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The
MORAL IDEALS
OF OUR CIVILIZATION

BY

RADOSLAV A. TSANOFF

Professor of Philosophy, The Rice Institute

1942

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NEW YORK

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PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

FIRST EDITION

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TO

My Daughter Katherine

PREFACE

This book has been written in the conviction that our society is confused about its spiritual heritage and that we need a more thorough and critical understanding of our moral values and principles. It is also intended to supply a more adequate survey of the development of ethical theories than one is likely to find in the usual histories of philosophy. Especially at the present time of world-shattering war, of disrupted loyalties and conflicting social programs and ideologies, a better grasp of our moral tradition is essential to any serious student of the history of ideas.

That this general problem is nowise of merely academic interest, the least inspection of the contemporary scene should make clear to us. Three or four centuries of modern thought, applying scientific knowledge to the mastery and exploitation of nature, have expanded almost beyond belief man's range of physical control and have transformed the entire stage-setting of our human drama. During the same comparatively brief period a corresponding reorientation in the inner life of Western nations, translating new ideals and standards into social institutions, has transfigured the structure and the very spirit of our civilization. This tremendous achievement has nourished self-reliance and confidence in modernity. Other epochs were retrospective and leaned on tradition, but our age lives in the present and looks to the future, its future. It may profess admiration for the culture of classical antiquity, but its admiration is apt to be only a cultivated gesture. Not for all the world would our typical modern man return to the golden age of Pericles, and he expresses his real estimate of antiquity when he speaks of its dead languages. As to the thousand years of medieval tradition, we dismiss them with a phrase, Dark Ages. Ours is the age of light and power, of real civilization and progress. So runs the man whom we may call the hundred per cent modern.

But to many, and not all of them reactionary spirits, this modern civilization has seemed misdirected and chaotic. Knowledge it may have, learning and technical skill; but it lacks wisdom; it has power, but not the intelligence to use it for the real strengthening and enrichment of human life; immensely expanded external resources, but an impoverishment of the inner man; immense material growth, but a

stunted spirit. On these scales the modern age is weighed by its severe critics, and found wanting. Perhaps it has understood and mastered physical nature, but itself it has neither mastered nor understood.

The settling of this dispute regarding the worth or the claims of modern civilization is apt to be confused by special pleading. Mere eulogy or disparagement is of little avail here; we require better insight into modern interests and principles. Our civilization is what it is and where it is because of our choice and scale of values. What men actually espouse or reject depends upon what they expect of themselves and approve or disapprove in others, upon what they consider as of supreme worth and importance, what only of incidental concern, and what of no account at all: in a word, depends on their moral outlook on life.

The modern spirit turned the eyes and faces of men in a new direction, set their feet on new paths in search of new worlds, and gave us a new civilization. In this reordering of standards and values, we may note the clash but also the interplay of the ideals of classical antiquity and the Christian-medieval ideals. Our study will concentrate on the modern scene, but a survey of the ancient and the medieval principles in our civilization is indispensable to a clear view of the modern, to suggest direction of movement and to see actualities and ideals alike in their historical setting.

So this work has for its aim the moral self-understanding of our civilization: the roots and the ramifications of our various Western traditions, the significance of our guiding principles, the ethical problems in which our complex and changing social system has involved us, the manifold demands for reform, and the search for abiding values in our life. By grasping more clearly the ethical thought of the past, we may more steadily confront the moral issues of the present.

There are histories of philosophy which concentrate on epistemological or metaphysical problems. This is a history of philosophy which emphasizes problems of conduct, moral and social values and alternatives. This emphasis brings to more particular notice a number of thinkers whose main interest has been ethical. But the leading minds in the history of philosophical ideas have been accorded their due major share of attention, and the reader will find their reflections on moral problems examined in relation to their general philosophical systems of thought.

The terms 'philosophy' and 'philosophical,' as used here, cover more than the territory usually fenced in by some technical definitions. Moral reflection in our civilization has not been the monopoly of professional sages or professors of philosophy. I have followed my prob-

lems wherever they might lead me, and so have searched the ideals and guiding principles of Western culture in the works of poets and saints and social reformers. A work like this, dealing with material of almost inexhaustible range, necessarily involves selection. Some readers might question the distribution of emphasis; I can only hope that they will have no reason to complain of my failure to realize my purpose of thorough inquiry and critical tolerance in interpretation.

Through the years of working on this book I have had the unstinted help of my wife, who in this as in many other ways has been the making and the mending of me.

RADOSLAV A. TSANOFF

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Houston, Texas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the following publishers for permitting me to use quotations from works published by them as indicated below:

The Macmillan Company:

J. B. Fletcher's translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy;* J. B. Fletcher's *Literature of the Italian Renaissance;* Susanna Winkworth's translation of the *Theologia Germanica;* Descartes' *Philosophical Works*, translated by E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross; Joseph Jacobs' translation of Balthazar Gracian's *Art of Worldly Wisdom;* A. B. Bullock's translation of Schopenhauer's *Basis of Morality;* Henry Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics;* Friedrich Nietzsche's *Works*, edited by Oscar Levy; Samuel Alexander's *Space, Time, and Deity;* R. A. Tsanoff's *Nature of Evil.*

Longmans, Green and Company:

W. R. Inge's *Philosophy of Plotinus;* T. K. Abbott's translation of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason and Other Works on the Theory of Ethics;* William James' *Will to Believe.*

Charles Scribner's Sons:

St. Augustine's *Works*, ed. Marcus Dods; T. M. Lindsay's *History of the Reformation;* Friedrich Paulsen's *Immanuel Kant*, translated by J. E. Creighton and Albert Lefevre; Arthur Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp.

D. Appleton-Century Company:

Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Ethics;* Walt Whitman's *Prose Works.*

David McKay Company:

Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.*

Random House:

Karl Marx's *Capital, the Communist Manifesto, and Other Writings,* edited by Max Eastman.

Harvard University Press:

George Santayana's *Three Philosophical Poets.*

Henry Holt and Company:

Passages from Cicero and Fichte, used by me as quoted in W. G. Everett's *Moral Values* and Frank Thilly's *History of Philosophy.*

The Clarendon Press, Oxford, and the Jowett Trustees:

Benjamin Jowett's translation of *The Dialogues of Plato.*

The Clarendon Press, Oxford:

W. D. Ross' translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics;* Robert Latta's translation of Leibniz's *Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings.*

Oxford University Press:

White and Stirling's translation of Spinoza's *Ethics.*

E. P. Dutton and Company:

A. Boyle's translation of Spinoza's *Ethics and* "*De Intellectus Emendatione,*" in the Everyman's Library.

Occasional short quotations from other works have been acknowledged in the Notes, where also every citation from whatever source is indicated, at the end of the volume.

I express my appreciation for the permission to include in this book the substance or parts of several chapters which were first published in *The Rice Institute Pamphlet.*

RADOSLAV A. TSANOFF

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Part I

THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR MORALITY

CHAPTER I

THE MORAL IDEALS OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

1. Ethical Beginnings and Perplexities

The ancient Greek was a native-born citizen of this life. Even when he criticized it, he criticized it as a native; it was nothing alien to him; with his intelligence he could grasp and master it. Moral excellence, according to him, was in the life of understanding and in the full realization of a man's nature: quite as natural to man as the blossoming and fruition of a plant, and quite as accessible to objective study. How is human life to be lived to the full, most appropriately and most characteristically? To master this art of living was and remained the Greek ideal: a vigorous espousal of the active virtues.

Greek ethics began with proverbs and sententious precepts, developed a more definite method in reply to radical challenge, and, reaching critical maturity, reflected the course of philosophical speculation as well as the characteristic Greek outlook on life. The simple maxims of early morality preserved the folk-treasure of homely wisdom and gave a natural though often naive expression to popular ideas of conduct. Of prime importance were the sayings of reputed sages which, like the poems of Homer and Hesiod, were used in the moral training of youth. A readiness for sage reflection thus developed which was to find more mature poetic utterance in the dramatists and a systematic expression in Greek philosophy.

Beginning with the sixth century B. C. the spread of interest in the investigation of nature gradually undermined the traditional belief in the Homeric mythology. In this first period of Greek science and philosophy, not only the myths, but also the ideals of the old religion were subjected to criticism, and this had important results for morals. The rude and naive ideas of divine perfection, which had found expression in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were no longer acceptable to a more mature intelligence. Thinking men objected to the portrayal of the gods as thieves and adulterers. This radical disagreement of revered tradition with the actual standards of thinking men is revealed in the moral perplexities of Greek tragedy. The chorus, as in *Agamemnon*, proclaims Zeus as eternal sovereign Justice, the Highest and Best, but the reported

conduct of the gods belies the worshipful praise. Evil-doing may follow a family as a curse, generation after generation; good men may be ruined by the gods while knaves flourish. Zeus seems jealous of men's aspirations and punishes their culture-champion Prometheus. What is a man to do when divine duties clash with each other? Orestes is pursued by the Furies for having obeyed the command of the god Apollo: in avenging his father's death he has incurred the guilt of matricide. Thebes is cursed with a pestilence for the unwitting parricide and incest of King Oedipus, victim of a dread destiny which he is unable to escape.

The appalling problem engrosses Aeschylus (525-456) in grim perplexity. Take sides with Zeus against Prometheus he cannot, nor yet join the Fire-bringer against sovereign Deity. Perhaps the gods themselves grow in wisdom and justice. Does not Zeus, as he rises in majesty after his struggle with the Titans, mount to the beneficent righteousness which is greater than might? On the one hand is the certainty of retribution:

> Firm stands, while Zeus remains upon his throne,
> One law, "Who doeth shall suffer"—[1]

On the other hand, the divine votes for and against Orestes are even, and Athene, deciding for acquittal, has to placate the Erinnyes.

Sophocles (495-406) saw dark disaster shadowing the steps of men, to lay them low and crush them in their unmindfulness. In tragic irony Oedipus seeks eagerly the truth that will destroy him. And yet it were arrogant impiety to doubt God's justice through it all. We do not know the divine plan, and we judge suffering to be a curse only because the long view of God is hid from our eyes. Man's virtue may not be scorned by God even though it leads him to ruin; the seeming ruin itself may be in the line of ultimate vindication, though we know not how. Eternity is in God's hands. will justice, flouted here and now, prevail in some Hereafter?—

> Long-worn with many an undeservéd woe,
> Just gods will give thee glory there below.[2]

This unflinching devotion to virtue and this sublime confidence in the Highest are the more tragic because of Sophocles' forthright portrayal of man's woes and his evident inability to justify virtue in plain human terms.

How rapidly Greek criticism and negation of traditional beliefs were spreading, we may realize as we turn from Sophocles to Euripides (480-

406). The younger poet really belongs to another generation, and to it he appeals. The old myths outrage his humanity, and his dramatic treatment of them clearly shows that he rejects them as true accounts of the divine. He feels keenly the woe of humankind, wrong and oppression and the wild lust of revenge which oppression breeds. From the depths of anguish and injustice men reach out towards the Highest; but what warrants their aspiration?

> Ye Gods . . . Alas! Why call on things so weak
> For aid? Yet there is something that doth seek,
> Crying, for God, when one of us hath woe.[3]

The old morality had moored itself in the traditional religion, and both were now collapsing in the minds of many. The old myths are idle tales or worse: perhaps our very ideas of the divine and of justice are groundless. Are justice and wisdom really at the helm of things, or is the world adrift, without guiding principle, and man's life a tangled web of passions? On this crossroad, Greek thought was confronted with the unprincipled challenge of the Sophists, and Socrates, meeting it, became the father of moral philosophy in Western civilization.

A century and a half of philosophical criticism had shaken the traditional faith, but the multitude of incompatible doctrines had also disturbed men's confidence in the new ways of thought. Mythology and philosophy alike seemed in the end inconclusive. This sense of mental ineptitude the Sophists accentuated and erected into a doctrine. Our supposed knowledge of things depends on variable conditions of experience and observation, thus precluding any universality or reliability. We have only subjective impressions, mere opinions, no objective criterion, no knowledge.

Are we to say, then, that virtue and vice are but words to express shifting taste and preference, that good or evil are to each man what happens to please or displease him at the moment, that justice is but a name for what suits a man's interest and what he can enforce upon the will of others, that right is might? This was a fair inference from the Sophists' doctrine, and some of them did not hesitate to draw it. The more moderate, although rejecting the objective validity of any moral doctrine, were yet conservative and respectable in dealing with generally accepted ideas of conduct. Men's experience shows them that some views and plans of action are safer and more effective practically, more suitable and advantageous than others. These conventional agreements and standards the individual flouts at his peril; the prudent and astute

man achieves his purpose by understanding his fellowmen and managing them by effective use of their ways and habits of thought and action.

This professed regard for customs and the proprieties, in which pragmatic considerations and common sense seem to have blended with a spirit of shrewd policy, might sometimes lead to eulogy of arduous but satisfying virtue, against the weak yielding to deceptive passions. But it also led to the conclusion that, since social laws and precepts are merely conventional, they may often conflict with the more natural pressure of individual demands; so why should the individual obey them? Rulers may devise religious beliefs and ritual, to fasten their hold on the people more securely, or society may cultivate certain customs and laws, to restrain the vigorous growth and dominance of the stronger men. If the strong were also wise, they would cast aside all scruples and please themselves in giving full play to their passions and to their lust for mastery. For ultimately there is no real reason why one should act in one way rather than in another; men's conduct is directed by impulse curbed by prejudice; men yield to custom as it seems they must, or trample it under foot as they feel they can, always pursuing the prevailing passion of the moment.

2. *Socrates, Pioneer in Moral Philosophy*

As we keep in mind this accentuated trend towards anarchic individualism, we can understand better the position of Socrates in relation to this movement and his significance in the development of ethics.

The personality and the teaching of Socrates (469-399) vitally influence subsequent Greek philosophy, but he left no written record of his thought, and the reports of it which have reached us do not all agree. So in dealing with the Socratic ethics it is best to begin with what appears reasonably certain. Unmistakable is the opposition of Socrates alike to the anarchic dismissal of all laws of conduct and to the airy insolence and moral impiety which characterized the more extreme Sophist utterances. In contrast to this release of uncontrolled impulse and unscrupulous power, the Socratic restraint, vigilance, pious regard for justice are outstanding characteristics. But this flaunting irresponsibility which he condemned was a deliberate inference from the relativism of the elder Sophists. Did Socrates, then, reject the entire Sophistic position?

This was so far from being the case that not only the confused populace but even the keen Aristophanes could mistake Socrates for one of the Sophists, as he did in his comedy, *The Clouds*. With the Sophists Socrates subjected to scrutiny the alleged knowledge of men,

—of politicians, poets, artisans,—and found it to be inadequate and often quite groundless opinion. His dialectic exposed the unstable though obstinately prejudiced opinions which in most minds passed for truths, the flagrantly self-refuting character of most men's alleged thinking. Equally disconcerting were the readiness of men to generalize and the evident and easily exposed invalidity of their generalizations. From the pathetic self-assurance of actually confused and ignorant men, Socrates at any rate was free. He knew that he did not know.

The famous Socratic irony, his entering every discussion with a disavowal of any knowledge, was more than a useful pretense, of tactical advantage in argument. Nor did the professed ignorance mark him as a Sophist who had taken his own teaching too seriously and too much to heart. His insistence on the exposure of ignorance as a too common fact did not in his case lead to the devastating conclusion that ignorance is man's inevitable lot, that men are limited to mere subjective and unstable opinion. We do not know, he agrees with the Sophists; but against them he maintains that knowledge is to be had, if rightly pursued. Thus regarded, the Socratic irony is not Sophistic-sceptical in tone, but signifies rather his high vision of what knowledge connotes and demands, a rigorous conception of it and an exalted estimate of its supreme importance in human life.

Virtue is knowledge. This central doctrine of Socrates marks the beginning of moral philosophy, but its definite meaning is still disputable. The very variety of philosophical doctrines and schools which claimed Socratic inspiration reveals him as a mind of manifold stimulus rather than as the advocate of a special theory. It seems clear that he sought the ground of defensible preference, the knowledge of the good which he regarded as the highest knowledge and identified with excellence.

Socrates is assured that man is bent on pursuing his interest, what he deems useful, his good. But whether his deemed good is really good for him, depends on his intelligence. The vicious man does not deliberately choose his ruin; perhaps against the protest or worry of a still lingering better judgment, yet under the impulse of a prevailing passion, he seeks a gratification which at the time seems most desirable. But his imagined good is spurious, and his gratification is his ruin. His choice of evil is a bad choice, a fool's choice. The good life springs from and reveals understanding. If a man truly perceived his highest interest and weal, he would assuredly pursue it. Perfection in virtue is thus conditioned by advance in knowledge, and above all by self-knowledge. This was the wisdom of the oracle which Socrates adopted as his life-slogan: "Know thyself." The good life is the intelligent life,

the life of a man who knows what he is about, a life of critical judgment in which actions spring, not from the onrush of some random emotion, but from deliberate conviction. This intelligent life yields the consistent and abiding human satisfaction which is real happiness. "An unexamined life is not worth human living." Not only does intelligence assure the choice of real not spurious goods and so serves our best interest and the attainment of what is truly useful, but clear inner conviction in conduct is itself the excellence and the virtue of the soul.

In the Socratic ethics we may thus observe the interplay of interest and insight. Intelligence serves our true interest, and our highest interest and satisfaction is critical intelligence. Here is a doctrine in which practical good sense counsels conformity in practice to established laws and order even while probing their basic claims. While never losing sight of everyday homely particulars, Socrates seeks to grasp and to define universal principles: the essence of temperance and courage in so-called temperate or courageous acts. So, beyond its immediate interest, moral effort is to lead men to a recognition of their essential aims. From common everyday goods which are nowise scorned, the soul is to rise, by examination and the culture of understanding, to the higher and more abiding goods and so to the highest good of perfect intelligence. And with this perfection of intelligence is to come a maturing of satisfaction, enhanced and assured happiness. The life of virtue and real satisfaction is the life of critical understanding.

It is from the impression made by Socrates on a variety of disciples that we judge of his own doctrine. And precisely this power of manifold stimulation is his outstanding characteristic. An ardently searching mind, devout and so fair in inquiry, pursuing the universal and suspicious of generalities, prizing high loyalty and so resolved to rise above random or bigoted conformity, cherishing happiness but wary of pleasure though not at all unresponsive to it, sharing the highest aspiration and even the mystical vision of the saint, but thoroughly at home with the common projects and scruples of everyday men, Socrates by his own rich personality and insight, in the first critical approach to the moral problem, disclosed its complexity.

Athens, meeting-place of purveyors of wisdom, disciples and dilettanti, supplied him with an ample assortment of temperaments to which his rich and fertile mind made its various appeal, to the great advantage of moral philosophy. On different men more simply compounded, his many-voiced discourses made their different impressions. His exposure of confused popular opinions earned him the hostility of bigots and of demagogues, who accused him of undermining religion

and corrupting the people, especially the youth, with his critical discussions, and brought about his trial and his death-verdict by an Athenian court. But even his own disciples responded to his teaching in various and contrary ways. On unphilosophical minds like Xenophon's the subtle interplay of Socratic ideas might make slight impression, but the memory of daily good sense and personal integrity would be stamped indelibly. One-sided or stubborn disciples might listen to all that the master said yet hear only what suited their set convictions. Only a philosophical genius, who to the keenness and rich humanity of Socrates added systematic theoretical power and a matchless style, could organize the Socratic ideas; not only express them but critically and classically realize their full implications.

Easy-going connoisseurs of pleasure like Aristippus the Cyrenaic were enchanted with Socrates' capacity for enjoyment. He was like a bee that could suck honey from the bitterest flower; he defied the ravages of time which blighted other men. And is not this the wisdom and the virtue of our life, to crowd the most pleasure into our brief days? So Aristippus taught: the wise man is an expert in enjoyment. This was the first version of the ethics of pleasure, Hedonism, the history of which may be traced throughout the course of ethical thought. It was not clearly reasoned out and allowed of many later modulations. Were any pleasures finer and nobler than others, or was every man to snatch the delight of the moment whatever it be? Was any act, be it rioting or adultery or stripping a temple, good if it yielded pleasure, and only inadvisable if likely to bring trouble on one's head in the end? Or were there really higher pleasures, friendship, gratitude, respect for one's parents, even though they put one to some trouble? Or again, though pleasure be the chief good of life, yet it is elusive, unstable, and when attained leads to satiety and disgust. Is not our life, then, worthless in the end?

