian egotists.

[2] The writer is, however, uncertain what others mean by 'the concrete universal.'

[3] *Loc. cit.*

expelled, but in our keep or under our control, and having voided [1] or tried to void our egotism (including all prejudices or preconceptions and blind loyalty to codes or rules or traditions or institutions) by criticism or thinking-through or bringing up from the unconscious into consciousness—in short, by confession—we ask passionately what we are to do, then listen and do.

THE REALITY OF GOODNESS

The idea of Goodness or Perfection is immanent in all criticism of egoism and of egotism, in the criticism of life, each time we say: 'This is not really good, that is not really good.' It is Goodness or Perfection that two people are discussing when they argue about perfect love, one saying: "It beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and the other: 'No, it does not endure all things, it chastiseth, it consumeth the chaff,' or 'Love is not an element of Perfection at all.' Goodness or Perfection is not a mere presentation or idea or something present only in an idea. It might be taken to be this if all possessed or enunciated the same idea of it; or if the many ideas of it were taken to be simply different as two trees may be different, and not in some cases contradictory. We can and do argue and contradict each other about it significantly, just as we do about a description of a really existing tree or of the British Constitution or of the composition of water and as no one can contradict my assertion about the whiteness of the white horse of my dream. Of Goodness, as of the tree, the British Constitution or the composition of water, an idea may be wrong or right. Like these, Goodness has objective reality—that is, reality outside the idea of it.[2]

[1] Compare or contrast the *via negativa* of mysticism.

[2] This is discussed by the writer in the 1933 January number of *Philosophy*, in an article "Immanence and Transcendence."

TRANSITION TO METAPHYSICS AND THEOLOGY

To inquire further into the nature of the objective reality of Goodness and into its differences from, and relations to, the objective reality of entities like the existing tree, the British Constitution or the composition of water, is to pass on to Metaphysics. The further question whether Goodness is God or merely an attribute or manifestation of God or an emanation from Him belongs to Theology, while to ask whether what is embodied is God or Christ and whether the 'call' or inspiration or prompting from Goodness is the Spirit, is to pass into the realm of specifically Christian Theology. To Metaphysics also, or perhaps simply to another book going beyond the limits of this, belong: the questions as to the meaning of 'self,' 'collective self,' 'indeterminate self' or 'subject,' 'bare potentiality,' 'nothingness,' 'person,' 'form or structure or situation'; the elucidation of the nature or mode of reality of the entities denoted by these words; the more exact formulation of the meaning of 'embodiment or expression,' 'the real ought,' 'rightness,' 'the inspiration or call of Goodness,' 'reason,' 'at-oneness,' 'communication.'

ULTIMATE TERMS

All these have been used here as ultimate descriptive terms sufficiently clarified and made significant, it is hoped, by the very matter they have described and tried to clarify. They were intended to help colligate observations on life as lived and intuitions into life as it should be lived. If the colligation is useful and illuminating, if the divisions and distinctions and identifications it makes are true, if things really co-ordinate are exhibited as co-ordinate, and subordinate and superordinate elements have been given their proper place, and if important similarities and differences have been brought to light, then the use of them has so far been justified. Ultimate terms there

must be for every inquiry, ultimate for the simple, but perhaps also the sole, reason that in writing, unlike in living and thinking, at one point or another there must come the ultimate term——

FINIS

THE SERMON'S MORAL

By ' the moral ' we mean the application to some immediate problem of the times.

What has here been alluded to as genuine morality is personal morality. It is that which is realised in the communication between individuality and individuality by means of the exchange of processes sought or shunned or of the means to such processes. It does not presuppose ' values.' The objects that are generally covered by this term, whether they be " the strong legs of a man," or genius, or virtues, or experiences, are simply matter to it, just as are wood and stone and pigments to the artist. It cannot be presented in a programme of measures, list of virtues or code of rules and *tabus*. It does not presuppose society and does not consist in the sacrificing of the individual to society or in setting up society as absolute. It is only consequentially, though very vitally, social. It is social because the perfect communion between individual and individual entails a perfect community, one that is all-embracing. What it does presuppose is, not ' values ' or society, but Goodness and transcendent Goodness. Of this transcendence this much at least may be said without venturing into Metaphysics, that Goodness is always more than any historical embodiment of it. Negatively this morality may further be described as a turning away from Greatness or from the heroic ideal to Goodness.

For the firmest enunciation of this morality (the only morality) we must go to the Judæo-Christian tradition with its realisation of God who is personality and Love or Goodness and before whom no man is great or, which is the same thing, all are equally great, with its Old Testament in which there is no hero and with its New Testament in which lowliness and, indeed,

ignominy itself are assumed into divinity. The enunciation is in the terms of religion only because all moral vision is also religious or metaphysical vision just as moral perversion is also religious or metaphysical perversion.

This tradition is itself not altogether free from corruption by collective egotism or the ideal of greatness effected by means of the honouring and officialising of morality. Thus, in the Old Testament, though no man is a hero, the Lord is *the* hero, the Lord of Hosts and Might, the protector of a favourite people and the author of numerous injunctions and *tabus*. In historical Christianity, on the other hand, He has often figured as the condescending potentate conferring a patent of special nobility or greatness upon lowliness, humility and suffering, while Christ has been the Big Brother raising to special power, privilege and glory the little ones; a division was also made between the spiritual sphere with its spiritual greatness and the worldly sphere with its worldly greatness and a kind of concordat laid it down that one could live in the first without having to alter the laws of the second; spiritual greatness even became identified with ecclesiastical power. But in spite of these interpolations effected by egotism, in the Judæo-Christian tradition more than elsewhere the indication of something other than greatness and the attempt to fashion moral ways of thinking and of feeling have been unmistakable.

The crucial problem of our times is that this tradition is now being all but completely ousted. Its place is being taken partly by what has here been called egoism or utilitarian or policy morality. But only partly, for ours are times of dearth and distress, and in such times it is the distinction of man that he longs most ardently, not for comfort and prosperity, but for glory or greatness, absoluteness, exaltation, self-worship and, in the last resort, sheer violence. In the barren and thirsty wilderness the Children of Israel did not want to reach the land flowing with milk and honey but only to worship a calf

made by themselves of what was theirs. The predominant characteristic of our day [1] is the worship of power or greatness. The theology of this cult, so we have tried to show, is the philosophy of values.

For extremes in the cult, as for extremes in everything, we must go to Germany. More particularly we must look at Nazism. The countless self-contradictions of the latter are at once transcended for us if we regard its words and deeds as the formulæ and gestures of a ritual, as the *cri du cœur* and dance of collective egotism, as the celebration and symbolising of Germany's greatness, superiority, supremacy, singularity, uniqueness, absoluteness, as the evocation of the people's superiority-feeling extravagantly succeeding the post-defeat inferiority-feeling, the extravagance of which was in its turn caused by, and directly proportionate to, the megalomania which had preceded it. Here as elsewhere absolutising is effected by the familiar egotistic lie with its identification-separation. The extremely fluid Aryan myth identifies the Germans with the founders of all civilisations and especially with the Greeks and Romans; incidentally it also identifies them with the Anglo-Saxons, regarded by them as the real victors of the Great War and as not only Aryans but also Germans though renegades; at the same time, as more Aryan than other Aryans, it separates them from the rest of the world and makes them the authors of a unique German civilisation appreciable only by the German heart. The same myth sets up the absolute Other or Enemy or Nonentity or Noman, the absolutely separate tenant of the world of Outer Darkness, the indispensable, not-to-be-relinquished domestic foil—the non-Aryan; incidentally, he it was who, along with some

[1] The generation referred to in what follows as also on several occasions in the body of the text, a generation dangerously athirst for self-complacence, is obviously different from the self-critical generation alluded to in the Introduction (pp. 16-17). It is, roughly, post-War only, while the other is, again roughly, pre- and post-War, the successor to the complacence-sodden Victorian age—a typical egotistic triad or cycle, this.

other Nomen Germans who were not real Germans, the 'Marxists,' both caused and suffered the defeat in the Great War, while the real Germans gained, and were robbed of, the victory. The identification is also between the claimant to greatness and the measure of greatness: Greatness *par excellence*, that to competition in which all the world is challenged by Germany, is to be measured by victory won by all the methods of modern warfare and by 'Aryan cunning,' but only victory won by Germans is real victory; that won in the Great War was no victory since it was gained by non-Germans through sheer numbers and armaments, through the killing of German soldiers and the starving of German women and children and through devilish diplomacy. Might is willed to be divine right, but only German might: the Treaty of Versailles is not divinely right but only the imposition of the will of the victor who was no real victor upon the vanquished who were not really vanquished.