Outspoken despisers of conventional pretense, like Antisthenes, saw in Socrates the forthright and free man: self-reliant, unconcerned, candid, spontaneous, strong. His life was his own, a genuine self-expression. For how is a man to find happiness, if he has never been truly and fully himself, rid of all his artificial proprieties and burdensome dignities and possessions; free of all conventional bonds whatever? In this disregard of all but his own temper and mood Antisthenes was followed by others, chief of them Diogenes whom antiquity remembers with many an anecdote. Living in his proverbial tub, with his food in his wallet and his doubled cloak for bed-cover, he was always where and as he wished, without any obligations or commitments. The opinions of others disturbed him as little as the course of external nature; he was

his own master. When Alexander the Great offered him any gift he might name, Diogenes, looking up from his tub, told the king: "Please, then, to get out of my sunlight." To most Greeks this free and candid life seemed also uncouth and even not decent. It was a life fit for dogs, so they called this doctrine Cynicism.

As we may see, directly out of the Socratic circle, in the first chapters of ancient ethics, emerged several alternative doctrines of moral value. Some of them were preliminary versions which found more mature statement in later Graeco-Roman thought. The greatest of them all, the Platonic, attained its classical perfection outright.

3. Plato's Aristocracy of Rational Harmony

Even in their opposition to each other's conclusions, disciples like Aristippus and Antisthenes manifested, despite the Socratic influence, a prevailing Sophistic tone. The former cherished the joys of insouciance; the latter prized the self-reliant present and uncommitted future. In this preoccupation with the individual of the moment, the Socratic quest of the universal was neglected. Precisely this advance from opinion and changing taste to knowledge and abiding principle is dominant in the thought of Plato (427-347). The Socratic doctrine that virtue is knowledge, that the unexamined life is not worth human living, now finds its fruition in a critical moral philosophy.

What is this knowledge which is the chief perfection and also the real satisfaction of man's life? It is, in the first place, a right measuring of satisfactions, the long view of the sage, judging truly of pleasures and pains, beyond the passing lure and qualm. Thus to judge is really to be a connoisseur of happiness, not a dupe of random passions. Self-knowledge, then, knowledge of one's interest, one's good, goes beyond the individual's subjective opinion of the moment; it is objective and universal. If I am to judge reliably regarding my present experience or draw from it the right inferences about the future, I must grasp its essential characteristic: for instance, the nature of justice or temperance which is manifest in all just or temperate acts and, despite manifold particular differences of setting or circumstance, constitutes these acts just or temperate.

This recognition of the universal is a condition not only of moral intelligence but of all real knowledge whatever. The so-called objects of sense-perception are unstable particulars, mere appearances, shadow-shapes of realities which they might suggest but never adequately reveal. In this shifting riot of colors, sounds and ever-changing masses, it is reason that discerns measure, rhythm, form, relation and law, the principles which are the eternal patterns, the nature or essence of

Reality. Plato calls them the rational Ideas. The senses passively feel the ongoing show of an ever-various and baffling world. Reason alone comprehends its structure and meaning, its nature: a system of basic characters and relations constituting the intelligible world. Beyond all other goods, and a condition of the reliable attainment of them all, is this knowledge of nature and of human nature, this understanding of ourselves and of the world, of what we are really about. Such knowledge and understanding alone leads to intelligent appropriate conduct. Thus enlightened, a man does not act blunderingly or under misapprehension; his own designs reflect the eternal scheme of nature.

In a literal sense, then, Virtue is knowledge: rational enlightenment is man's supreme interest; the examined, intelligent life is alone worth living. Futile and frustrated is the inappropriate act, the act of a man unresponsive to the dominant character and principles of the world, in which he ignorantly lives an unavailing life. If the world were a reasonless sweep or whirl of particles in the void, and ourselves only precarious clusters or blobs of froth in the eddies of existence, then our lot would be random drifting in the flood of desire. If Socrates were but a tangled skein of sinews and joints and skin, then he might well have yielded to any passing impulse; Crito's urging would have sent him through the open prison gates. "I am inclined to think that these muscles and bones of mine would have gone off long ago to Megara or Bœotia—by the dog they would, if they had been moved only by their own idea of what was best, and if I had not chosen the better and nobler part, instead of playing truant and running away, of enduring any punishment which the state inflicts." [4] But, if the world is indeed a rational cosmos, a hierarchy of abiding principles, then our supreme task and opportunity is to attain this clear view of reality, to recognize and to realize our true rôle in the hierarchy. This recognition is deepening of insight; this realization is perfection of virtue. Once more, Virtue is knowledge.

Very clearly, the Socratic doctrine has matured in Plato's mind: theory and practice, metaphysics and ethics have been revealed as correlative. In understanding his nature and his characteristic rôle, man is enabled to pursue and attain unto his heritage and destiny; he becomes really himself. Thus perfecting and finding himself, man reaches into the very heart of Reality. Virtue requires insight, and insight points to virtue. Intelligence is both beacon-light and steering-wheel in the voyage of life. The true saint is the sage in action.

Plato's thought is thus a directed advance from the surface to the center, or better, from the low outskirts of being to the summit. A thing is itself in that it finds and realizes itself. So in attaining his char-

acteristic good, man achieves or expresses his full and true being. If thus the 'good' of anything signifies its attained final reality, the principle itself or the Idea of Good is the highest Idea, the supreme reality. This is Plato's God, the ideal Principle of Dominant Perfection towards which all significance and worth in the world aspire and in which they abide. In the light of this ideal we are to regard the aristocratic conviction by which Plato is directed in working out his ethics, that what is best is by right entitled to rule over the lower nature or faculty. Discord and frustration result from disregard of this aristocracy of values and principles, in the life of the individual and in society. The self-knowledge which is a condition of a perfect life comes from an analysis of our constitution. We recognize our various parts or faculties and can assign each its proper place and rôle in our life.

The reasonableness and the necessity of such orderly assignment is shown even more clearly in the life of the state, which exhibits on a larger scale the principles and needs of individual life. Society is a system of coördinated active classes, each class finding its real perfection and satisfaction in doing well its appropriate task in the total economy of the state. Thus a state includes a class of artisans, engaged in the production and amassing of the goods that satisfy the manifold desires and physical needs of men: food, shelter, clothing, and the rest of the catalogue of commodities. The provisionment and maintenance of society depend on the prosperity of the artisan class; but their secure employment in their activities demands the protection of the state from hostile invasion. This security calls for another class, of warriors or soldiers, preëminent in martial vigor, defensive or if need be aggressive. But if the state is to abide and to attain perfection, a dominant class is needed, a class of distinctively intelligent men, to regulate the artisans and direct the warriors, to plan and legislate, a class of guardians or magistrates.

Only when each of these three classes does its appropriate work in the life of the state can that integrity or harmony of the whole be attained wherein the perfection and the happiness of each is to be found. Therefore it must be the duty of the guardians to order the entire life of the state so as to check all discordant or disruptive factors. Furthermore, the guardians must assure to the state stable direction by its most intelligent class, generation after generation. To discover, elicit, and develop distinguished intelligence in the young generation, and to install it in the chief offices when brought to maturity, is the main task of the guardians, and public education thus becomes a most important undertaking in Plato's Republic. Without this assured self-perpetuation of ruling intelligence, the state degenerates; lower principles assume the

uppermost, and timocracy, oligarchy, democracy are the steps of a degradation which finds its lowest downfall in tyranny.

Corresponding to the three classes in society is a tripartite division in the individual soul. In society, conflict between classes may disrupt the unity and stability of the state, unless the activity of each class and group is regulated and directed by the guardians. So in every man's life contending faculties and powers press for mastery and require control, if the health and sanity of the soul is to be preserved. Our nature teems with lusts and appetites craving satisfaction; blind to all but the lure of the moment, the greedy soul may plunge itself and others into ruin, and even in less intense desire it is ever setting aside law and order in its insatiate indulgence. Alongside of this avid sensuality, and contesting its possession of our soul, is vigorous will-energy, a spirited restless drive for power and for sheer ongoing activity, firmly resistant, boldly aggressive, impetuous, pugnacious. It may scorn flabby sensuality and lash the soul with martial austerities; but again, itself espousing some greed or lust, it may sweep us to disaster. Yet ruinous as sensual appetite and spirited will-energy are when left to run their own course in our life, they have their place and rôle when duly ordered and directed. This directing and controlling faculty on whose dominance all human welfare depends is reason. Itself supreme and keeping the other faculties and powers of the soul rightly related and directed, it achieves that harmonious sanity of character which is human perfection.

This rational mastery over the various sides of our nature is moral excellence. So Plato's tripartite division of the soul leads naturally to his doctrine of the cardinal virtues. Where the senses and the manifold desires and greeds are kept in due measure, satisfaction and the prospect of it have their proper range but do not usurp the chief place nor upset the order and peace of the soul. This appropriate moderation in all pleasures and desires is Temperance. By self-control man becomes and remains his own master: that is to say, his better judgment is never overwhelmed by unprincipled passions, but the lower elements of his nature are ever recognized as lower and subordinate, and are kept within bounds by the higher intelligence which maintains dominion and order. So likewise the spirited element of will-energy, straining at the leash and eager for the fray, finds in reason its captain, to guide and dictate its course. Contentious vigor is swung into line with the higher aims of life; rash fury becomes staunch, resolute, firm in aggression, resistant, persistent, a reliable dynamic reserve. This is the life of Courage, dauntless and loyal. Reason itself, in a life where the desires of the senses and the spirited will-energy are thus controlled and directed, attains the virtue of Wisdom, clear self-recognition of intelligence. Undisturbed

by the random course of sense-experience, it contemplates the eternal principles of order, the rational Ideas that alone abide through all change, significant and real. Thus wisely discerning the eternal plan and pattern of life, reason controls and directs consistently, and its entire activity has the stamp of truth. These three cardinal virtues—temperance, courage, wisdom—find their summation and epitome in the fourth, Justice, which is, for Plato, not a particular virtue but rather virtue itself. For justice is precisely that characteristic and appropriate recognition of each aspect and activity of our life, giving each its due attention, which we have seen expressed in the other three virtues.

The life of virtue or excellence thus conceived engages all of our life. As harmony is opposed to discord, so moral life resists whatever disrupts right order or undermines the dominance of reason. It is not, therefore, a narrow moralism in Plato which would expurgate Homer because he tells lies about the gods, or which would institute censorship of the arts, reject the depressing, soft, inebriate harmonies, and espouse "the strain of courage and the strain of temperance." In the field of aesthetic expression and enjoyment, just as in all other experiences, man is to attain and to maintain order and harmony. The *bad* art is bad *art;* we are to resist it as we are to resist bad logic in our thinking. How are men to live the life of high resolution and sobriety, if their nature is softened and enticed by corrupting poetry and music? How are men to fix their glance on divine perfection, if their ideal is distorted by false portrayal of divine excellence?

Moral achievement is itself truth in action and a work of art. The ideal good claims an unfaltering lover's devotion, if our life is to attain that perfect rational harmony wherein goodness and truth and beauty are one. In the speech of Socrates in the *Symposium*, Plato gives us the vision of human life, by perfection of taste and enlightenment in love, being lifted to higher and higher devotion, from sensual hankering to spiritual worship. "What if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colours and vanities of human life—thither looking and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine? . . . In that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, . . . bringing forth and nourishing true virtue, to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?" [5] This passage, in which words are charged with the utmost of meaning that they can carry, expresses Plato's vision of the all-pervading nature of the good life of active reason: with clear and penetrating insight controlling and directing all the activities of our life in due order and attaining that harmony of the soul which is per-

fect beauty and that devotion to the ideal which is true religion, the vision and the worship of God.

This very consecration to the ideal, which positively expresses the possession of man's entire life by intelligence, also moves the soul to a high disdain of material things. In this everyday world of matter and change, the rational soul bears its vesture of mortality, but through all the impediments of sense it beholds the rational Ideas and contemplates its own pristine perfection and immortal destiny. Is it strange that the daily stir should leave the pilgrim of eternity unmoved, undisturbed by mortal fears and ready for death, the soul's return to the eternal? The only concern of the sage is to abide in that philosophic dedication to reason which loosens the bonds of sense and further attachment to mortality, and restores the soul to its eternal home. There is ever an incipient dualism in the ethics as in the metaphysics of Plato, between the random particulars and stirrings of the empirical and the abiding rational principles and perfections. Plato the Athenian rationalist confidently portrays the life of reason realizing the ideals of truth, beauty, virtue; but there is in this Platonic eulogy of reason an ascetic-mystical aspiration for the really perfect life which is beyond the sorry frame of this life and time. Thus on the one hand we have in Plato the classical expression of the Greek positive aesthetic-moral ideal of human fruition of character; on the other, a foretaste of that tragic self-consecration to eternity which was to find its greater utterance in Christianity.

4. Aristotle's Ethics of the Balanced Life

In place of Plato's aristocratic-idealistic worship of reason, Aristotle (384-322) would establish its dominance naturalistically, by a biological-psychological analysis of human nature, and by a study of conduct individual and social.

The initial problem of ethics concerns the nature of the good. Many things are desired by men, some as means to others, and these in turn as instrumental to still further goods. But surely there must be a final basic end or goal to which other goods point, and we may accept men's general recognition of it. Aristotle calls it *eudaemonia*, a term which we may translate by 'happiness,' but better still by 'well-being' or 'welfare', faring or doing well. What distinguishes the happy life of a man who is doing well? Here men disagree, and we should be on our guard lest we be misled. It cannot be wealth and money-getting, for that is but a means, useful for the sake of something else. Nor can it be honor, the end of political life, for a man's honor depends on those who bestow it, whereas the final good must be proper and assured to

a man himself. The most vulgar of men identify the good or well-being with pleasure, but a life of mere pleasure Aristotle pronounces suitable for beasts. Yet while rejecting the hedonistic doctrine that pleasure is the chief good of life, Aristotle admits it as an element in the truly desirable life. Pleasure is a good, he says, but not the ultimate good. As activities differ, so do their corresponding pleasures, and so the intensity, the worth and desirability of them. The best pleasures would be such as accompanied or colored the highest and best actions, but those pleasures may not be the most intense or the most obvious. The happiest, best-lived life cannot be defined as the most pleasurable. It is the life of the best activity.

So we return to the question of final good which for its own sake makes life worth living. Aristotle's answer is in terms of characteristic function. Anything is good when it does well what it is distinctively meant to do: be it a pipe or a piper. We may thus define 'good' generally as consisting in the adequate performance of characteristic function. To learn what constitutes human well-being, we need only to recognize man's distinctive function and its adequate performance. So Aristotle is here brought back to his psychology. The soul, he teaches, is the principle of life in living beings. In plants it is the capacity to grow through nourishment. In animals, it has the added faculties of locomotion, sensation, and desire. The human soul shares all these but has its own distinctive faculty of reason. Man is the rational animal. The distinctive good and satisfaction of man demands his characteristic human functioning, that he realize to the full his human character as a rational being: the capacity to devise a plan or principle and the capacity to obey it. This is the initial general statement and outline of the good. The good life for man is the rational life, because it is the life that expresses and realizes man's characteristic nature.

The identification of human well-being with rational activity is not intended by Aristotle to mean that the only good for man is the life of rational contemplation, though he does undertake to show, at the close of his *Ethics*, that the contemplative life is the highest. Wherever reason is engaged in achieving mastery and direction in our life, human excellence is disclosed and human happiness attained. Though the vegetative and animal activities of our nature do not lead to the peculiar human perfections, yet in steering a rational course through manifold entanglements of sense and passion, we realize excellence just as we realize it in the undisturbed activity of intelligence. Aristotle's conception of virtue or excellence is not narrowly moralistic, but comprehends all the manifestations of prevailing reason in human life. He distinguishes the intellectual virtues, achieved by reason in its purely

theoretical activity undisturbed by the intrusion of the irrational, from the moral virtues, wherein man attains rational mastery in the face of conflicting passions.

In its pursuit of the moral virtues reason is acting under difficulties. Knowledge of the right path is not enough; virtuous practice requires the right habituation of the will. Even as we become lyre-players by playing the lyre, "so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts." [6] Good habits make it natural and easy for us to perform acts which our reason recognizes as good, just as contrariwise bad habits confirm the soul in vice. Settled mellow virtue requires clear rational insight, voluntary choice, and a formed character. Just so a gentleman not only knows what courtesy is and chooses it deliberately as a way of dealing with his fellowmen, but long cultivated experience may have made courtesy his second nature.

In every circumstance of life, the irrational tendencies which reason is to enlighten, to direct and by habituation to tame, are tendencies that spur to extremes. Impulsive acts yield to the whole force of some passion of the moment which is allowed to have its way unchecked by any counter-emotions or considerations. Even as hasty generalization and one-sided partisan judgments, inconsistent and unreliable, mark the undisciplined mind, so the capricious man, as we say, lacks character. Between the impulsive overdoing and the unconsidered neglect which mark the life of passion, between the too much and the too little, reason pursues the middle course, the balance of sanity. This is Aristotle's doctrine of the Golden Mean. Virtue is the rational mean between the extremes of excess and deficiency, both vices. "Any one can get angry—that is easy—or give or spend money; but to do this to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right motive, and in the right way, *that* is not for every one, nor is it easy; wherefore goodness is both rare and laudable and noble." [7]

Thus when confronted with grave danger or hostile attack, a man may rush madly headlong or else precipitately flee. Between these extremes of foolhardiness and cowardice, reason, rightly judging the gravity of the danger or aggression and the demands and capacities of resistance, follows wisely the middle course of courage. Again, a man may yield to over-indulgence of some sensual pleasure, or else quite dully pass it by altogether. Between these extremes of intemperance and insensibility, reason pursues the virtue of temperance. So in giving and taking of money, between the extremes of stinginess and prodigality is the virtue of liberality. The display of money on a large scale calls for rational judgment and good taste, if the virtue of

munificence is to be attained; else we yield to meanness or to vulgar ostentation. In social intercourse, between the vices of obsequiousness and surliness, is the virtue of friendliness; between buffoonery and boorishness, ready wit; between wrathfulness and slavish stolidity, good temper. So in other relations and circumstances reason is revealed as a balancing agent directing the soul to the moderate course of virtue.

Aristotle's doctrine does not imply that any feeling or type of action is good if duly moderated, or that there can be too much of excellence. There is not a virtuous tempered thieving or moderate adultery or reasonable murder or cruelty; nor is one to guard against too complete attainment of the rational mean. The rational mean, it is further noted, is not an arithmetical half-way point between the two extremes. Virtue is opposed to the two vices just as they are opposed to each other, but it is more opposed to the one than to the other extreme, depending upon the tug and strength of the counteracting passions. Thus a man carrying unequal weights in his hands will incline away from the heavier load in order to maintain his balance. Courage, for example, is evidently more opposed to cowardice than to foolhardiness; so near it is to the latter that the censure of a man as overbold has the overtone of admiration. But temperance is so strongly opposed to intemperance, and the vice of deficiency here is so unlikely in human life that Aristotle had to coin the word for it. The more careful mapping of the rational middle course of virtue would involve a more thorough inquiry into the psychology of the emotions, the range, strength, and discipline of the passions. It would supplement Aristotle's table and would subject it to certain revisions. Thus, as has been pointed out,[8] the triad of courage really involves a duality of virtues and vices. There is the feeling of fear and the feeling of confidence: in the former case, courage is opposed to cowardice; in the latter, discretion is opposed to rashness. Likewise, in place of Aristotle's liberality triad, we really have the virtue of liberality opposed to stinginess and the virtue of thrift opposed to prodigality.

The Aristotelian table of the virtues is a capital account of Greek outlook on life and ideals. While elaborating his doctrine of the mean, Aristotle also rehearses the characteristic moral judgments, preferences and dislikes of his more cultivated contemporaries. The matter-of-fact discussion makes the record the more revealing. Morality is brought down to earth; reason is exhibited as a natural power, the distinctive human faculty, and its task also natural, akin to strategy or dietetics. Virtue is nothing occult, but the result of daily experience in deliberate habituation. This prosaic secular treatment is of decided advantage in ethics, but it also manifests certain deficiencies in moral insight. The

disinterested note is absent, the note of moral reverence, of devotion to duty and ideals holy and august. Morality appears as the natural fruition of character, but also as a process of exploiting life's opportunities to the full: self-realization in its often unlovely form.

The crowning grace of the Aristotelian virtues is high-mindedness or greatness of soul, the mean between the vices of vanity and humility. The pride of the high-minded man expresses his true conviction of his high worth. He expects and demands the honors which are his due, but is not overwhelmed by them and disdains the admiration of common folk. He is ready to grant benefits, reluctant to be beholden to anyone; condescending but not easily impressed, unruffled, deliberate, sedate. His life, not himself, proclaims abroad that virtue is noble and that it is his assured possession. Face to face with this confident self-absorbed excellence, one is reminded of the deeper note in the Socratic irony, and one waits for the words of Jesus: "Why callest thou me good?" The ethics just as the politics of Aristotle may serve as balancing correctives to the nostalgic spirituality and idealism of Plato, and likewise of Christian sinfulness and otherworldliness, but we miss in them the devout soul of moral aspiration, the incense and breath of the ideal.

Aristotle does not square justice readily with his doctrine of the mean. We might say, of course, that between claiming more than is our due and accepting less, is justice, exacting our proper share. But the real opposite of the just is the overgrasping unjust man, while the equitable man, who does not press his claims and refrains from insisting on what the law allows him, more just than he has to be, is admired for his noble equity, even though he would scarcely be condemned if he stuck to his rights. Two uses of justice are to be distinguished in Aristotle's ethics: as lawfulness or righteousness, and as fairness. In the former sense, justice, obedience to law, is not so much a particular virtue, but the rational substance of all the virtues on their social side: "proverbially in justice is every virtue comprehended." [9] This use of justice, approaching the Platonic, is not the one which mainly interests Aristotle, but rather the more particular justice as fairness in distribution or retribution or trade. To accord to each man his fair share of the goods which the state has at its disposal for the use of citizens, and fairly to remedy violations of rights, demands regard for the proportion which maintains just equality. In distributive justice this proportion demands that all persons' shares have the same relation to their deserts, as determined by the standard of worth adopted by the state, so that, as all receive their respective shares, their relation to each other remain the same as before. In retributive or remedial justice, on the other hand,

the state does not ask whether the wrong-doer or the wronged are of high or low station, but is concerned to restore the damage or deprivation. The unjust man must lose what he has wrongly gained and make it up to the victim, thus restoring the just relation which has been violated. Furthermore, in the trading of goods and services men require a standard or medium of exchange. This is money, a standard established by law to assure the fair reciprocity which reason demands. In the treatment of justice, to be sure, we are confronted with the moral claims of others, but it is the state which presides over their enforcement. Genuine concern for the welfare of others is, however, recognized in Aristotle's discussion of friendship. Neither the friendship for utility nor the friendship for pleasure meet the high moral standard, for in neither of these is the friend loved for his own sake but is rather exploited as a means to personal advantage. The true and perfect friendship springs from shared perfection and devotion to virtue, friends helping each other to live the life of excellence and generously wishing each other well. A man may enter so fully into the life and endeavors of his friend that he cares for them as for his own, in a manner which goes beyond the usual distinction between selfishness and benevolence. Aristotle's discussion here suggests a truth much neglected by subsequent thought, to which critical ethics is yet bound to return: that the rise to perfection is a rise from conflict to community of selves.

If the moral virtues exhibit the utmost of perfection to which reason can attain in the arduous discipline of the passions, the highest perfection of the soul would be that of reason in her own sphere, and so Aristotle ranks the intellectual virtues above the moral, even though he devotes less attention to them. Theoretic activity yields scientific knowledge, consisting in valid inferences from first principles. These first principles are grasped by intuitive reason. Theoretical or philosophic wisdom unites in itself intuition and scientific demonstration. The highest perfection of the soul is in the theoretic life, and this conclusion is Aristotle's pendant to the enthronement of the philosopher in Plato's Republic. "Perfect happiness is a contemplative activity. . . . The activity of God which surpasses all others in blessedness must be contemplative; and of human activities, therefore, that which is most akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness." [10]

The regard for the external goods of life, which Aristotle did not disdain either in theory or in practice, is particularly evident in the *Characters* of Theophrastus, who succeeded Aristotle in charge of the Lyceum. This work, the product of mellow old age, reveals Theophrastus as an urbane and mildly sardonic observer of the common

vanities and frailties of men, with a keen eye for detail of conduct or motivation. No dominant attention to principles of ethics is in evidence here, but a respect for the advantages of fortune, for gentle breeding and substantial social worth. The *Characters*, of value to the social historian in their portrayal of everyday Greek conduct, records also the moral reactions of the respectable and worldly-wise, insistent on the decencies and graces of life. About the inner rational core of virtue, Theophrastus would agree with Aristotle that it is the final test of man's worth, yet his own observation is centered on the externals of the acceptable life.

5. *Epicurean Contentment*

Unconvinced by Creative Reason and unimpressed by the Idea of Good, Epicurus (341-270) kept close to matter and revived the claims of more obvious common sense. I know what I see, he said; the world is as I perceive it, material; the real good of life is the good I directly feel, pleasure. By this unwavering confidence in sensation and feeling, the atomistic materialism and the ethics of pleasure-seeking which the rationalists had disdained were combined in a suave philosophy of life. Easy-going people, whose alleged knowledge had been exposed as groundless opinion and whose ways of conduct had been shown to lack sound principles, were bound to take kindly to a doctrine which let men down from the exalted heights of reason to plain everyday certainties and satisfactions. The freethinker welcomed the explicit dismissal of popular superstitions and of traditional scruples. Life could be lived in untroubled contentment, if men could only see things as they are and make the most of them.

The final objective of the Epicurean philosophy is in its ethics. Physics, knowledge of nature, would be weariness of the flesh for its own sake; its value is that it can teach us how to live. The greatest source of misery in human life is the dark terror of religious superstition. From the noisome prison of ignorance men can escape into the daylight of knowledge, and by understanding the facts of nature find peace and happiness. The world of our experience is a world of fortuitous clusters of atoms, manifesting no design or direction by Divine Providence. Our own life, body and soul, is a career of motions, frictions, contacts and collisions of material particles. Our body, composed of rougher and less mobile particles, holds together the rounder, smoother and nimbler, more elusive atoms of the soul. Sooner or later this container breaks down, and with its dissolution the soul-particles are dissipated to form other combinations. When men once realize their inevitable mortality, the finality of death and the cessation of consciousness with the breakup

of its bodily medium, the very ground of fear and superstition is removed. So Lucretius (97-55) introduces the third book of his poem *On the Nature of Things* with the praise of Epicurus "who out of deep darkness first availed to raise a torch so clear, shedding light upon the true joys of life." There is neither Elysium nor black Tartarus nor any directing Divine Providence to be placated here on earth; there is only this our life to be lived for whatever it has to yield of joy and peace before death sweeps us away one by one to make room for others.

Moral science, then, is simply knowledge of how to get the most happiness out of life while it lasts. It cannot dictate ideal rules of conduct; it is concerned with the plain facts of conduct; the nature and composition of man, the satisfactions and pleasures of our life: how they are to be secured most reliably and with the least hazard of pain or disquietude. This is explicit hedonism: pleasure as pleasure is the good of life, and no pleasures are to be condemned as unworthy. When Epicurus disapproves of the pleasures of the glutton, the drunkard and the debauchee, we should not neglect the reasons for his disapproval. For pure virtue and its alleged nobility he has little respect. "I spit on your fine moral principles when they do not yield any pleasure," he exclaimed. Even in his departure from mere sensuality, his motive is still hedonistic. The question is always, how to be assured of the maximum of satisfaction. The better pleasures are better because they are more reliable, more stable, not of the moment only, not poisoned by subsequent pain or revulsion. The first concern of man should be to attain freedom from pain, from fear and uneasiness. So in the pursuit of happiness man should be critical in his choice of pleasures.

The expert in contentment is thus necessarily a connoisseur of desires. Some desires are natural and necessary, others are natural but not necessary, while still others are neither necessary nor natural but vain and empty. The first group of desires, as for food, clothing, shelter, must be satisfied if we are to live and attain bodily and mental comfort. The natural but not necessary desires, as for instance the sexual, may be gratified in moderation, yet may also be restrained. The vain and groundless desires, for rare viands or luxuries, are really burdens which the wise man should discard rather than indulge. Epicurean hedonism espouses the simple life, not in an ascetic spirit but as the plan of most assured contentment and freedom from uneasiness or vexation. The early Epicurean was not an epicure. His gospel was: *Eat*—barley gruel; *drink*—water; and *be merry* and genial—in friendly converse.

In the interests of happiness, then, one should frugally and sensibly reduce pleasure-seeking to its simplest terms and not allow it to over-

burden or vex the soul. Even more clearly the Epicurean would seek to avoid social and public involvements. Justice and social order are, after all, conventional, and while the Epicurean finds it expedient to live in conformity to the law, he is nowise a champion of it but tries quietly to go his own way. It is not in the life of power or ambition or social display that happiness lies, but in ease and tranquility, without entanglements, free to stay and free to go. The Epicurean is also wary of the troubles and cares of family life and inclines to celibacy as the more comfortable arrangement on the whole.

There is no sense of social responsibility here, nor the worries of it. But we may note some apparent paradoxes: a gospel of pleasure which advocates the frugal and abstemious life, and would avoid if possible the most ardent passions; an unsocial selfish plan of life which yet sets a high premium on friendship. Epicurus' objection to passionate love is due to the same motive as his distrust of family bonds: they ensnare and enslave men. But friendship is a solace assured and more blessed than any possession, for friends freely sweeten the life of each other. To be sure, if we examine the Epicurean friendship, it does not come up to Aristotle's standard, for the motive is frankly the selfish regard for pleasant ease.

Thus pursuing his daily course in quiet contentment, with desires simply gratified, not cowed by superstitious fears nor devoured by burning and futile passions, friendly and genial, a man may live a happy life and match divine blessedness, a god among men. Nothing can unhinge or overpower the man who knows that he can have life on his own terms; for life is always pleasant to him who knows that he can end it when it is no longer pleasant, without any worries about a hereafter. But what a wise man requires for his fullness of happiness may not appeal to a man of common or coarse sensuality. The glutton, the drunkard, the libertine may pay dearly for their revels and debauches; but how is their life to be disapproved on the grounds of pleasure as a life *for them?* So the Epicurean appeal and the response to it were various: barley gruel and water in the Garden of Epicurus, with occasional Cytherean cheese by way of a feast; kindliness and geniality and friendly converse; or Lucretian exalted resolve to face the facts of nature and "to dwell in the calm high places, firmly embattled on the heights by the teaching of the wise";[11] or Horatian joyous equanimity, idyllic simplicity, friendliness, deepening serene resignation; or else sanguine profession of common pleasure-seekers and voluptuaries, using hedonistic doctrine to dignify sensuality. These last were in the majority; by them the Epicurean school came to be judged more generally.

Epicurus stood condemned by the character of his following, and his doctrine was subjected to a severe polemic, in which the Stoic sages took the lead.

6. Stoic Self-Mastery and Serenity

Philosophy after Aristotle manifested a decidedly practical turn; it became the wisdom and the art of knowing how to live. The Stoic school, founded by Zeno (356-264), shared with the Epicureans the subordination of logic and physical science to morals. In the garden of philosophy, logic is the fence, and physics the trees, but the fruits are ethics. Men need knowledge of the world and of their own nature, body and soul, in order to direct their conduct aright. The contrast which tradition has drawn between Stoic and Epicurean morals is not entirely borne out by the facts. The sensual variety of Epicureanism, against which the Stoics directed their stern eloquence, was not the choice of the leaders of that school. With the higher version of Epicurean ethics the Stoics had much in common. The serenity of the more benign Stoic might approach the contentment of the more reserved and thoughtful Epicurean. Yet, notwithstanding similarities in detail and in practical results, the whole world-outlook of the Stoic sage, and in particular his estimate of the relation of moral conduct to the world-process, differed radically from the corresponding Epicurean views. We should not be misled by surface resemblances to overlook the deeper antithesis.

The Stoic account of the world and of human nature appears to be as materialistic as the Epicurean. The constitution of the soul is interpreted as a composition of bodily factors; the entire career of man is viewed as a coarsening or a refinement of material structure, and even God, the World-Reason, is the finest matter, Cosmic Fire. But this means nowise that the world-process is a mere mechanism, a vortex of atoms. The course of events is more than a series of fortuitous contacts and jostlings of particles. It is a drama of Divine Providence, in which higher and lower forms of matter operate according to rational plan and everlasting law.

The Epicurean saw his life as a passing flurry in the endless and meaningless cosmic whirl. Let him, therefore, get the most happiness while he could, before death dissipated him altogether. To get the most happiness and contentment, however, required careful choice of pleasures, freedom from uneasiness and vexing desires. So reasoned the more deliberate Epicurean, while the less cautious members of the school turned to the pursuit of more obvious sensual indulgence.

But to the Stoic the moral program was not motivated by the wish

to "make the most of what we yet may spend": a counsel of expediency in a senseless world. He regarded moral conduct as man's conscious participation in a rational world-order. Against the Epicurean dismissal of Reason is the Stoic proclamation of it as Sovereign Reality; the recognition of the cosmic order as rational, the worship of it as divine, and the complete ordering of human life in accordance with this recognition and in the spirit of this worship. Thus once more is the Socratic teaching espoused with unwavering assurance. Socrates had declared that Virtue is knowledge; the Stoic advocated the life of virtue as philosophy in action, knowledge of nature translated into conduct.

The doctrine of the prevailing rationality of the world-process, foundation of Stoic philosophy, leads, on the one hand, to the apotheosis of Reason in Nature, and on the other to the advocacy of a life according to reason or nature. This philosophy is to serve the Stoic sage as a religion and as a moral way of life. That a life in ignorance of nature or contrary to nature is futile misdirection, the Stoic never tired of pointing out. Whatever real good is available for man can be attained reliably only by him who understands himself and the world in which he is called upon to play a part, who does his appropriate share suitably and in fit relation to all with whom or with which he is involved. To the mind of understanding, nature is disclosed as unitary and determined throughout, never fragmentary or fortuitous but proceeding on a rational plan. Could a great poem be produced by shaking together a mass of letters in a box? No more is the existing constitution of things to be explained as due to a mere scramble of atoms, without a governing principle and purpose at the heart of the process. So everything in nature is in its place; it is as it is meant to be. The recognition of the rationality and necessity of the world-system itself and of each detail in it excludes chance, the lure of lawless spontaneity, and so all petulance and complaint. Things are as they must be and as they ought to be. Acquiescence in the rational world-order is open to us, but conformity to it is in any case imposed. "Him who is willing the fates lead, but the unwilling they drive."

In this insistence on all-pervading necessity, how is fatalism to be avoided, whether resigned or complacent? If all is as it must be, and as it will be, then how is moral effort to be motivated, or moral appeal justified? The Stoic replied: things are as they are and go together as they together belong. Only the necessary means proceed to the necessary end, and so throughout the rational order of the whole is disclosed. But we are not therefore to say: No matter what we do, things will be as they will. To the thief who protested, "It was fated that I should

steal," Zeno rejoined: "Yes, and that you should be flogged." [12] What is called fate is the essential reason or nature of things; the divine law which orders things together appropriately. In this system, the life of ignorance is a life of futile desires and demands for unsuitable ends. The life of wisdom is a life of concentration on what, by Divine Providence, is ever in our power, the attainment of the right ends by the right means. Achievement of virtue is through the victory of wisdom, of reason over the passions. "For freedom is secured not by the fulfilling of men's desires, but by the removal of desire." [13]

The man in the grip of passion is consumed with desire for some thing or condition which is not in his power, but on which he hangs his happiness or well-being. Be the end desired sensual pleasure or wealth or any other external mastery, the infatuate pursuit of it enslaves the passionate man and finally exposes his entire life as futile. For nothing is gained where self-knowledge or self-mastery is not realized. In his pursuit of the good life the Stoic concentrated on the rational will as the distinctively human faculty, but unlike Aristotle and Plato who advocated the moderation or control of the passions, the Stoics demanded their utter repression, apathy, the life of reason sovereign and uncontested.

Prime condition to the attainment of the complete rational mastery over the passions is the clear recognition of what really concerns us and what is indifferent. Here through lack of wisdom men are spurred to blind greed and in their confusion blame nature and God for failing to meet irrational demands. Most of the things which men call evil are in fact things irrelevant, or perhaps incidental to good, even as the shavings and cuttings and other trash which litter up a carpenter's shop. The thorough possession of this truth requires the culture of understanding. Exile, imprisonment, bonds, death and shame are things indifferent, beyond our power and nothing to us. But we have the power, in realizing this truth, to face these apparent evils with greatness of soul. So they may become a means to real good, reaffirmed rational self-possession. We are also able wisely to disdain the alleged goods of the sensual life, vain ambition and rapacity: we do not mistake them for our good. What is not indifferent is the way in which we deal with indifferent things. External circumstances, in themselves neutral, gain in dramatic significance when human character is brought to bear on them, disclosing quality of will. Not events themselves are tragic, but the will's response to events. The same conditions may reveal in one man importunate or craven spirit, and in another, constant dignity and greatness of mind.[14]

The basic condition or means to perfection appears to be firm

dignity; the resultant state is one of active wisdom or prudence. This rational state of mind is the foundation and the crown of virtue. In matters of pain and adversity it is manifest as fortitude; in resistance to the lure of pleasure it is self-control or temperance; in dealing with the claims of others, it is justice. These four are the cardinal virtues: prudence, fortitude, self-control, justice. The detailed perfections of the soul are, of course, many. Marcus Aurelius (121-180) gives a partial list: "sincerity, gravity, endurance of labor, aversion to pleasure, contentment with thy portion and with few things, benevolence, frankness, no love of superfluity, freedom from trifling, magnanimity." [15]

Stoic practice in detail discloses a standard variable in application, even as the Epicurean, but certain main features call for notice. The Stoic sage concentrated on the inner life, but he was not a recluse. He did not need anything, yet had use for everything. He took his place in all the natural institutions and relationships of human life. His moral estimate of the family, unlike the Epicurean, was constructive if not always conventional. The Stoics meant to do their full duty as citizens, and their record as statesmen is eminent. Their insistence on social order did not mean unquestioning acceptance of established forms. They opposed slavery on principle as contrary to nature; by virtue of reason all men are colleagues, and the distinction of master and serf is among the things that the wise man disdains. With regard to decency and decorum in speech, apparel and manners, Stoic thought and practice varied. Some Stoics dismissed them in somewhat Cynical terms. But Epictetus (5-65) accepted good breeding and advocated courtesy and personal modesty, cleanliness and comeliness.

Throughout this active participation in the life of social order, the Stoic sage yet keeps peace with himself, maintains serenely but unflinchingly his inner dignity. The vicissitudes of fortune leave him unaffected: he remains invincible whom nothing external can either lure or dismay. Generous companion to all mankind, the sage seeks nothing from others, for the life of virtue is self-sufficient and needs no recompense, even as vice is its own punishment. The best revenge on the wrong-doer is not to become like him. To serve the gods means to pursue divine perfection, and becoming like God is its own reward. For the world is an order of beauty to which man can respond in kind: a world-city, cosmopolis, of which man may become a citizen. But this higher loyalty does not preclude, it completes the loyalty to one's native city and state. Socrates called himself a citizen of the universe, but of Athens also, obedient to her decrees even unto death. Unto death, but not unto injustice or dishonor. Here is the distinction which the Stoic repeatedly makes. For despite all surrender of goods or body,

he ever retains his inner and final devotion. His life he surrenders even to the tyrant, not his convictions: dies without complaint, but also unyielding.

When the Stoic called the life of virtue natural, he did not also say that it was easy of attainment. On the contrary, no other school of moral philosophy emphasized more repeatedly the need of constant vigilance and redoubled endeavor to retain mastery of oneself. The Stoic is warned against philosophic pride, just as the Christian saint was to be admonished later not to sin by too self-conscious saintliness. Stoic discourses are tireless and ever varied appeals to moral heroism. For virtue is not to be attained by degrees nor does it fade gradually into vice: the difference between good and evil is a difference of direction and choice of will. It is not a question of more or less but of either-or. The least surrender of the will is utter defeat. One can be drowned one foot below the surface of the water just as at the bottom of the sea. This stern doctrine anticipates the later Christian division of men into saints and sinners. It raised virtue to the height of perfection and made the moral sage, Socrates or Diogenes, a human ideal approaching divinity. Epictetus is forever admonishing backsliders: "By the gods, I would fain see one Stoic." But he is also patient with those who are not equal to the moral enterprise. For criticism is in a measure also a tribute. Socrates censured his disciples for their unmanly weeping at his impending death, but not the gaoler, who could not be expected to restrain his tears if he was inclined to shed them.