But it is in "German Christianity" that Nazism, going far beyond mere politics, reaches its peak of general significance and aims at providing satisfaction for more than the immediate hunger of defeated Germany. In "German Christianity" it offers a "new" religion, one which is the direct antithesis of, and seeks to substitute itself for, the Judæo-Christian tradition. This religion is to be a purely German product, cut loose from all Semitic bonds, with a god of the purest German blood and an Aryan Jesus who is the prophet of Antisemitism. It is to be a worship of the State or ruler on the Japanese model, in a country in which, to quote a Nazi gospeller, there will no longer be men but only Germans; a worship also of heroes or great men (Germans preferably), not of course as critical history represents them, but moulded by the rulers of the time after their own image. It is to be, in short, the religion of power or greatness.

If in its general inspiration, as in its particular features,

Nazism were confined to Germany, it would not be necessary to call attention to it here when we are seeking for an application of our thesis to the crucial problem of our times. But this general inspiration—the turning away from the Judæo-Christian tradition to "new" (really very old) gods, the gods of power—is this very problem, and is unfortunately not limited to Germany. Long before the birth of Nazism it could be seen in English literature, in D. H. Lawrence (at first rejected by the Nazis as the author of *Schmutz-Literatur* but recently hailed as one of their precursors) with his factitious violence and his dalliance with "dark gods," the metaphysical Phallus, snake-worship and even a *soupçon* of cannibalism. This inspiration is sometimes called Paganism. This is a misdescription of it. If Paganism worshipped power it just worshipped it, without self-consciousness and without much consciousness of anything to take its place; its brutality, when it was there, was just in the day's work, as it were. What we have now is not merely worship of power but the worship of the worship of power, a conscious rejection of the consciousness of something that is not power, a brutality which (horror of horrors!) is introspective, self-conscious. It is a sickly, morbid thing. Hence it may be that even the peculiar manifestations so common now in Germany, the hysterical brutality and the habit of foaming at the mouth and shouting at large 'Let's be brutal and ruthless' instead of just being brutal and ruthless decently and quietly, are not specifically German but (potentially at least) just modern.

It is a commonplace that Man is now attaining power (for destruction as well as construction) greater than he has ever had before. But as his power increases so increases also his love of power, of power not as a means but as an end, as greatness or position, as, therefore, panurgic. Such a love, we have argued, must entail destruction or death. When there is not the other, the rival, to destroy there is left self-destruction; the

giant who is without a competitor but who wills to be nothing but a rampant giant becomes a suicidal maniac. Man is a corporate giant coming into such an undisputed position; his suicidal mania is taking the form of each member of the body fighting for the position of being the Giant. Nothing is more likely than that the nations of the world will increasingly rather than decreasingly strive with each other for that position, using every means that the long process of competition known as evolution has brought up either in the physical or the biological kingdom, including even the most elementary one —namely, spawning. (Here too Germany points the way: her leaders are both advocating spawning and claiming that she must have room in which to spawn.)

What shall stay the general destruction which undoubtedly threatens from the increasing lust for power stimulated by ever more numerous and facile temptations?

If the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah is averted from the world this will be only because there are found sufficient lovers of righteousness, men who do not seek after greatness nor use its language, but from love of Goodness seek only to embody Goodness; whose inspiration comes not from a belief in an automatically progressive ' Universe ' (for the ' Universe ' has the seed of madness and destructiveness at its core—it is the Nulliverse), nor, on the other hand, from the despair, indignation, defiance or scorn roused by the sight of multifarious egotism, madness and destructiveness in themselves and about them, nor even from the feverish desire to ward off the calamity of mankind, but from Goodness itself; who have seen the clay feet of their own idols as well as of all the idols of all tribes; who, not taken in by facile substitutes for righteousness, are not buoyed up by the thought of much righteous achievement by themselves or others; who are critical and iconoclastic, but not from the love of exercising their own destructive power; whose inspiration, in spite of all this, is as

strong as the hurricane zeal of the fanatic, and yet calm, peaceful, and possessed of an æonic patience and suffering; who, unlike the fanatic, do not just see big and far or think constantly in terms of Humanity, the World, the Nation, the State, the Ideal, the Race, the Millennium, but, firmly rooted in place and time, accept from the individual moment and from their individual relations with Smith and Jones here and now their primary tasks, which are always individual and yet always charged with universal significance; who aim, not at producing either the *Machtmensch* or the *Massenmensch*, but at helping the development of free personalities living and growing and having their being in that free, full and intimate communication with each other in which is embodied Goodness.

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(*This is not exhaustive and is meant to supplement the Table of Contents and the headings in the text. In the case of names the reference to a particular page generally extends to the notes on it though these are not specially mentioned.*)

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