The Stoic ideal became a spiritual power in the best of Roman life, for it expressed some of the highest motives in Roman character. Stoicism found classic expression in the moral reflections of Seneca, in the *Discourses* of Epictetus and in the *Meditations* of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Before these three, Cicero (106-43) had given a more systematic though not more profound statement of morals in his work *De Officiis*, in which he combined select Platonic and Aristotelian ideas with a mainly Stoic philosophy of life. As a Roman version of Greek wisdom, it is of especial interest.

Cicero wrote in a period of social and political unrest, when the Roman liberties which he had sought to maintain were definitely humbled by the ascendency of Caesar. He saw political and social corruption sapping the energies of Rome, and moral decay completing the ruin of his people. Against sensuality dressed up in Epicurean doctrine, he advocated moral responsibility, an upright spirit, and a loftier expediency. The moral problem, in his exposition, is treated as fivefold: it concerns the nature of the morally right and wrong, of the expedient, of conflicts between these two, and also of the moral choice between

alternative right courses of action, or between different expedients. Thus, gravely searching for the right but sensibly recognizing the advantageous, he endeavors to reach a reasonable harmony between the two.

These tactics reveal the lawyer and the statesman in the moralist; but we should rather say that in this work the statesman and the lawyer are revealed as seeking the sovereign principles which distinguish the really good man from the merely law-abiding. Cicero insists that, unless a man would refrain from evil-doing irrespective of any thought of detection or punishment and selfish concern, there is no real good in him. In his treatment of fortitude, he insists on moral courage, free from passion and cleaving to rectitude alone. He whose life had developed the politician's strategy in dealing with plots and conspiracies, probes here the ethics of real truthfulness, sincerity and fair dealing. The code of honesty in buying and selling which he advocates would go hard with the exponents of standard commercial integrity nowadays. In the pursuit of advantages and well-being, Cicero advocates supreme concern for moral integrity, a man's preservation of himself and his character. "What is there that your so-called expediency can bring to you that will compensate for what it can take away, if it steals from you the name of a 'good man' and causes you to lose your sense of honour and justice?" [16] Petrarch fancied, when he read the *De Officiis*, that he heard, not the pagan philosopher, but a Christian apostle speaking. The words of Cicero just quoted are a hint, but only a hint, of the more profound utterance in the Gospel which they may recall: "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self?"

The substance of Cicero's morals is in his advocacy of the good life as one of justice and generosity, doing no ill to others nor tolerating the doing of injustice, and more positively promoting the general welfare by all the means in one's power. In this upright and benign philanthropy and in the estimate of human character which motivates it, we find, on the one hand, a reaction against the unprincipled or reckless pursuit of selfish advantage and pleasure; on the other, a humanitarian attitude and a sense of human dignity and immortal prospects. Plato's vision charms Cicero's thought, and the Stoic challenge moves his will. To the life of Stoic self-possession, the ideal of the sage, Cicero gave a most appealing eulogy: "What dignity, nobility, and steadfastness does the character of the wise man display! And since reason has taught that what is honorable is also good, he is necessarily also happy, and to him truly belong all those epithets which the ignorant are wont to ridicule. For more justly will the wise man be called king than Tarquin, who

could not rule himself or his own house; more justly master of the people—that is, dictator—than Sulla, who was the slave of three baneful vices, luxury, avarice, and cruelty; more justly rich than Crassus, who, had he not been in need, would never have crossed the Euphrates when there was no cause for war. Justly will he be said to possess all things who alone knows how to use all; justly even will he be called beautiful, for the features of the soul are more beautiful than those of the body; justly will he alone be called free, not obeying the dictates of any man nor yielding to the demands of appetite; justly will he be called invincible, for even though his body be bound, yet upon his spirit no chains can be fastened." [17]

This ideal of rational attainment aroused a religious as well as a moral response. The Stoic in his own way said: "Thy will be done."

> Lead me, O Zeus, and lead me, Destiny,
> Whither ordained is by your decree.

Here on earth man can be a colleague of God. The "Hymn of Cleanthes" (301-225) remains forever a classic of philosophic piety. The earlier Stoicism of Athens had entertained the belief in a life after death, but in Rome this idea made no headway, and Roman Stoicism registers increasing indifference to immortality. Neither in Athens nor in Rome, however, did Stoic morality appear to require the sustaining hope of rewards in the hereafter. Marcus Aurelius thinks of death always, so that with the certain prospect of it he may yet, while living, pursue a godlike rational course. Morals and religion alike are chosen by the Stoic on their merits alone. Marcus Aurelius quotes Plato as urging men to look on earthly things as from some high place. This spirit of lofty disinterestedness is characteristically Stoic. "Everything harmonizes with me, which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing for me is too early nor too late, which is in due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return." This serene spirit of cosmic acquiescence is the high closing note of Roman Stoicism. But it has the overtones of resignation.[18]

7. Neoplatonic Mystical Ecstasy

Greek ethics rested mainly on the self-reliance of critical intelligence; it required knowledge as a condition of virtue. This Greek chorus of prevailing intelligence, confident even when critical, was disturbed by the jarring notes of Scepticism, sounding again in a new setting the challenge of the Sophists: What warrants the claim of intelligence to dominate our life? How was man to commit his life to any principle,

when the opposite principle could be argued quite as plausibly? As it undermined firm assurance and weakened convictions, scepticism also unsettled fixity of purpose and made for general indifference. Scepticism might be a resigned inference, but also a cult of negation. So Carneades (213-129), shaggy and unkempt, taxed the arsenal of dialectic to bedevil intelligence. He touched no concept but stirred a hornets' nest of confusions and contradictions. One day in Rome he would rouse his auditors to moral fervor by his advocacy of justice, only to dash all their convictions to scorn the next day with another speech in which justice was called only passing expediency. We have no ground for firm loyalty to principle; all we have is a choice of probabilities, and the more we consider them, the more unsure we are how to choose.

Another and more positive expression of the disturbed Greek intellect, is the religious mysticism in the closing period of classical antiquity. Their reason challenged, men sought certainty in intuition, and blessedness in ecstasy. This tendency in philosophy and in religion was developed particularly in Alexandria. The guiding spirit of the Alexandrian philosophy and its dominant tone remained Greek, but in the reinterpretation of essentially Greek ideas foreign influences were at work, religious-mystical and world-transcending. It was in the third century of our era, during the age of spreading Christian worship, that out of Alexandria, the cradle of Christian theology, and Rome, the seat of the coming empire of Catholicism, issued also the last philosophy of dying classical antiquity, the Neoplatonism of the Egyptian Plotinus (205-270).

The Stoic apathy and rational indifference to sordid externals, the Christian vigilant resistance to the carnal and to all worldliness, the mystical-ecstatic bent of Oriental cults: all manifested an aspiring spirit, athirst for the divine life. This holy striving found occult and even morbid expressions; in Neoplatonic philosophy just as in Alexandrian Christian theology it sought a convincing version. The philosophy of Plotinus recognized Perfection as fundamentally real, pervading the universe and ultimately prevailing. It also noted imperfection in the world and manifold evil. To explain the presence of evil and to justify confidence in its final reclamation were thus the main aims of his thought. The graduated self-manifestation of the Eternal Perfect One in the world was not only to be explained but also vindicated.

Plotinus teaches that the world in all its stages of existence is a manifestation of ultimately Perfect Reality. All things are in God and from God; but the manifestation is not a perfect manifestation, else the world were identical with God, and thus no manifestation and no world. In

Plotinus' theory, the world is a hierarchy of emanations. From the all-radiating plenitude of perfection of God arises Universal *Nous*, Reason or Spirit. Spirit in turn emanates in Soul, *Psyche*, and Soul overflows into Matter, the world of bodies, change and multiplicity. As from a luminous center in ever more diffused and dimmer periphery to outermost darkness, so from the unqualified perfection of God to the measureless evil of the material lowest range of emanation, proceeds the hierarchical career of being. Is it a hierarchy of degradation, and the process of emanation itself the original sin of God? So thought the Gnostics, but against such wailing blasphemy of the cosmos Plotinus insistently protests. At every stage of being we find characteristic perfection, but the perfection is aquiline, equine, human: in each case a manifestation, not the perfection of God. Yet if emanation is thus continuous and characteristic throughout, could it call for vindication? If we could speak of evil at all, how could we admit it without discredit to God? Vindication would seem to be either not at all in question, or else quite out of the question; if it were required, it could not be achieved.

A dual affirmation characterizes Plotinus' thought. The emanation process nowise affects the unqualified perfection of God. Matter nevertheless is evil, and good must involve our rising from it, the fulfillment of each stage of being in the stage above it, and so ultimately the consummation of each finite soul in the perfection of God. If the first of the affirmations marks Plotinus' insistent theodicy, the second expresses the substance of his ethics.

The Soul, between Spirit and Body, may be said to disclose a descent in emanation. But in this descent the soul need not fall or yield. In the scale of emanation it is the divine destiny of the soul to rise from matter to spirit. The drag of the body and the urge of spirit are both in our soul, both actively contending for mastery. If it yields to body and descends as soul, then its higher capacity is frustrated, and this corruption is vice. Virtue consists, then, in the active realization by the soul of its divine source and destiny. To each stage of the rising soul's career there are appropriate virtues. It is by mastering the characteristic order and harmony of one level that we reach the higher level. Plotinus does not advocate escape from the world but victorious transcendence of it. In the world of material affairs the aspiring saint respects order and conformity to law; but in the virtues of social and political life he already realizes the corporeal and sensual barriers to the soul's higher career. These barriers he now undertakes to surmount, by ascetic discipline and purification. Divorced from the body and all its lusts and wedded to spirit, the soul in single devotion pursues the higher planes of

intelligence. But even in its attainment unto Spirit, the soul has not reached its supreme goal. Beyond the virtues of rationality is the highest perfection, mystic self-absorption in the One: ecstatic, silent, blessedness unqualified and unutterable. Four times in six years, so Porphyry tells us, Plotinus reached this union with God.

How is the soul that has thus tasted eternal bliss to content itself patiently to abide in the prison-cell of the body? Plotinus, contemning the mortal shell of his spirit, yet does not commend the suicide's precipitate flight from the body. Man should remain at his post, a loyal sentinel, and wait on God for the hour of his release. But though in the world, the saint is not of it. For how is a guest of the perfect mansion to remember or attend to its rich furnishings, if he has once looked upon the Master of the mansion? The Master's love alone forever claims him.

The highest good, oneness with the One, is not strictly moral perfection. It is beyond virtue, which is a good, but not the highest. The utmost bliss is not in practical achievement, nor in moral endeavor, but in perfection of insight and vision: yet not in intellectual mastery but in mystical ecstatic intuition. In attaining unto God the soul attains unto itself; it has found and reached its home. In the silent bliss of divine ecstasy there is no more frustration, nor effort, nor desire, nor activity. "It embraces in itself all that is immortal, all Spirit, all that is God, all Soul, eternally unchanging. For why should it seek to change, seeing that all is well with it? And whither should it move, when it has all things in itself? Being perfect, it can seek for no increase. . . . All things are transparent, and there is nothing dark or impenetrable, but everyone is manifest to everyone internally, and all things are manifest; for light is manifest to light." [19]

In this perfect communion the world-range of emanation is revealed at one glance, revealed and vindicated: the world-pervasion of the all-radiating and all-prevailing One. Words from the Fourth Gospel come to mind, from that prologue which, as one of the pagan Platonists said, ought to be written in letters of gold:[20] "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not," or as another version has it, "the darkness overcame it not." Even the ascetic discipline, even the gaze removed from earth, are not finally desolate and pessimistic. In the natural perfection of the saintly mystic all nature is justified. There is unmistakable emphasis here which we should not ignore. Though the blessed path begins in the world of bodies, it leads away from it, towards the Master's house, and not only to the house but to the Master, to God. The perfect life is a consecration, transcendence of wordliness. The Platonic ideal quest, which Aristotle had under-

taken to bring to earth in his naturalistic rationalism, receives double emphasis in the Neoplatonic vision of the soul's career. The recognition of man's positive capacity to mount the spiritual heights, however, marks the doctrine as still essentially Greek. The blessedness is not bestowed; it is worthily attained.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF SALVATION



The Christian gospel produced a spiritual reorientation of ancient ways and ideals. For the rigidity of law it substituted the life of the spirit; it scorned the cautious wisdom of the sage to bless the trusting faith of a child; from the beauty of the flesh it turned to the beauty of holiness; it regarded man as a prodigal son and a lost sheep, lost but for the grace of the Divine Shepherd. This life and this world were to it but the threshold and doormat to the mansions of the hereafter. The startling gospel gripped the downtrodden Jew and stirred to fresh spiritual life the world of classical antiquity. Christianity offered salvation and peace to the heavy laden; it guaranteed the certainties of faith to the disenchanted pagan intellect.

In claiming the entire thought of its converts and in directing all mental interests towards the life of grace and the kingdom of heaven, Christianity transformed the moral problem into a religious one. It replaced the ethical search of the highest good by the humble submission to the absolute will of God. Moral philosophy became ancillary to theology. The cardinal virtues of Greek philosophy were pronounced at best splendid vices; man's true glory was in his abasement; his redemption was from himself, requiring a new birth. Not in active mastery and full fruition of his characteristic excellence was man's true destiny to be sought; his hope was rather for a wholly undeserved gift of grace.

Christian civilization issued from the conflict and fusion of contending cultural strains and ideals. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." His words express both the spiritual necessity and the deliberate strategy which marked the advance of Christianity. The moral teaching of the new faith was, first, a radical revision of the Jewish law and régime. As it crossed Jewish boundaries and spread over the Mediterranean world, it won over classical culture, but to do this it had to learn the language and think the thoughts of Greek philosophy. Though itself a gospel resisted by paganism abroad and by Pharisaic Judaism at home —"unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" [1]

—Christianity, speaking to Jew and Greek alike and seeking orthodoxy in doctrine and in practice, contended with Oriental cults that were its rivals and also heretical movements in its own midst: Gnostic, Manichean. It won the victory over Roman power, but the empire which it subdued left a lasting impress on its hierarchy. The classical world, converted by the Christian from the East and laid waste by the barbarian from the North, groped slowly through the dark ages of one civilization dead and another unborn; and when with the Revival of Learning the new medieval culture became conscious of itself, Roman and barbarian were both Catholic, and the Church, sovereign in the spiritual realm, claimed dominion also in the temporal.

1. Old Testament Righteousness

Not only in contrast to the moral ideals and outlook of the Graeco-Roman world, but also in opposition to the Christian view of human life in its initial version as recorded in the Gospels, Old Testament ethics represents an alternative and a factor in the development of Western civilization which should be kept clearly in mind.

Morality in Israel was definitely religious in tone and motivation. Vice to the Hebrew was sin, and the virtues were forms of righteousness: the transgression or the fulfillment of God's will. The moral problem itself was not a problem of understanding and attaining the highest aims or principles of our nature: it was the practical problem of obeying the Lord's commandments. Indeed, the supposed initial blessedness of man, in the Garden of Eden, had been in innocent unquestioning compliance with God's orders. Eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was the original sin which cost man his paradise. The great words of Greek ethics were the Socratic: "Virtue is knowledge; an unexamined life is not worth human living." But the Hebrew moral consciousness was dominated by the Divine "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." We cannot imagine a moralist in Israel, in the manner of Aristotle, setting up the perfections of the theoretic life as the supreme virtues of the soul. To the Psalmist, the beginning of wisdom was and remained the fear of the Lord: "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments." [2]

In such a definitely theocratic culture, the development of moral ideas would appear as a continual revision of duties reflecting gradually more mature religious conceptions; but the actual moral growth in the life of the people would itself be expressed in religious terms. A changed moral outlook became articulate as a changed view of God, that is, as a revised version of God's will, and it could thus appeal effectively to the Hebrew as the true divine commandment: "Thus

saith the Lord." Accordingly, we should expect to find the closest parallel in the development of moral and of religious ideas in Israel; and such in fact is the case.

Theocracy, at the basis of both religion and morals in Israel, found expression in the idea of the Covenant, and the development of Old Testament ethics reflects the changing view of this contractual relation. In the traditional religion of the people, prior to the prophetic reform, three features of this idea stand out, all three of decided moral import. The covenant was between Yahveh and his chosen nation Israel. The demands which it imposed on the people emphasized ritual, external observance. The blessings which Israel could expect from its fidelity to God were blessings of visible prosperity: political, economic, domestic. The earlier codes, reflecting crude ideas of a fierce deity jealously exacting unswerving obedience, and requiring propitiation by sacrifices and the most punctilious attention to details of purification and ritual observance, neglected the inner core of morality. Not only the immoral features of the popular cults, of Yahveh-worship itself and of Canaanitish corruptions, but also the vices which the pre-prophetic religion permitted or rather quite ignored made a reform imperative. This reform was undertaken as soon as the more enlightened moral conscience of the prophets, protesting against flagrant wrongs, sought sanction for its protest, where sanction for all duty was to be sought, in the will and law of the Lord. Keener moral perception led the prophets to a higher conception of God; in proclaiming this true law of God, they championed a loftier morality.

Amos, Isaiah, Micah, the eighth century reformers, spoke in the name of a God who was not concerned with ritual and was not to be propitiated with sacrifices, but demanded a life of righteousness. Yahveh hated and despised burnt offerings and meat-offerings of iniquitous worshipers. The purity which he demanded was a purity of heart and a clean moral record: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well: seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." [3] Amos had championed justice and righteousness in general terms, and in the name of a morally inexorable deity had forecast the utter doom of the people unless they repented. Hosea's message, also grimly foreboding, yet emphasized a more positive note. As his own heart yearned after his adulterous wife, to reclaim her, even so Yahveh's boundless love reached out to save his faithless people from disaster, if only they would repent. Isaiah probed the public and private life of the people and scathingly denounced explicit abuses: drunkenness, lewd riotous license, the landlord's greed and extortion,

flaunting iniquity in political office high and low, robbery, oppression, bribery, collusion of judge and criminal, violence, injustice manifold and shameless. An evil generation could not persist in doing iniquity and brazenly trust in its being God's chosen people. Yahveh is the god of righteousness and holiness, and unless the people thoroughly reform their lives, Israel is doomed.

This emphasis on the moral heart of God's law served to lead the prophets to the ideal of religion as a personal relation of the individual to God. Yahveh was not a monopoly of Israel, but hearkened to them that did his will in righteous living. This idea made slow headway in the Hebrew consciousness. The priests sought to placate Yahveh by a reform of worship and ceremonial, mitigating some flagrant abuses such as slavery, denouncing idolatry, human sacrifice, religious prostitution, abolishing the various local sanctuaries and high places with their corrupt ritual, and centralizing the worship of Yahveh in the Temple of Jerusalem. But in all this reform Yahveh continued to be regarded as Israel's god and Israel's defender against foreign invasion. So long as they duly sacrificed to him in the Temple of Zion, they were safe. Jeremiah's exposure of this pernicious delusion made him the most hated and tragic figure in the prophetic movement: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of Yahveh, the temple of Yahveh, the temple of Yahveh is this." [4] The destruction of Jerusalem, fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy, also imposed on the Jews, now captives by the rivers of Babylon, the necessity of grasping more fully the prophetic ideals of ethical monotheism, universalism, and a personal religion. Yahveh was God alone; he could be worshiped anywhere and by anyone, whether in Jerusalem or in Babylon; his will exacted righteousness and holiness and purity of heart. But in spite of this tragic deepening of religious insight, the Levitical concern with ritual and the priestly formalism and legalism were never entirely overcome. They persisted and sought new and revised emphasis, and in a later day, as Pharisaism, represented the object of Jesus' still more radical reform of Judaism.

If we consider the ethical gains of the prophetic reform, we find that they are many and vital, not only in criticism of existing moral wrongs and misconceived duties but also in positive statement of the virtues. Micah interprets God's law with concise finality: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [5] The Ethical Decalogue, in its more distinctively moral commandments, by stigmatizing murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and covetousness, espouses the opposite virtues and also inculcates filial

piety. In the more practical manual of moral edification, the Book of Proverbs, a list of vices is given in the sixth chapter, which suggest by contrast the moral emphasis on justice, benevolence, a sincere and a peaceful spirit: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

In the Psalms the justice and the power of God are exalted, and man's utter dependence on Yahveh. The Psalmists do not abandon the contractual idea; righteous conduct and loyal worship are still man's duty to Yahveh, who will sooner or later judge each man according to his desert. Even in such a psalm as the fifty-first, which is a prayer for inner purity and dedication to God, even here the Psalmist prays: "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem." But we can also hear a new note of utter devotion to God's law, moral self-consecration characteristic of the more alert Jewish conscience: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a constant spirit within me."

Viewed in connection with the idea of the contractual relation of Yahveh to his people, the problem of evil acquires an especially perplexing character in later Hebrew thought. How are we to explain the apparently undeserved suffering of righteous men? In the Book of Job this problem provides the tragic theme. If, with Job's three friends, we judge that affliction is always punishment for sin, we reason against plain and abundant experience in men's lives. If, with Satan, we speculate that God brings calamity to men in order to test their righteousness, we may be maligning God, whose omniscience would scarcely seem to require, or his perfect goodness to permit, any such experiments at good men's expense. But Satan's question may yet be the decisive one: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" Though the tragedy of Job remains in his anguished search for a theodicy, for a view of God's treatment of him that would not reflect on God's unwavering justice, yet Job's own unshaken moral resolution reveals that he does serve God for nought. Unable to grasp a new view of God nor yet to abandon the old one, he holds fast to his righteousness. He yearns for a chance to have it out with his Judge: "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" [6] His eyes peer across the dark facts of the here and now to the vista of an amazing Perhaps beyond the grave, a possibly eternal scope for the vindication of his and God's justice. In any case, however, he remains loyal to his integrity. Let God do as God will, Job will not renounce God, but he will not stultify himself either, by professing to repent of a life in which he honestly re-

members only unswerving devotion to God. Thus tragically cherished, the righteousness of which Job makes a solemn declaration gains in dignity.

2. *The Moral Gospel of Jesus*

The three great principles of the prophetic reform—ethical monotheism, universalism, personal religion—were really three strains of one profound theme. They sustained each other; and it was because the first principle was not grasped thoroughly, not even by all the prophetic reformers and never consistently by priest or Levite or common worshipers, that Judaism did not realize the fuller implications of the other two ideas. The moral deepening of the theocratic ideal, which constituted the heart of the prophetic reform, pointed to the transcendence of all nationalistic and external limitations in the conception of God as related to his worshipers. The clear perception of this truth, which made possible the radical advance of a Jeremiah or a Second Isaiah, reached its consummation in Jesus' complete spiritualization of the Law. The ethics of the Gospels, both its radical character in relation to Judaism and its abiding significance for all men, can be expressed by a comparison of Jesus' idea of the kingdom of God with the theocratic conception of Jewish tradition.

The spiritualizing of the Law led Jesus, not only to the firm grasp of universalism in his view of God, but to a moral universalism in which the full blessings of the godly life were deemed to be within the reach of common folk, without distinction of race or rank. Israelite and Greek, each in his own way, had drawn the distinction between the aristocracy of men that really mattered and the others who were somehow below par or even beneath consideration. This aristocratic ideal was conceived by the Hebrew in racial terms. In spite of the teachings of prophets like Jeremiah, the Jew still insisted on keeping foremost in his mind the importance of his being a child of Abraham, one of God's chosen people. That this Israelitish preëminence had actually been scorned and overwhelmed by a succession of Gentile oppressors, was the galling anguish of Jerusalem; that Yahveh had forsaken his chosen people, was the tragic note of national despair; that despite all afflictions, God remembered and in his own good time would revindicate his own and Israel's majesty in Zion, if only the people remained loyal to his worship in righteousness and holiness, was the pharisaic hope that would not be denied. But it was because of this tenacious though humiliated racial aristocracy that Judaism could not quite outgrow reliance on ritual and externalities, nor attain fully unto moral universalism and a thoroughly spiritualized religion.

In the aristocratic idea of classical antiquity the racial note is not to be ignored. It may be perceived in the connotation of the term 'barbarian.' Both Plato and Aristotle, in their ethical and political systems, were thinking of Greeks. But even when classical antiquity in Rome and Alexandria was attaining a cosmopolitan outlook, the more basic aristocracy of Greek thinking still persisted. His political democracy notwithstanding, the Greek set out with the conviction that some men were born to be drudges, living, as Aristotle said, only with their bodies, while the élite, by virtue of superior rationality and other distinguishing endowments, were men in the fullest sense of the word. For these latter were ethics written; to them alone could the moral ideal make its full appeal; theirs was the perfect fruition of life in the cardinal virtues. The rest, the common people, were both described and dismissed in the phrase 'the many,' *hoi polloi.*

It was by his moral universalism that Jesus, overcoming all racial limitations in his teaching of God and man and crossing over all barriers of status and superior endowment, addressed his gospel, glad tidings, to all men whatsoever. But it was because of his radical change in moral emphasis and a really new selection of cardinal virtues that his gospel could arouse the response which it sought from the lowly and weary and heavy laden. What was bound to impress rabbi and philosopher, even before they had grasped or had been moved by the new teaching, was its power to evoke from abjectly low and ignorant people high spiritual response. To these hitherto inarticulate masses the new gospel must have been in a real sense a revelation.

It was not by a lowered moral standard, by easing the way of the blessed life, that Jesus brought it within the reach of the masses. His procedure was rather the opposite. Jesus did not arouse a vain complacency in the vulgar, that they were equal to the wise and could achieve the perfect life quite as well as the rabbis. On the contrary, he pushed further a conclusion which had been strangely dawning in the more exacting Jewish and even Graeco-Roman conscience: that no man, not even the noblest, was quite equal to the demands of perfection. The note of man's moral inadequacy, humility before God, repeatedly provided the Psalmist's prelude and refrain; the Stoic might profess self-reliance in his pursuit of virtue, but he was not sanguine about his own perfect attainment of it. So the gospel of Jesus appealed to all men through its conviction of the grievous spiritual need of all: not by cultivating pharisaic self-assurance in the masses, but by arousing in all men, from the Pharisee down, the publican's repentant humility. Profoundly significant is Jesus' remark to one who addressed him as Good Master: "Why callest thou me good? There is none

good but one, that is, God." [7] Matched against divine perfection, what was man, any man, capable of achieving, or what availed man's own endeavors?

If the Jew's or the Greek's characteristic confidence in his capacity to achieve his respective virtues may be designated as moral optimism, then this Christian lowly conviction of sin and spiritual indigence might be called pessimistic. But the Christian temper is not to be misconceived as one of basic despair and negation. The conviction of sin is the obverse of the hope of redemption. The repentance of the prodigal son is a devastating sense of his swinish life, but it is also his coming to himself, and the first step in his return to his Father. Jesus' version of morals, in thoroughly religious terms, concerns the ways in which sinful man, utterly lost but for God's redeeming love, comes to realize the blessed working of this love in his life, and through his life in the life of others. We may thus perceive the fundamental tone of Jesus' ethics, and the sort of virtues which it was bound to emphasize.

It should be kept in mind that we are dealing here, not with an ethical system, but with a religious gospel. The moral ideas which give it its winning power in the lives of men are not argued but find effective utterance in preachment, parable and maxim. Appealing directly to heart and mind alike, these ideas as a leaven pervade and transform the convert's entire attitude and are translated into conduct. At a later stage of experience, the Christian mind in its endeavor to rationalize its cherished convictions, would be reducing them to some sort of system, and the system then would reflect, not only the direct Christian experience, but also the intellectual background and equipment used in its more deliberate interpretation.

Different intellectual versions are thus to be expected, and the meanings with which contending traditions might load certain initial ideas would make it hard to recover the original intention in the teachings. Did Jesus seek to lead the people, defeated and despairing in this life's enterprise, away from any concern in this world, to the hopes of a life hereafter? Was his thinking dominated by the conviction of the speedily impending end of all things, and his ethics one of vigilance on the eve of God's new and glorious-solemn day? And are we to understand in this sense the 'world-denying' character of his teaching? Or did Jesus, notwithstanding his eschatological alertness, teach an ethics of abiding values in the lives of individuals and groups? And in that case was his gospel one of radical reconstruction of the entire social system, or even a denial of civilization as a wrongly motivated human enterprise? Or again, was he on the whole positive in his social outlook, and his gospel one of genuine but 'reasonable'

liberalism? Was his emphasis on spirituality ascetic, or did "life more abundant" mean the enhancement and enrichment of human nature here and now through the realization of human capacities? These interpretations are not all incompatible, and support has been sought for each one in the record of the evangelists.

Historians of the early Christian Church have called attention to these and also to other aspects of the Gospel, or rather to the various lines of effective appeal and response in the spread of the new faith. An account of the Apostolic age treating Christianity as simply a moral teaching of winning human power, and Jesus as only a greater Socrates, would miss the mystical regenerative spirit which possessed and transformed the Mediterranean peoples. The social historian and the theologian must here supplement the work of the ethical interpreter. We have been told that Christ was "a savior rather than a pattern, and the Christian way of life is something made possible by Christ the Lord through the community rather than something arising from the imitation of Jesus." [8] The later development of the Christian doctrine of grace reveals an initially fundamental idea, of men's redemption by God in Christ, rather than of men's achieving human perfection by understanding and adopting the teachings of Jesus. But the radical stirring power of new moral ideals was still there, transfiguring men's lives and men's individual and social outlook. Moral conviction united with sacramentalism in the Christian faith and accounted for its power and success.

Here our immediate main interest is to examine the moral message of Jesus and the Apostles. Even within this frankly acknowledged limitation of our account, we cannot dismiss the many available contending versions of the Gospel, nor confidently call any one of them the plain statement of the original teaching. Though choice of emphasis can scarcely be avoided, we should guard against dogmatic presumption.

If we center our attention on the early reports and impressions of the teaching of Jesus, certain ideas stand out as the moral heart of the message. The purpose of God's perfectly holy will is being accomplished in the world, and this purpose reveals God's redeeming love for all men. The sense of transcendent divine holiness accentuates the note of humble piety, but the assurance of God's love and its inspiring influence are spiritual dynamics pervading and uniting morality and religion in the Gospel: love of God and love of man summing up the Law and the Prophets, the essentials of the godly and blessed life. Man's one duty is to do the will of God, and so integrity and loyal trust are fundamental. But the spirit in the doing is all-decisive, and

the spirit of love evokes and demands love in return. The entire gospel is thus interpreted in the First Epistle of John: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. . . . If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

This paramount emphasis on love as the fulfillment of the law, enriching and personalizing the traditional assurance of Israel as God's chosen people and universalizing the pagan Greek consciousness of worth, was the expression of a new reverence for man, for any man, the recognition of man's infinite spiritual need but also of his moral possibilities. In God's love of him man, any man, was disclosed as possessing unique and irreplaceable worth; in each man was holiness by the redeeming grace of God. God is the Good Shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine safe in the fold, to seek the one lost sheep. Emerson observed that no one perceived so perfectly as Jesus the essential moral dignity of man.

Thus the moral consciousness which Jesus imparted was one of reverence in humility through love. To do the will of God is to realize God's purpose for man, in one's own life and in the lives of others. So true religion finds its expression in the godlike life. But the godlike life is a life in God; as its consummation is the inner dynamic of love, so its first characteristic is inwardness. It is inner spiritual communion with God always, and so cannot find its aims or satisfactions in externalities. In one act of penetrating insight Jesus perceived and disclosed the heart of both individual and social realization. The divine realm in human life is spiritual. The Kingdom of God as Jesus proclaimed it was not to be a theocratic state, a doctrinal or priestly structure. Nor was it framed by any regional or temporal boundaries: Lo here or there. It was a spirit working as a leaven in the inner life of man, permeating and transforming him altogether. Jesus said: "The kingdom of God is within you": thus living and most intimate, right in the midst of us all.

Love concentrates itself on its object and allows no distractions. From the lesser and baser loves of wordliness we may rise to the greater love of God. Most important in the eyes of Jesus is this right gradation of devotion. In preachment and parable he ever returns to it. The merchant who finds the one pearl of great price, the man who discovers the treasure hid in a field, and who sell all that they have to gain the supreme value, these are parables not of evil and good, but of lesser and of supreme good, and of the all-important choice between them. Jesus drove home the importance of the supreme devo-

tion so strongly that he was liable to impress his hearers as condemning or dismissing what he subordinated and neglected only by comparison with the moral pearl of great price. His attention was not concentrated on external instrumentalities or individual and social apparatus. His institutional ethics was neglected in a manner which has occasioned misconception and confusing praise or criticism. Here is no anarchic dismissal of social order. Jesus does not reject, he only refuses to emphasize institutionalism. It is not the system but the inner spirit that matters first or last. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." [9] He would render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's because already he had reserved for God the higher things that are God's. He does not disdain human institutional loyalty except where it is an obstacle to the higher devotion. "He that loveth father and mother *more than me* is not worthy of me." [10] So Martha is not censured for her hospitable solicitude but for her negligence of "the better part." Without love, mere external reform or institutional reliance are futile; with love, all externalities and institutions find their way and keep their due place. Keep the better part dominant; in all social order and relations keep love and reverence for its object first. So all institutions are subordinated to human needs, and above all human needs is the need of loving communion with God and man.

This loving concentration on inwardness, resisting rival devotions in themselves not evil, is bound to resist doubly the ruinous depravity of sin. Jesus' account of evil reveals the same emphasis on spirit and motive, as does his message of the godly life. This is strikingly brought out in his revision of the traditional Mosaic code, in the Sermon on the Mount. Not only murder is condemned but the murderous anger in the soul, violent hatred, the spirit of hostile contempt of man by man; not merely adulterous conduct, but the spirit of sensuality that corrupts the soul and would corrupt others. So Jesus points out the sin of a too external or too narrow range of moral obligation. Not the conformity to official oaths or contractual fidelity, but the deeper loyalty is in question, the loyalty to one's best conscience which no contractual bond can limit or excuse; not outwardly fair justice but utter devotion to peace and goodwill; not narrow limitation of duty to race or class, but the universal expansion of the range of moral community in love. The principle of mutuality in human relations, as an epitome of all moral precept, finds expression in the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." [11]

In the Beatitudes the characteristic virtues of Jesus' ethics are arrayed in impressive contrast to the opposite worldly evaluations.

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Against worldly exaltation and pride, Jesus teaches the virtue of lowly humbleminded spirit, teachable, submissive, trustful. This is the true attitude of spiritual responsiveness and the most seemly before God and man. "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted." [12] 2. "Blessed are they that mourn." Condemning the unmoved hardness of the confirmed sinner, Jesus points to penitent distress and the grieving conscience as the conditions of comfort through repentance. 3. "Blessed are the meek." Against overbearing assertion of outraged power, Jesus advocates forbearance and tranquil self-control. 4. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Jesus emphasizes the importance of utter consuming desire for the perfection of character. A chief virtue is the unreserved moral devotion itself. 5. "Blessed are the merciful." Intelligent love prevails over the unforgiving heart; to enter into the evil-doer's motives and difficulties is to realize how like him we are, both in need of mercy. The parable of the unmerciful servant, himself a successful pleader for mercy before his master, but unwilling to accord it to his fellowservant, expands the motivation of this fifth beatitude. 6. "Blessed are the pure in heart." He who is to live in the sight of God must be purged of impurity. Purity of heart springs from inner reverence for oneself as the object of God's love and involves corresponding reverence for the moral inviolability of others. 7. "Blessed are the peacemakers": not only meek and merciful themselves but also allayers of strife among others, reconcilers, active promoters and radiating centers of goodwill. 8. "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake." Jesus does not measure the worth of life in terms of outward triumph. The doer of God's will is engaged in a heroic enterprise and should gladly meet a hero's trials. Sacrifice and suffering and martyrdom may be in store for him; to the devoted soul all these are counted blessings, if they advance God's will among men.[13]

The Christian virtues are not the virtues of active self-reliance; they are mainly the passive virtues; but when they are so called it is not meant that Christian morality is negative in tone. This was an ethics of genuine joy in the doing of God's will: an ethics of integrity, humility, vigilance, aspiration, earnestness, compassion, scrupulous conscientiousness as to motive or inner spirit, purity, reverence for the person, longsuffering devotion, forbearance and a forgiving and peaceful spirit. To the sensual and worldly mind all this must have appeared as manifold renunciation, but Jesus taught overcoming

through surrender. He who pursues mastery of the external, though he possess the world, is building upon sand. "For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" or as Matthew has it, "lose his own soul"; or better still, as in Luke, "lose or forfeit his own self." [14] Thus emphasizing the irreplaceable worth of man's soul, but also its true path of self-realization, Jesus insists on a new discrimination of values. Against the judgment of the world is his message of a divine standard. Judged by that standard, the man who, in doing God's will "loses his life" in the eyes of the world, abandons or misses its lusts and estates and powers, that man alone finds his true life.

This gospel, by redistribution of emphasis in interpretation, might lead to a system of conformities for the saving of man's soul in the life of the Church, or to an ascetic withdrawal from the world in the service of Christ. But in the ethical thought of our civilization again and again these really central and saving truths are disclosed as the inevitable, though distant, consummation: Jesus' vision of the unique and infinite worth of man's soul, of any man's soul, his glad tidings of love as the divine dynamic in the world, his gospel of brotherhood in all human relations.

3. The Spiritual Outlook of the Apostles

The early spread of the Christian communities emphasized the problem of their relation to existing social groups. Religiously and ethically the initial intimate message of Jesus yielded to a more deliberately formulated code. The substantial and growing body of Gentile converts raised the question of the terms on which they were to be admitted to full communion in the Church. This issue concerned the whole future of Christianity. St. Paul's apostolate to the Gentiles established the new movement as a world-religion and not merely an Israelitish reform. Preaching to Greek and Roman a Christ to whom they could come directly, without subjection to Jewish ritual, Paul contrasted the bondage of the Law with the new freedom of Christian love. More insistent on the fruits of Christian righteousness and distrustful of any morally barren faith, the author of the Epistle of James advocates a religion of works, which is perhaps the best Judaist version of the new way of salvation. But the author of the Fourth Gospel was convinced that true Christian saintliness was neither in fulfillment of the Law nor in any practical observance but in the possession of the soul by faith and by spiritual illumination. The crown of blessedness was to know God in Christ.

St. Paul's view of Christianity as an abrogation of the Law was a profoundly significant idea, which, however, might be gravely mis-

understood. What he taught was that to the true Christian the call of duty was not any longer the exaction of a statute, bondage, but the penetration of the soul by love, freedom. Many of his Gentile converts, accustomed to the relaxing of the ordinary morality by the abandon of the soul in the mystic cults, took Paul's teaching to mean not only ritualistic exemption but toleration of moral laxity or even inducement to saintly license. This antinomian tendency Paul resisted with all his power. To die unto the Law was to die unto sin, not to live in sin. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid." [15] Not less but more virtuous must be the saint who lives the godly life in freedom and love of God and not under the bondage of the Law.

Paul in his portrayal of the life of the spirit, a life dead to the flesh and the world, subordinates the vigorous and secular virtues to a more intimate spirituality. Conversion is through repentance, a turning away from the ways of sin and death and a renunciation of the world and its lusts and pride. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. . . . Also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth; lie not to one another." [16] The Christian life is portrayed also in more positive terms and with a keen eye for the varied relations of everyday conduct: it is a life of mercy, kindness, humblemindedness, meekness, and long-suffering, of forbearance and forgiveness, charity and a peaceful heart and a spirit teachable, admonishing, vigilant in prayer and grateful, of loving tolerance and submission in all the relations of family life, servants' fidelity and fairness of masters. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." [17] These detailed exhortations reveal basic principles to which Paul gave final utterance in his great eulogy of love: "Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." The fulfillment of faith and hope is in the spirit and in the life of love, more important than knowledge or prophecy or understanding of mysteries or good works or martyrdom. All the virtues are aspects of love or find their motive and their culmination in love. It is the abiding and unfailing heart of all true saintliness.

In his Christian emphasis on inwardness Paul does not rely on institutional or other apparatus; for the same reason he is prepared to tolerate much that he does not in principle advocate as essential to Christian perfection. He is no uncompromising ascetic; though he prefers the

state of celibacy, he does not reject or even discredit marriage. Married if he must be or single if he can, let the saint live in God and Christ. Paul was not a social revolutionary and does not seem to have regarded either a political or an economic overturn as a fundamental article in the Christian program. While he urges Philemon to treat his runaway slave Onesimus as a fellow Christian and a brother beloved, he yet sends Onesimus back to his master. Not any deliberate plan of social reorganization characterizes his thought, but rather an eschatological alertness. Like Mary, instead of being anxious and troubled about many things, he would choose the one thing needful which shall not be taken away from him. The end of all things, he believes, is at hand: "The time is shortened; that henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none; and those that weep, as though they wept not; and those that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and those that buy, as though they possessed not; and those that use the world, as not using it to the full: for the fashion of this world passeth away." [18]

Paul's moral tone throughout is one of spiritual need. Not in proud self-reliance does he fight the good fight; not by his own achievement does he hope to reach the goal; his hope is ever in the grace of God. The insistence on the godly life together with the conviction that not by any godliness of ours are we saved characterizes Paul's teaching. Justification is by faith. There is no relaxing of the moral fiber, but saintliness is not in man's attainments; it is God's blessed presence in the man who has yielded all to Christ in faith and hope and love.

In his resistance to the moral laxity which Paul censured in many of his converts, the author of the Epistle of James was involved in an opposition to the Pauline doctrine itself. James' test of Christianity is by moral conduct. Saintliness is not only an inner experience, far less the profession of it; unless it yields fruits in justice and mercy, it is of no avail: "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body: what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself." Doing the will of God, fulfillment of the Law, is the main thing. James conceives this in terms of purity, justice and charity: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

In the First Epistle of John, fatherly admonition to live the life of Christian love is an outstanding feature: "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren. . . . My little chil-

dren, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth." But in the Johannine view of Christ it is not the actual reformation of conduct, nor yet the possession of the spirit by God's love, but Christ's revelation of God to man which is the central experience. The life in Christ is spiritual illumination. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In him was life; and the life was the light of men." To Paul, moral practice was important as disclosing a spirit emancipated from the bonds of the flesh through faith in Christ. To John, the Christian life of Love was the pathway from darkness to light, the prelude to the supreme vision of God. "Whosoever *believeth*" in Christ has everlasting life. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Pagan mystics could respond to this message, and Christian mystics were to be inspired by it. But we are not to misconceive the Johannine view as exalting spiritual vision at the expense of active saintliness. The godly life is the godlike life. In the perfect light of Christ men are to see their way to God, and in perfect love they are to walk in that way.

4. The Church Militant Against a World of Sin

The Christian teaching was a gospel of salvation through brotherly love, but disciples and converts found the new life a life of conflict, without and within. Jesus had said: "I came not to send peace, but a sword," [19] and the history of the Church abundantly fulfilled his words. The consciousness of ever-spreading power and yet ever-threatening opposition and heresy made the Church imperious but vigilant. "We are but of yesterday," Tertullian (160-220) declared to the pagan world, "and yet we have filled all that is yours, cities, islands, forts, country towns, assemblies, camps even, tribes, councils, the palace, the senate, the forum; we have left you only the temples." [20] But half a century after Tertullian, on a wider battle-front, slowly retreating enemies continued to harass the Church. "We are still in the world," Cyprian writes, "we are still placed in the battle-field, we fight for our lives daily." [21] It should be kept in mind that the strength of Christianity in the Roman world was not a strength of overwhelming numbers. Even as late as the beginning of the fourth century, when Constantine with the keen eye of strategy was to see in the heavens a cross, "In this sign you conquer!" the Christians formed probably one-tenth of the Eastern half of the Empire, and one-fifteenth of the Western half.[22]

Grave and continued emergency and growing institutional dominion combined to emphasize discipline. Jesus' glad tidings of boundless love, his divine respect for the moral dignity of man, Paul's message of free-

dom from the bondage of the law and of ritual in the new life of faith and hope and love: all these were subordinated to reaffirmed ecclesiastic régime, sacramentalism and prevailing orthodoxy. Utter obedience to church-leadership was declared essential to the Christian life: outside the Church and its ordinances there is no salvation. The Christian became a child of the Church, and the priest his spiritual and really authoritative father.

Christ had sent his disciples "as sheep in the midst of wolves." The Church, in its work of converting the world to Christ, was presumably undertaking by God's grace to transform wolves into sheep. The dominion of the Church to the glory of Christ was the main thing. If thus obedience to ecclesiastic authority was made the characteristic virtue, and recalcitrant heresy the most grievous sin, a twofold result in Church-policy vitally affected morals. On the one hand was a strange application of Jesus' words to Martha and Mary. The 'better part' was now regarded as unwavering orthodoxy. The Church was apt to be indulgent with considerable moral looseness in those whom it was drawing within the fold. On the other hand, declaration of ecclesiastic authority over the lives of men involved an increasingly rigid discipline over the least details of Christian conduct.

In this ascendency of institutional régime, the early Christian spirit of loving devotion was being submerged; but we would be doing the leaders of the Church militant an injustice if we ascribed their unyielding pastoral attitude to dictatorial motives. The Christian fold were indeed sheep in a world of wolves. The lofty ideals of the Greek and Roman moralists should not divert our attention from the unspeakable actualities of life in the capital and in the provinces of the Roman Empire. Roman literature reflects the philosophers' noble influence, but historian and satirist alike have left us a record of the corruption, the cruelty, and the moral disintegration of Roman life. The philosophers and the poets contemplated high ideals of human perfection individual and social. Stoic rationalism cultivated broad philanthropy. But daily affairs in the Empire shamed those high aspirations. Rome was teeming with slaves brought in the trains of victorious commanders from the four corners of the earth: slaves that pandered to the vices of their idle masters and made corrupt living the order of the day: adultery, abortion, infanticide, unspeakable gluttony and lewdness. The moral sensibilities of the people were brutalized by the cruelties of the circus and gladiatorial combat, where human blood ran in streams with the blood of wild beasts to the delight of thousands. Vedius Pollio fed his fish on slave-meat, and Nero lighted his gardens at night with flaming torches of pitch-smeared Christians. Not only daily conduct but the

moral ideals themselves were contaminated by the imperial cult. Throned monsters were deified, and the idea of Deity itself in the Roman mind was polluted.

From this moral and spiritual cesspool a Stoic sage might withdraw in lofty dignity, and no doubt in Rome as in Israel there was a saving remnant of men devoted to the higher life. To these the classical moralist made his appeal, bent on advancing from the good to the better and to the highest good. But the Christian set out from the very midst of the cesspool of sin. Sin was the first fact in his view of human life, and salvation from the life of sin his first need. When he referred to all evil by the one phrase 'the World,' he was simply epitomizing the facts of his observation. The world was a world of evil and sin, in need of radical refashionment, a new birth. The contrast of the natural man to the man reborn was being translated into the contrast between paganism and the life of Christian consecration. The saintly cohesion and intimacy of the new cult roused in the Roman mind evil suspicion of occult lusts. The Christians were accused of drinking the blood of children, of incest, orgies of promiscuity. The Apologists protested that only corrupt minds could devise such groundless calumnies. To all these slanders they replied with tireless denunciations of pagan superstition, pollution, and cruelty. The struggle in which each one of them was engaged grew in their minds to cosmic proportions: the World, the flesh and the devil, against Christ. And in St. Augustine's masterpiece this antithesis found its classical expression: The City of this World and the City of God.

Advancing against the entire pagan world, Christianity advanced to overcome, to convert and regenerate, not merely to reform. The thinkers whom it moved it moved over; the rest remained apparently unaffected by it. Lecky writes: "There is no fact in the history of the human mind more remarkable than the complete unconsciousness of the importance and the destinies of Christianity, manifested by the Pagan writers before the accession of Constantine." [23] A story of Anatole France comes to mind, in which the aged corpulent Pilate at the watering-place of Baiae meets an old friend whom he has not seen since his days in Jerusalem and Syria. The two exchange memories of long careers in imperial service and intrigues. The conversation turns to interesting bits of reminiscence. What about that Galilean wonder-worker, Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified for some crime or other? "Jesus?" Pilate murmurs in the closing words of the story, "Jesus of Nazareth? I do not seem to remember the name." [24]

To be sure, Christian writers could meet indifference with disdain. "Separate Jerusalem from Athens!" Tertullian cried; and St. Jerome,

penitently recalling his classical studies and enthusiasm, sought to uproot the least trace of paganism: "What has Horace to do with the Psalter, Virgil with the Gospels, and Cicero with Paul?" [25] Yet during the three centuries of developing Patristic thought, in dogmatic controversy and systematic exposition of doctrine theological and moral, the best thought of antiquity was reinterpreted in Christian terms. Christian beliefs and ideals were formulated in the language of Greek and Roman philosophy, and the continuance of Classical, Jewish, and Oriental thought which had made Alexandria the first world-mart of ideas, made it later also the great nursery of Christian orthodoxy as well as the spawning-pool of heresies.

In their contemplation of Christian moral ideals, just as in their achievement of orthodoxy, the Fathers of the Church manifested the influence of Greek philosophical ideas on their Christian piety. Justin Martyr (103-167) does not abandon his Stoic fortitude or his Stoic insistence on moral endeavor or self-discipline of the will. It is through Stoicism that he rises to a greater one than Zeno or Plato and to the ideal of a more complete spirituality. Clement of Alexandria (150-211), prizing Christian fidelity on any terms, yet prizes faith and loyalty the more if they are intelligent. So when faith and reason bear fruit in good works of Christian love, we find the full attainment of the will of God in the Christian counterpart of the Stoic and Platonic sage, the saint that knows, the intimate of God. In this recognition of the importance of Christian understanding, Clement emphasizes the active manifestation of Christian wisdom in the good life.

Greek ethics sought to express the ideal of human perfection, the fruition of character in the life of well-being individual and social. The gospel of Jesus appealed to men to live the godlike life of love and of brotherhood. But in the ascendency of the Church over the minds of men, the dominant idea came to be that of saving one's soul, and morality itself became a discipline to that end. Ethical theory and the practical régime of medieval morality were dictated by this paramount concern for soul-salvation, and this anxiety gave rise to a tangle of moral problems. What part, if any, did a man play in his own salvation? What manner of life realized most fully or most nearly God's perfecting grace in a man's soul?

The doctrine of grace and salvation raised the question of man's moral competence and responsibility. The conviction of sinfulness had too often induced a humble resignation to sin, and many an ecclesiastic was apt to explain his dissoluteness by confessing himself a frail and worthless vessel. The sturdy morality of the British monk Pelagius (*c.* 360-*c.* 420) protested against any such passive and ignoble surrender.

Pelagianism represented the persistent Stoic note of robust moralism in Christian piety. God has created us with certain powers and capacities, but the use of them is determined by our free will. It depends upon God whether we can see or hear; but on us, whether we look or listen. We could have refrained, are therefore blameworthy: we still can avail ourselves of Christ's blessed guidance. Here was stalwart devotion to virtue, a doctrine of rigorous moral demands.

Man's blameworthiness and his just punishment for sin were incontestable Christian verities, but the more sanguine moralism of the Pelagian doctrine roused active opposition, particularly from St. Augustine (354-430). For ten years Augustine had been inclined to the Manichean doctrine that good and evil are due to two cosmic eternal powers, God and Matter. His first writings after his conversion to Christianity were naturally directed against the Manichean heresy. Rejecting all dualism and any view of evil as a radical cosmic principle, Augustine declared that there is no *evil nature*. Evil is unnatural, a perversion. "When the will abandons the higher, and turns to what is lower, it becomes evil—not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is perverse. . . . Not even the nature of the devil himself is evil, in so far as it is nature, but it was made evil by being perverted." [26] This anti-Manichean polemic inclined Augustine to a recognition and emphasis of genuine moral choice and responsibility. But with equal vigor he turned later against the Pelagian doctrine, which he regarded as the opposite heretical error. If a man could achieve his own salvation, what need was there of Christ? Evil is ever in perversity of will, yet the will of unregenerate man is always perverse, hopeless but for the grace of God.

As children of Adam we are all tainted with the fatal consequences of his evil choice, a free moral choice which God allowed but did not compel. Grace and salvation God owes to no man, but vouchsafes them; the gift of grace is wholly undeserved, and in the operation of grace man is a passive recipient. Saintliness is not a man's merit but God's blessing. Thus the actuality of evil is recognized, yet God is held nowise to blame for it. But the more Augustine insisted on God's respect for man's moral freedom in permitting evil as a possible alternative in the initial choice, the more perplexing were the problems which he imposed on Christian orthodoxy. Why did God have a chooser of evil in Adam? As to the rest of us, children of Adam, and so incapable of choosing good, why should we be justly damned in such multitudes for evil careers which we could not avoid, since only by God's grace could we choose aught but evil? The problem of squaring original sin with moral responsibility taxed even St. Augustine's theological genius.

The importance of St. Augustine's doctrine of grace for morals is that it emphasized the passive character of Christian virtue, man's utter dependence on God. All active, heroic, achieving morality was declared to be pagan pride. The cardinal virtues of the Greeks were "splendid vices": real virtue was always in man's devout surrender to God. The entire moral life and all its virtues now become manifold orderly expressions of the life of Christian love. For St. Ambrose (340-397) as for St. Augustine all the virtues are varieties of love. Every perfection of the Christian life is disclosed as the soul's loving commitment to God in some sphere of human conduct: modesty, kindness, fortitude, justice, temperance, prudence: in man's relation to the course of events, to other men, to himself, to God. Augustine more closely reinterprets the cardinal virtues on this principle: "Temperance is love keeping itself uncontaminated for its object, Fortitude is love readily enduring all for the beloved's sake, Justice is love serving only the beloved and therefore rightly governing, Prudence is love sagaciously choosing the things that help her and rejecting the things that hinder." [27]

St. Augustine does not neglect applied ethics. God's grace regenerates man's soul, and so the Christian way of life reaches into every sphere of conduct and governs marriage and family relations, political order, the life of trade. St. Ambrose's career as Bishop of Milan likewise discloses active promotion of the Christian cause in the world of power and affairs. His struggle with Emperor Theodosius was more than a contest for ecclesiastic prestige; it was the struggle to attain mastery for Christ in the Empire and to reconstruct the world on a Christian pattern.

5. *Monastic Renunciation and Priestly Discipline*

Devout souls sought Christian perfection in withdrawal from the world of sin. Christian medieval morality tended to express its highest aspirations in the monastic ideal, and the Christian transvaluation of the moral values of classical antiquity found its more emphatic conclusion in the ascetic retirement from the world. By outright negation or by a radical revision, the Christian moralist replaced temperance by abstinence, courage or Stoic fortitude by the martyr's longsuffering firmness and patience, justice by lenient and generous charity, wisdom or prudence by trusting childlike faith, highmindedness by humility. In place of the active realization of all human capacities and the fruition and perfection of character in worldly pursuits, the Christian looked over and beyond this world of sin to his soul's refuge in Christ. This spiritual revolution was expressed in the phrase "the contempt of this world, the love of Christ—*contemptus mundi amor Christi.*"

The full achievement of this Christian program could scarcely be expected of the rank and file of believers, and the Church was ever confronted with the practical problem of mapping out the moral borderland between 'being in the world but not of it' and 'being of the world, worldly.' So a double level of Christian living was conceived, lay and clerical. On the one hand was the minimum of God-fearing conduct in obedience to Church discipline which could be expected of the laity who remained actually engaged in worldly pursuits: marrying, trading, pursuing ambition, waging war. On the other hand, a higher level of Christian perfection was sought in the life of the clergy who had made their consecration to Christ the single dominant purpose of their being. So in the pursuit of this higher saintliness, resolute devotion expressed itself in the monastic vow.

Persecution sent some Christian devotees to hermit retirement, but the basic motive was the hope, by withdrawal from the distractions and lusts of the world, to achieve that mastery of spirit over the flesh which was believed to be a condition of real saintliness. The hermit, in mortifying his body and humbling all his passions, was dominated by the one holy passion for his soul's salvation. Ascetic zeal found expression in a contest in austerities. Anchorite imagination devised more and more impressive expressions of the soul's contempt for the body and all its desires. The more emaciate, dirty, vermin-infested and macerated the body, the more clearly humbled it was. Not only the more flagrant evils were rejected: in the utter denial of the world, even the normal human affections were stamped out of the heart. That paragon of austerities, St. Simeon Stylites, standing atop his pillar on one leg, the other covered with nauseous wormy sores, the rope around his waist imbedded in his flesh, exceeded also in his saintly disdain of all human attachments. He refused his mother's plea to see him just once before she died. Needless to say, the recital of such excesses is nowise a balanced account of the hermit life, but the fact that these austerities were eulogized, that St. Athanasius and St. Jerome and a hundred hagiographers relate with devout enthusiasm the depressing and even disgusting aspects of anchorite saintliness, reveals the moral and spiritual outlook of the age. Lucretius' line comes to mind here:

> Such is the power of religion, evils in life to engender.

But it is important to see how intense must have been the longing for salvation from this world of sin that could find expression in so harrowing a severance of all human ties.

The organization of monasteries, following St. Benedict's Rule (529) disciplined some of these excesses, brought order and regulation of life

in work and assigned duties. It dignified productive labor, physical and mental, as compatible with holiness and indeed favorable to spiritual growth. In place of fierce austerities and wild solitude, the cloister provided a communal atmosphere of religious stimulus and exaltation, submission, gentle forbearance, active coöperation. Organized monasticism thus represented a partial return of the devout soul to ordered human life. Christianity was to have its holy "wild men of the woods," and then under a saner discipline the ascetic was to work out a Christian program of life and find the way to Christ in the society of his fellow-seekers. But though with growing wealth, worldliness and laxity corrupted the monasteries, again and again renewed eagerness for the saintly life led to reform or else to renewed efforts and new monastic orders. Meanwhile the monastic triple vow of chastity, poverty, and obedience ever signalized the guiding spirit and the goal of saintly withdrawal from the world of sin.

So dominant is the Christian consciousness of sin that the moral outlook is perhaps better indicated by its list of sins than by its tabulation of virtues. Outstanding and ever emphasized are the so-called seven deadly sins. More than seven vices claim the evil places: Pride, Envy, Anger, Unchastity, Avarice, Gluttony, Dejection, Weariness, Vainglory. Each of these deadly sins had a train of derivative vices, and a review of the spiritual perversity and sensual depravity which they comprehended discloses the range and the abyss of man's sinful ruin. St. Augustine in *The City of God* surveys men's vain and evil desires and gnawing cares: "disquiet, griefs, fears, wild joys, quarrels, lawsuits, wars, treasons, angers, hatreds, deceit, flattery, fraud, theft, robbery, perfidy, pride, ambition, envy, murders, parricides, cruelty, ferocity, wickedness, luxury, insolence, impudence, shamelessness, fornications, adulteries, incests, and the numberless uncleannesses and unnatural acts of both sexes: . . . sacrileges, heresies, blasphemies, perjuries, oppression of the innocent, calumnies, plots, falsehoods, false witnessings, unrighteous judgments, violent deeds, plunderings. . . ." [28]

As Rome is overwhelmed by invasions from the north and as the old world of classical antiquity is eclipsed, intellectual twilight lowers over Western Europe for several centuries; but over the ruins of the old culture and into the uncultivated waste of new peoples, the Church spreads its influence and mastery. Despite ecclesiastic preoccupation with discipline and sacramentalism, the Christian pervasion of Western Europe was a moral reform in ideals and in practical results.

The Church reformed slavery and checked the unspeakably brutal disregard for human life which had marked imperial Rome. More than mitigation of slavery was accomplished by Christianity. Though the

Church admonished slaves to obey their masters, in the life of the Church itself master and slave were one in the sight of God, and God might elect the slave before the master. "If the early story that, in the third century, a slave became bishop of Rome is doubtful, the fact that such a story came to be believed at all is significant." [29] Though the Christian practice of almsgiving was motivated by the desire to save one's soul, it did cultivate benevolence. Hermit and priest might proclaim woman and the love of woman as the devil's tools for the destruction of man, yet the very insistence on chastity, by raising the standard of sexual morality, contributed to raise the position of women and to reach a higher conception of family purity. St. Jerome might say: "I praise marriage because it produces me virgins," but that monastic sentiment had a greater promise of moral advance in it than the modern epigram of a Napoleon, that women are in the world to supply him with soldiers.

Priestly strategy in dealing with rude and undisciplined races required the distinction between inflexibly severe treatment of black wickedness and lenient correction of minor faults. So a classification of sins, with an elaborate system of penances for the guidance of priests at the confessional and of bishops in dealing with more conspicuous offenders, grew up during the Dark Ages. The severity of the penance imposed for the various sins reveals inversely the scale of moral values in the practical ethics of medieval Europe, and serves also to portray the manner of folk whom the Church was undertaking to subjugate. Gluttony and drunkenness, congenital Germanic frailties, were treated with mild penalties of three to forty days' fasting, and while murder might involve penance for as long as ten years, a homicide under extenuating conditions might be punished with only forty days. But on sexual sins the Church was stern, and unusually depraved offenders might be condemned to lifelong penance. Sins of ecclesiastic nonconformity and sacramental lapses or offenses received very heavy punishment. A priest's sins were doubly heinous, and double also a layman's offense if a priest or monk was the victim.

The interest of canon law in compassing men's conduct under its authority led to subtle analysis and manifold citation of various acts with directions for appropriate priestly treatment of each. Thus arose the investigation of 'cases of conscience' which was to grow into the ecclesiastic discipline of Casuistry, seeking to classify the boundless variety of human acts under an elaborate system of categories and thus to refer all conceivable instances of conduct to definite precedent, with duly stipulated treatment and appropriate penance. Medieval casuistry, satisfying the perennial desire of men for precept and rule in conduct

by reducing morality to a code, reached its more perfect formulation later, towards the close of Scholasticism. Legalism stimulates the effort to find exception and allowances under the law, and so casuistry was to yield that Jesuit equivocation and counterplay of authorities and decisions, the lashing criticism of which, during the Jansenist dispute in the seventeenth century, immortalized Pascal's *Provincial Letters.*

CHAPTER III

MEDIEVAL CULTURE AND THE SCHOLASTIC METHOD



1. The Beginnings of Scholastic Ethics

The rebuilding of the shattered culture-edifice of Italy and Gaul and the civilizing of the North were slow processes taxing the spiritual resources of the Church. They were too often retarded by the rise to power of rude and rapacious ecclesiastic barons who preferred armor to surplice and were content to fleece the flock they were meant to shepherd. But the leaven was working. Though the eighth century has been called the darkest and most barbarous in French history, it was the darkness before a new dawn. With the establishment of the Carolingian schools an organization of intelligence in Western Europe was initiated which later yielded its cultural fruits in Scholasticism. Feudalism was achieving external order in social relations, but it was monastic leadership which instituted inner reforms in the social and economic life of Western Europe under the feudal system. The sentiments of the value and dignity of the individual person were perfected: the idea of a man's rights and responsibilities in his own domains, his loyalty and the honor of his word and name, chivalrous respect for woman, courtesy and charity and hospitality.

There was as yet little systematic ethics. The operative morals of priestly ministration inclined to an organization of ideas in terms of precept and code and penance. Works of moral edification, denouncing the seven deadly sins, extolled the seven cardinal virtues, the seven gifts of the spirit, the eight beatitudes.[1] When early scholasticism undertook a systematic exposition of ethical principles, it worked within the frame of Church doctrine. The doctor of the Church was supposed to begin with indubitable dogmas, and, after his long philosophical deductions, to end with conclusions unassailably consistent with his first premises.

Philosophical criticism within the framework of orthodoxy had its hazards. Erudition or speculative zeal might and did bring the scholastic mind to moral principles which convinced reason but did not accord with the doctrines of faith. Confronted with such an antithesis, an insistent dialectician would maintain his logical ground, proceeding then to reinterpret or even to revise orthodoxy, so as to reconcile it if pos-

sible with his conclusions. Aghast at such prospects, whether in one's own thinking or in that of a Gottschalk or an Abelard, scholastic piety often sought assurance, through the surrender of intellectual self-reliance, in mystical intuition: "I love so that I may understand, *Amo ut intelligam.*" But mystical intuition and love may not always be submissively orthodox. Itself a venture of the spirit, mysticism ran the hazards of a heresy the more dangerous because not amenable to argument. Maturing scholasticism sought a way out of these difficulties. Assured of the final agreement of sound reason with orthodox faith, the more constructive leadership of medieval thought followed the course of Catholic rationalism and found its culmination in the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Between St. Augustine and the rise of Scholasticism, ethical literature consists for the most part of anthologies of passages from the Bible and the Church Fathers, with occasional comments and explanations. Only one thinker, John Scotus Erigena in the ninth century, calls for especial mention as a systematic and speculative mind.

In the philosophical system of Erigena, Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas inspire a doctrine of Christian pantheism bold in conception and of strong mystical appeal. Nature and human nature are regarded by him as the manifestation of God, the source and substance and destiny of all things. In Nature or Reality thus conceived, is evil admissible at all, and if so, how is it to be explained and justified creditably to Deity, and with sufficient recognition of human responsibility to permit a moral judgment of conduct? The Christian problem of Augustine's ethics returns to us here in a more decidedly Neoplatonic setting.

If Reality is ever and ultimately God, and if all things in their essence are from, in and to God, then evil is in principle ruled out. There can be no evil nature: a conclusion which St. Augustine had also reached in his anti-Manichean writings. How, then, is its actual presence in our finite world to be explained? Here Erigena cites human freedom as a productive activity: man's rational nature, the perfection of God-given faculties, leads the soul to the divine; but arbitrary abuse of our freedom, pride inciting to sin, corrupts the finite nature.

In the perversion of our character by evil choice, our being is frustrated, and the will bent on evil is in fact bent on its own undoing. Thus all good in us is from God, but the evil is our own, the ruin of our soul. The punishment of the sinful will is not imposed by God; it is a self-punishment. Hell is a spiritual state, the inevitably evil fruition of the free will's evil choice. The stern solemnity of this idea, which was to find its more mature and sublime version in Dante's *Inferno,* is tempered in the mind of Erigena by a conviction of final

restoration. Evil results from the abuse of man's free will, and it has its correspondingly evil harvest; but neither the evil choice nor its evil fruition are ultimately comprehended by and in God. Evil is perversion, finite; Divine Reality never recognizes it in principle and ultimately reaffirms its own essential perfection in the salvation of all.

In this doctrine, it should be observed, hell is ultimately extinguished, but not hell alone. Individual blessedness, consistently, is bound to share the course of individual torture. The final consummation in such a metaphysics as Erigena's is not a Paradise of souls redeemed but the return of the finite to infinitude, of all streams to the ocean of reality. The ascetic mysticism of Erigena's practical ethics points in the same direction: a progressive negation of the senses and of self, the overcoming and the transcendence of finite barriers, mystical union with Deity. This pantheism was bound to arouse resistance and condemnation by the Church; but its influence on medieval mysticism was manifold and real.

St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) is an outstanding personality in medieval life and thought. A Lombard aristocrat sacrificing wealth and a worldly career to pursue learning with Lanfranc and to find the peace of God in the Abbey of Bec, he represents the monastic spirit at its best. His long struggles as Archbishop of Canterbury, first with William Rufus and then with Henry I, defending papal authority against royal control of the Church in England, revealed him as an ecclesiastic statesman of deep convictions, firm strategy, and honorable tactics. He strove to purge church practice of corruption and abuses. Devout to the point of mystical absorption in his piety, he yet sought for Christian doctrine the support of rational conviction, and the ontological argument marked him as the first leader of scholasticism. His revision of the doctrine of the atonement, his treatment of the problem of free will, and his account of moral motivation are significant contributions to scholastic ethics.

According to the earlier doctrines of the atonement, Adam's fall had made all men Satan's captives; when Satan was tricked or induced to cause the death of the Son of God over whom he had no right, he had to relinquish his hold on mankind. Against this ransom theory, Anselm advocated a conception of God as in eternal justice demanding the punishment of sin. This demand was satisfied by Christ's death, freely offered. In Anselm's conception of God the stern legalistic view of the Implacable Judge combines strangely with that of the Savior's redeeming love, but nevertheless an advance is made towards a more moral version of the drama of salvation.

Evil is regarded by Anselm as negative: absence or privation of

good, due to excessive or perverted desire of that which in due measure would be good. Even Satan's ruinous sin was not in his willing to be as God, but in his willing this unduly. Man's sin and consequent misery result from his abuse of his free will. God grants to man good; man receives it, but can lose it, and cannot recover it himself if lost. To persevere in righteousness is thus man's true freedom, and sin is the abuse and frustration of his freedom. So long as will and reason remain, a man retains a certain degree of moral initiative. Anselm does not believe in the total depravity of the children of Adam. But this remnant of capacity for righteousness can only be realized and fructified by divine grace. Whether the divine grace is accorded to a man, cannot be known by us; but this ignorance does not warrant the surrender or the relaxing of moral endeavor. Men sow their fields faithfully every year, though knowing well that some years will not yield them any crop. So we work for our own salvation and for the salvation of others, trusting to God to fructify our work, nor seeking to prejudge God's design.[2]

Righteousness is essentially justice, according to St. Anselm: doing the right because it is the right; but the ultimate source and ground of good is God's perfect will. The saint's loyalty to righteousness is his loving devotion to God's will, and in his loving devotion is his vision of God's perfection, and therein his perfect bliss.

These doctrines reflect a growing emphasis on the moral elements in the life of Christian piety. The analysis of the nature of sin is pursued further by Peter Abelard (1079-1142) with dialectical skill. Sin is not merely a vice of the mind, a mental defect or infirmity analogous to blindness: stolidity, a lazy or wrathful or melancholy temper. These and others are moral qualities predisposing to sin but not themselves sinful; if controlled by reason under great provocation, they may even serve to disclose the more emphatic virtue. Nor, on the other hand, is sin to be identified with the external action, which may be harmful yet innocent, or beneficial yet guilty. The essence of sin, according to Abelard, is in the intention or motive of the agent, in the consent of an evil will to proceed against recognized divine ordinance. Sin is thus fundamentally man's contempt of God, and therefore its range and gravity are determined by man's knowledge of God.

In more strictly ethical terms, moral evil consists in proceeding contrary to one's conscience. The zealous study of the right, of God's will, and the firm intention to proceed in accordance with conscience are thus the conditions of a virtuous and godlike life. Conscience is our guide; enlightened knowledge of it, our moral reliance; loyalty to its behests, our good. Moral reformation does not consist in our recoil-

ing from the disastrous consequences of our sins, but in repentance from the inner disaster, which is our scorn of God and of conscience. Saintly perfection likewise cannot be in a prevailing desire for the blessed rewards of heaven; it must be singlehearted devotion to the right, to God's will. Indeed, some of the moral sages of classical antiquity, by their disinterested loyalty to their best conscience, manifested a higher moral perfection than many a Christian pursuer of Divine blessings.

Equally radical is Abelard in his reinterpretation of Christ's death as instrumental in our salvation. According to his doctrine of the atonement, neither Satan was paid, nor God's justice satisfied on Calvary: but the Savior's life of love found in his death its culmination. It redeems men by moving their hearts to a Christian love that shames sinful disloyalty to God, overcomes evil propensities, enlightens our conscience, confirms our devotion.

Abelard's concentration on conscience,—the betrayal of it in sin, the pure devotion to it in virtue, its enlightenment as a condition of moral perfection,—involved by implication a negligence of externalities, an emphasis on inner conviction and motive. He did not reject authority, but would assure himself of it by good logic. His reliance was on reason. These features of his doctrine would have proved more influential in advancing medieval ethics, had Abelard been able to gain the confidence and the respect of his age as a moral guide. It is here that his own conduct betrayed him. In the judgment of his contemporaries, the lover of Heloise, faithless to his religious vows, was not a fit teacher of virtue. Whether or not he deserved all the censure of his opponents, certainly the personal ignominy to which they brought him cast his doctrines into disrepute, caused his resolute dialectic to be distrusted, and so retarded the progress of critical ethics.

A confirmed foe of Abelard, of what he was and of what he represented, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153) opposed the dialectic of the rationalist with the mystic perfection of Christian love. This mysticism is not metaphysical absorption in the Absolute, but the utter self-sinking in the Love that passeth understanding. St. Bernard points out a double course to perfection, Contemplation and Love, leading man beyond things human to the divine presence. St. Bernard's mystical exaltation of love is especially revealed in his eighty-six sermons on the *Song of Songs.* But repeatedly in his *Letters* we see his genius for ascetic poetry expressing the longing and the contemplative ecstasy of the saint in the language of sensuous passion and rapture. The mood and the expression of it characterizes medieval experiences. This per-

fect fusion of human and divine devotion breathes from Filippino Lippi's picture, "The Apparition of the Virgin to St. Bernard," at the Badia in Florence. This union of love and contemplation is exalted by Dante in the third canticle of the *Divine Comedy:* Beatrice and St. Bernard leading the poet through the blessed heavens to the intimate presence of God.

Socrates' speech in Plato's *Symposium* records a sublime vision of the steps in the gradation of love which lead to perfection. St. Bernard likewise surveys the heavenly ladder. From common self-seeking love, man rises to a love of God which is motivated by the sense of grievous need and a hope of divine succour and guidance. Higher rises the soul as it comes to love God for his perfection and divine love. But the apogee of Christian love is reached when in mystic ecstasy the soul is utterly rapt in devotion to God, lost to itself and one with the divine.

The mysticism of St. Bernard is not morally inactive. To an assembly of abbots at Soissons he writes: There is no moral standing still; you either ascend or descend: "It may be held as certain that the man is not good at all who does not wish to be better." [3] St. Bernard's eyes seek the heavenly vision, but they are not turned aside from the daily duties in which our station on earth involves us. Repeatedly in his *Letters* he urges monks and abbots not to abandon their posts and assumed tasks in order to enter upon a pilgrimage or a life of solitude. His own life-career included monastic administration, spiritual counsel, direction of ecclesiastic policy, promotion of the Second Crusade. His leadership in the Cistercian order and his position of dominant influence in the Church were due to his personal character in which the Middle Ages recognized the ideal of Christian piety. His was no mastery in dialectic, and he reflected rather than led the thought of his age. But in moral power and spiritual intensity he dominated. Thus personally as well as in method he was the antithesis of Abelard whom he opposed and crushed.

But in the silencing of Abelard the spirit of rationalism in Europe was not silenced, nor was the scholastic mind convinced that dialectic was necessarily heretical or disruptive of faith. More constructive or more conciliating thought endeavored to find a possible harmony of reason and faith, and particularly in the field of morals criticism and pious devotion sought a common path to truth. A century after St. Bernard, as the Christian spirit entered and inhabited the body of Aristotelian doctrine, rational scholastic ethics reached its maturity in the system of St. Thomas Aquinas.

2. *The Christian Aristotelianism of St. Thomas Aquinas*

The direct knowledge of Greek philosophy which had characterized the Patristic theologians lapsed during the intellectual twilight of the Dark Ages. The earlier Scholastics knew St. Augustine and the other Church Fathers but had very little direct mastery of Plato or Aristotle. In fact it required the coöperation of Arab, Moor, and Jew to bring Aristotle's writings to the Christian West, and the initial reaction of the Church was one of very natural suspicion. Here were Jewish accounts of Arabian commentaries on Aristotle, or translations of his works at second or third hand, Latin versions of Arabic translations from the Greek or Syriac that had been prepared originally for Bagdad caliphs by Nestorian heretics. All this was decidedly unchristian on the face of it, and some interpretations of Aristotle's doctrine, notably the Commentary of Averroës of Cordova (1126-1198) with its denial of personal immortality, were plain heresy calling for firm resistance.

The thirteenth century was the century of Aristotle's victory in Catholic Europe, but it was a hard-won victory, contested all along the line. In 1209 the Paris provincial council forbade the public or private reading of Aristotle's natural philosophy and of commentaries on it; in 1215 this prohibition, and of *Metaphysics* also, was reaffirmed by the University of Paris. In 1231 Pope Gregory IX ordered that Aristotle's works on nature be purged of their errors before being used. An Aristotle acceptable to orthodoxy was thus on his way, but not at all readily admitted. Though both the physics and the metaphysics of Aristotle were parts of the Paris curriculum in 1254, Pope Urban IV opposed Aristotelianism in 1263, because of heretical Averroist interpretations. In 1266 Thomas Aquinas had to return to Paris to defend the Christian version of the Aristotelian philosophy which he and Albert the Great had achieved, against the attacks of Averroists like Siger of Brabant and against influential theologians and ecclesiastics to whom Thomas and Siger and Averroës and Aristotle were all dangerous to orthodoxy. The struggle, then, was arduous, but the final victory was thorough. Though eminent Franciscans contributed to it, as Alexander of Hales and St. Bonaventura, this victory was mainly a Dominican achievement, and more particularly the work of Albert the Great whose encyclopedic mind collected and surveyed the Aristotelian ideas, and of St. Thomas Aquinas who organized them into a system, Aristotelian in its philosophical principles, Christian in its directing spirit, and expressed in the language of Catholic orthodoxy.

The Dominican Aristotelianism in the field of morals is not to be interpreted as entirely setting aside the Augustinian Platonism which

characterized the earlier scholastic tradition. The change was rather a shift of emphasis. St. Thomas is not unaffected by the Augustinian saintly wistfulness in this mortal world, nor is he any less keenly aware than St. Augustine of the woeful state of sinful man. But even while declaring our insufficiency and our dire need of divine grace, St. Thomas is more concerned to reveal the blessed life as the normal fruition of human nature. Virtue is arduous, not wholly within our unaided reach, but it is thoroughly natural to man, the true fulfillment of our rational character. The maintenance of these two strains of ideas in a real synthesis may be regarded as the main undertaking of the Thomistic ethics; we need not be surprised if it should tax the dialectic of the Angelic Doctor.

The method of St. Thomas is one of rational analysis, sustained by argument, appealing to authority, culminating in faith. Philosophy is *ancilla theologiae*, handmaid of theology, in the sense of serving it and leading to it. Reason is reliable but insufficient: as far as it goes, it proceeds in the right direction, but it does not take us the whole way; for the completion of our spiritual journey we need the higher guidance of faith. Even so, in the *Divine Comedy*, Virgil with sage counsel leads the poet through the chasms and caverns of hell and up the steep mount of purgatory, but at the gates of paradise resigns his charge to more saintly guidance.

Important alike in his relation to St. Thomas and in his influence on thirteenth century thought and ideals is Albert the Great (1193-1280), a Swabian of the noble house of Bollstädt who became the acknowledged encyclopedic mind of his day, *Doctor Universalis*. In his close association with Aquinas, in Cologne and in Paris, Albert disclosed an Aristotelian breadth of survey and mastery. This treasury of investigation and vast prospect was reduced to orthodox order, organized and perfected by the systematic reflection of Aquinas. Albert was enough of an Aristotelian to be more than a mere disciple. What one could learn from Aristotle was knowledge and likewise the right method of pursuing and attaining it: analysis and experiment, investigation of nature and logical reflection. With his Aristotelian methods Albert covered a vast range of inquiry in which he was reputed medieval authority: in logic, metaphysics, cosmology, to be sure, but also in physics, astronomy, geography, mineralogy, alchemy, botany, zoölogy, physiology, psychology, medicine. This mere catalogue of Albert's intellectual proficiencies indicates the working of the Aristotelian leaven in him, but suggests also the turn which medieval Aristotelianism was likely to take in other more definitely naturalistic minds. With Albert the medieval Church undertook to give Europe

universal learning. But some churchmen might hesitate before this task and draw back, professing to choose with Mary the better part of divine instruction: whereupon growing numbers of a more secularly minded generation would turn to do the humbler but necessary work of Martha.

In the *Summa theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) the essential scholastic enterprise, the harmony of reason and faith, finds its highest expression. We can deal only with the ethical portions of St. Thomas' vast treatise. If we read them side by side with the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle, we may realize how much, but also how little, the Greek ideal of human life had in common with the medieval-scholastic. No such comparison can be attempted within our small compass, but it must be at least suggested, for then we can understand better alike the tremendous significance of Thomist rationalism in the ethical thought and life of the Church, and likewise the resistance to it, the parting of the ways, with new and hazardous alternatives: mystical, Scotist, nominalist and naturalist, and these last ever more definitely worldly.

St. Thomas follows Aristotle in expounding a teleological ethics, but in a theological version. There is something mystical in the light of day as it is filtered through the celestial blue of Chartres Cathedral. So the ethics of St. Thomas is the rationalistic naturalism of Aristotle, but seen through a stained glass window. In the Prologue to the Second Part of the *Summa theologica* he declared that, having treated of God the Exemplar, he turns to consider man the image of God, man the free author of his acts. The chief topics of Thomist ethics are, first, the fruition of human character, man's ultimate end; second, the acts or things which advance or frustrate this perfect fruition. Reason, St. Thomas agrees with Aristotle, is man's distinctive capacity: in the perfect direction of our life by reason consists the life of excellence. Man has, not merely natural impulses, but a rational, responsible determination of will. Conscious of his destiny as a child of God, he can recognize the divine ideal as the supreme law and good of his being. Just as the highest knowledge is knowledge of God, so the highest perfection is in man's active recognition and espousal of the divine order. Aristotle's happiness or well-being has here become beatitude; his philosophic life, the saintly vision of the Divine.[4]

In the realization of this high destiny, by free choice in accordance with rational counsel, man can develop capacities into habits, and his will may become confirmed in the godlike life. But the corruption of Adam is in us; by perversity of will we may turn away from the loyal membership in the divine order, and in grievous betrayal of our high

calling proceed to our utter ruin. This is sin, turning from the imperishable good to goods that perish. What we turn to, in our perversion, determines the particular sin to which we yield, but the basic evil is always in the initial inconstancy and misdirection.[5] Thus understanding the essential nature of sin, disloyalty to God and to our own highest nature, we are confirmed in our knowledge of virtue: the loyal pursuit and attainment of our ultimate end, the vision of God. The particular virtues exemplify this godlike life in detail.

Sin is unnatural, that is, contrary to our truest nature, yet man is full of sin. The desire for the perfect life in God is natural to man's intelligence, but only by divine grace can this desire find its blessed satisfaction. We can see here, not only philosophical and theological motives sharing in the direction of the Thomist ethics, but also Augustine contending with Aristotle in St. Thomas' account of man's moral capacity. To our intelligence the fundamental conviction of conscience is affirmed as a law: we should choose the good and eschew evil; but rational activity is required, to develop and to apply this first principle in actual and various conduct, to habituate the will in manifold virtue. The initial endowment and the culmination are both gifts of God. Man, made in the image of God, needs divine guidance and grace to live in the light of his Divine exemplar.

St. Thomas' classification and treatment of the virtues reveals a resolute synthesis of Aristotelian naturalism and Christian piety. Aristotelian in the main is his account of the natural virtues, attainable by us through rational habituation of the will: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance. But higher than these cardinal virtues and than the intellectual virtues of the soul, are the theological virtues: faith, hope and Christian love, *caritas*. The former cardinal virtues, attainable by us in our natural life and within the grasp of human reason, nourish the spirit for its loftier aspiration. The latter, theological virtues, have God for their object and are granted to us by the grace of God.[6] Likewise the intellectual excellences of the soul, scientific deduction, mastery of principle, rational wisdom, prepare for, but are also transcended in the sublime certainties of faith. The attainment of virtue by rational mastery is the natural preparation of the soul for the beatitudes of Christian piety. In all his pursuit of reason St. Thomas never wavered in his ultimate devotion. Love of God remained his final aim and motive. Precisely this synthesis, or else alternation, of a naturalistic and a theological treatment, while it raises systematic difficulties in the Thomist ethics and leaves perhaps a final tone of indecision, yet reveals the spirit of thirteenth century Christian thought at its best. Its duality of motive and its almost divided loyalty were but the obverse of its

resolute demand for spiritual unity, without neglect of the natural life of active understanding and rational mastery, but also without surrender of 'the better part.'

Only the briefest notice is possible here of the detailed treatment of the particular virtues in the vast systematic survey of St. Thomas. The life of perfect Christian love is one of active but joyous benevolence, without ill will and also without despondency or weariness. Justice, the virtue of yielding all persons or things their due, whether in distribution of interest, in sharing of goods, or in correction of injuries, or in other dealings with our fellowmen, reveals in its treatment the Aristotelian influence but also a significantly expanded range of meaning and application. Connected with justice by St. Thomas are the virtues of religious devotion, adoration, piety, gratitude, obedience, liberality, and the contrary vices. Fortitude and temperance are cardinal virtues concerned with the control of our irascible and concupiscible passions. St. Thomas' treatment of fortitude follows the example of Patristic ethics in translating an essentially active virtue, courage, into firm endurance, resisting rather than aggressive: humbled ambition and vainglory, persevering and longsuffering patience, unflinching martyrdom. Temperance is mastery of our lusts and appetites, as fortitude is resistance to fears and incursions. Here again the Aristotelian positive estimate of reasonably moderate enjoyment is replaced by an emphasis on manifold abstinence: strict sobriety, humility, chastity, the monastic virtues.

As reason leads but also bows to faith, and the moral virtues to the theological, so in the social organization of human life civil-political authority is ancillary to the spiritual-ecclesiastic. St. Thomas agrees with Aristotle that man is by nature social and ordained for membership in a social order: an affirmation faced with the challenge of the monastic ideal of blessed solitude with God. The varieties of government in their Aristotelian classification are distinguished, without emphatic advocacy of any one kind, though the general preference for monarchical rule is significant. Tyrannical abuse of power is condemned, and to the resistance of it by the power of law and the people's will is added the restraining influence of the Church, ever concerned for the welfare of men. Where a ruler's oppression defeats the purposes of government, and where ambition or greed sets the policy of the state in opposition to the highest spiritual interests of the people, the superior authority of the Church comes to the aid of men, by excommunicating the apostate ruler and releasing his subjects from loyalty and obedience to him. In social as in individual life, we are to render to each interest or claim in life its due response, subordinating the lower loyalty to the higher, and of all our loves and devotions reserving the

highest for the Highest. In the political thought of St. Thomas ecclesiastic authority prevails over the secular because every man has inalienable rights which the Church is bound to cherish and defend. Thirteenth century thinking was actively aware of these rights: by a coincidence, the year of the founding of the Dominican order, 1215, is also the year of the Magna Charta.

3. Dante's Divine Comedy

In the Thomist philosophy of life the scholastic method found its fruition. It met with criticism; active opposition to it, as we shall see presently, served to unsettle and then to discredit scholasticism. This Christian Aristotelianism was not Christian enough for those of more ecstatic piety, nor Aristotelian enough for minds of a more definitely secular and naturalistic temper. But it did realize the aspirations of the scholastic mind: the subordination of reason to faith, but also the active support of faith by reason, the rational synthesis of the secular and the spiritual life. To this triumph of thinking piety the Church gave its supreme stamp of approval in the canonization of the Angelic Doctor, who was made saint within fifty years after his death. In time his festival came to be ranked officially with those of St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory, and the art of later days was to glorify him as the fount of Christian teaching. So Benozzo Gozzoli portrayed him seated in the seat of Christian instruction, with ancient wisdom represented by Aristotle standing at his right and Plato at his left, and turbaned Averroës lying prostrate under his feet; an upper panel revealed Thomas' divine inspiration, and a lower panel of a conclave, his influence on the Church.

The divine wisdom of life eternal as the high destiny of man, of which St. Thomas gave an intellectual statement, found a complete human utterance in the great poem of Dante (1265-1321) whose description as "Aquinas in verse" and as "the voice of ten silent centuries" indicates his intellectual kinships but also his supreme position as the poet of Christian-medieval civilization. Dante does not undertake a systematic ethics, but his Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise disclose architectonic order; the direction of the universe by rational necessity is proclaimed on the very gates of Hell:

> Justice my maker moved who rules above;
> There came unto my making power divine,
> Wisdom preëminent and primal love.[7]

Theologians had been content to vindicate God's damnation of the evil-doer as just. But Dante's account in the *Inferno* is simpler and deeper: Hell is what the sinner *chooses;* his damnation is the evil frui-

tion of sin itself, its fullest self-disclosure, spiritual frustration and ruin. In the *Inferno* we see, not the punishment of the lustful or the murderer or the traitor; we see lust itself, or murder, or treachery; the sinful soul itself is disclosed to our view, and its character is its punishment.

For sin is essentially man's rejection of his high destiny. Man was not made

> to live like unto brutes,
> But to strive after what is good and true.[8]

Subordinated thus to rational devotion and love of God, all desires for earthly goods and pleasures are to find their place, a low one, in the well-ordered Christian life. But impulses and greeds may sweep a man to excessive passion for things unstable and depraved. This is Incontinence, and in the first four circles of hell we find the souls that have chosen to waste themselves in lust, in gluttony, in avarice and prodigality, in anger. More grievous is the soul's ruin when the passions, scorning intelligence, turn against the end of love. The love of the incontinent is unworthy because irrational, but here love is wholly rejected. This is the manifold sin of Violence, and in the three circles of a lower abyss in Hell it finds its ruinous harvest. Here are the murderers, robbers, tyrants, violent against the persons and possessions of others; here are suicides, violent against themselves; here the blasphemers, sodomites, usurers, violent against God, nature, art. More deeply still sinks the soul when intelligence itself is maliciously used to bedevil and frustrate love. This is Fraud, and it is triply damned in the third division of Hell: Fraud Simple or Deceit, in the ten evil pouches of the Malebolge, for seducers, panderers, flatterers, simoniacs, soothsayers, barterers, hypocrites, thieves, evil counsellors, schismatics and scandalmongers, falsifiers; or Treachery, the blackest sin for Dante, damned in the very pit of Hell, with Judas, Brutus and Cassius writhing in the three jaws of Satan.

This is Hell, ruinous abandonment of rational devotion and love of God. What, then, is the path to salvation? Remorse and repentance are the first steps to it. God himself cannot save a man against his will; but although in repentance man renounces malice, he is not thereby wholly reclaimed. Much cleansing is needed to erase the stains of sin and to attain purity and saintliness. This work of spiritual reclamation Dante traced in the second canticle of his poem. In the *Purgatorio* the repentant souls are shown denying persistently the sins which had wrought their ruin. This manifold expiation is portrayed with a mar-

velous insight which makes the *Purgatorio*, if less awesome than the *Inferno* or less sublime than the *Paradiso*, yet the most human part of the *Divine Comedy*. While the sinners are purged of their sins, the heavenly vision of the opposite virtues is before them. But heaven would not be heaven to them until their expiation has been completed. When the purged soul is at last spotless and sanctified, it has no more remorse or sense of conflict; in free outpouring it gives itself to God, and this utter bestowal is its blessedness and its supreme joy.

The *Paradiso* is the poem of Christian blessedness, and it is not the blessedness of a levelled perfection. Just as in hell abyss below abyss disclosed the downfall of the sinful soul, so Dante's paradise reveals the realm of perfection as a hierarchy, and blessedness itself as a gradation. Each saintly soul in paradise is as perfect and as blessed as it can be, but there is a varying range of spiritual capacities and corresponding achievement; the perfection and the blessedness of some souls in paradise are more sublime than those of others. There is a lingering touch of the earthly in the bliss of the saints in the three lower heavens. Above the wise theologians, in the heaven of the sun, are the brave soldiers for the faith, in the fifth heaven, of Mars; higher than the pious soldiers and crusaders are the righteous Christian rulers; but still higher, in the seventh heaven, are the saintly mystics, the supreme devotees of Christian ecstasy. This finally prevailing note of mystical contemplation in Dante is significant. In the portrayal of sin, of the soul's reclaiming, of virtue, the rightful dominion of intelligence is emphasized. Vice has been disclosed as the frustration of natural capacities, and virtue as man's spiritual fruition. The heavenly exaltation of Beatrice has revealed the best of our human nature as drawing the soul to God, human perfection reaching towards the divine. But in the end it is not St. Thomas but mystical St. Bernard who takes Dante's hand, to lead him to the highest vision of God. Rational analysis and demonstration yield to mystical intuition; order and subordination of lower to higher, all intelligent and articulate, are sublimated in a loving, unquestioning, all-certain pervasion of the soul by God: as in Dante's vision of the circular Divine River of Light, in which the saintly souls are flaming sparks.

4. Mysticism and Moral Activity

Dante's mysticism is the final aspiring gesture of an essentially rational spirit. St. Thomas himself, on his deathbed, asked the monks of Fossanuova to read to him the *Song of Songs*, on which St. Bernard had written eighty-six mystical sermons. But more consistently mystical in their reliance on non-intellectual faculties and in their exaltation of

the heart over the head were the Franciscans, who shared with the Dominican theologians the leadership of thirteenth and fourteenth century culture.

There is no question of radical opposition between the two great monastic orders. The Franciscan doctors were not deficient thinkers. St. Bonaventura was intellectually a worthy contemporary of St. Thomas; Roger Bacon has been called the first man of science in the modern sense; not without reason was Duns Scotus styled the Subtle Doctor; even in the spread of Aristotelianism, the first well-informed schoolman was a Franciscan, the Irrefragable Doctor, Alexander of Hales. The difference between Franciscan and Dominican was one of emphasis. In the sermons of St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) God marvellously spoke to the souls of men without the mediation of learning or argument, a language of the spirit which even the birds could understand. When St. Francis, confronted in court by his irate father for squandering the family estate in charities, stripped himself naked before the judge and cast his clothes at his parent, declaring himself thenceforth son of God alone, his act was a symbol of the order of Christian life which he was to inaugurate. It was to be a stripping of externalities: of outward possessions and pomp, to be sure, but also of all else that stood between the naked soul of man and God in Christ. Intellection, argument, doctrine, these were also vestures. The Franciscan "minstrels of God" did not argue, they sang their Christianity, poor and free in their flight to God as the birds of the air. "By the impulse of his unexampled devotion," St. Bonaventura writes of St. Francis, "he tasted that fountain of goodness that streameth forth, as in rivulets, in every created thing, and he perceived as it were an heavenly harmony in the concord of the virtues and actions granted unto them by God." [9]

Needless to say, this initial attitude was increasingly difficult to maintain as the Franciscan order grew in power and expanded its range of activities. But though St. Francis was disappointed in his endeavor to keep his brothers to their early consecration, some of the pristine spirit did remain. The Franciscan may rise in the ecclesiatic hierarchy, but his final aim would still be eremite communion with God. He may reason out a theological system, but his sustaining hope would still be for mystical rather than reflective assurance: not seeing as in a glass darkly, but face to face. The theology of St. Bonaventura (1221-1274) is concerned to trace the rise of the soul from the lower to the higher illumination, from the light of philosophical understanding to the higher light of divine grace which alone reveals saving truth, from the lower partial perfection of the soul in the life of virtue to the

higher and complete blessedness of ecstatic piety. "If thou askest how may these things be, interrogate grace and not doctrine, desire and not knowledge, the groaning of prayer rather than study, the spouse rather than the teacher, God and not man, mist rather than clarity, not light but fire all aflame and bearing on to God by devotion and glowing affection." [10]

To this longing for a mystical union with God both intellectual and moral effort are subordinated, and there is a corresponding depreciation of the individual and all his concerns. Disdain for self has its moral implications; it accentuates the condemnation of selfishness in any form. St. Bonaventura writes in the first chapter of his *Life of St. Francis:* "The warfare of Christ is to be begun by victory over self." This insistence on suppression of self was to become a major principle of mystical thought and practice. Denial of all this finite and changing world of individuality, effacement of me and thee, of knowledge, effort, endeavor; surrender of the soul, absorption and oneness in God: this utter yielding is especially characteristic of the German mystics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the *Theologia Germanica* there is an almost Buddhist conviction that egoism is the root of all error and all evil. "So long as a man clingeth to the elements and fragments of this world (and above all to himself), . . . he is deceived and blinded. . . . Be simply and wholly bereft of Self. . . . Put off thine will and there will be no hell. . . . Of all things that are, nothing is forbidden and nothing is contrary to God but one thing only: that is, Self-will." [11]

Meister Eckehart (or Eckhart) (1260-1327) works out the speculative premises and the practical implications of this mystical self-transcendence with Dominican thoroughness. God is the all in all of reality, the Godhead manifest in the Trinity; only as syllables of the divine Word are we real at all. The more attached we are to ourselves, to our own desires and projects, the more futile and evil is our life, because wedded to unreality. But as we die to ourselves we come to life in Christ: as we are emptied of finitude, we become one with the Divine plenitude of being. Thus Christian humility and self-effacement are our truest fulfillment. In such a life of selfless bliss the divine is recognized, and in this oneness with God (nor should we say any more, *our* oneness), there is naught besides in the world. This is the life of following God, in holy poverty, stripped of all finite attachment, stripped of oneself, in the silent desert of absorption.

This, Meister Eckehart insists, is literally the Christlike life. Even so was Christ on earth ever one with God. In such a life, there being no attachment to anything, there is no want nor regret nor sorrow; nor is

there any concern for things done or left undone, since it is not in doing or in leaving undone that true holiness consists, but only in the true selfless holiness are all deeds justified. If there is any ulterior purpose in my action, be it done for the rewards of paradise or for the glory of God or for any other end whatever, so long as I set before myself ends to myself, I am not on the right path. Only when I am so utterly one with God that I no longer will, that I no longer say *I* am one with God, only in this extinguishment of myself is all good and all perfection realized. How then is the soul that has perceived this truth, how is it to be distracted or diverted from the true path by any plan of action? Justice, charity, saintly austerities are well enough, yet the main part of redemption is redemption from self, the release of the soul to God.

The heterodox implications of this Christian pantheism need not concern us here: the Church that had condemned Erigena condemned Eckehart. But clearly, in this concentration on mystical absorption, there was depreciation of intellectual and moral activity. Inquiry and conduct were here both unavailing. As the practical effort of the mystic was to culminate in the transcending of all effort, so Eckehart's persistent reasoning was but the grasping of the truth that lifts us above and beyond all reasoning. In fourteenth century Germany this mystical zeal led some heretical sects to moral laxity. In Lombardy and in Provence the Cathari or Pure Ones practiced a saintliness that did not always recognize the moral restraints acknowledged by more ordinary men. The *perfecti* in their holiness were above sin and beyond the duties and hazards of normal human conduct. Even when it did not lead to aberration, this mystical piety was impatient of principles or order; even when it did not corrupt or undermine morality, it cultivated a holy indifference to systematic ethical inquiry. So Thomas à Kempis writes in his *Imitation of Christ:* "I had rather feel compunction than understand the definition of it." [12]

5. *The Undermining of Scholasticism*

Thomas had sought a synthesis of philosophy and theology; but, though subordinating reason to faith, had he not also admitted in his faith a reliance on rational necessity? This reliance was challenged by Duns Scotus (1265 or 1275-1308). Reason is not entitled to any such primacy, for ultimately it neither prevails nor avails. For human problems it may serve, but it is unequal to dealing with divine themes. Reason yields no conclusive demonstration of God's existence; in fact, there is nothing really worth proving in theology that reason can prove.

More radically now Duns Scotus proceeds to subordinate reason to

will. To draw certain conclusions regarding God's will as deducible necessarily from God's perfection, is sheer presumption. Who are we thus to limit God's will, to argue with assurance what God is bound to do or not to do? All this manner of thinking, according to Scotus, proceeds from an initial and fatal misdirection. Even in our nature the will is a nobler faculty than reason, right decision than correct inference. Righteousness is active devotion to God rather than reasoned deduction and a system of doctrine. How, then, are we to subject God's will to rules of reason? It is not to be argued about at all; it is free and ultimate. This primacy of will is a first principle of Scotism. Perfect Creative Will is the author of all order, itself freely determining both that things be and what they should be. All nature is as it is because God has so willed it. We must believe that God's will constitutes perfect reason; we cannot presume to argue that certain reasons necessarily motivate God's will.

This is monarchical authoritarianism in theology, in cosmology, in ethics. It is the last of these that particularly interests us here. If all things are as they are, in nature and in human nature, because God so wills them, if our science is our knowledge of the divine statutes in nature, shall we also say that nothing is good or evil essentially, that moral standards, principles and distinctions rest ultimately on divine affirmation alone, that God's will, by a counter-edict, could have established, or can establish, radically opposite moral principles? Duns Scotus did not push his voluntarism to all these unsettling conclusions in ethics, as his pupil William of Occam (died 1349) explicitly did. But this is the kind of ethics to which the basic doctrine of Scotism is entitled, not one in terms of natural end and realization of character and rational devotion, which Duns Scotus sometimes expounded but which we can learn better and less ambiguously out of St. Thomas. For in fundamental Scotist terms, to reason out the essentially prevailing worthiness of justice over injustice, and thence to infer that God is necessarily just, is to subject God's perfection to the standards of our reason. This procedure would then be the reverse of right: our reason should take its first principles from God's unsearchable will. God's will decrees for justice: therefore alone is justice good and worthy of prevailing.

The ten commandments are not divine conclusions in morals but God's self-sanctioned edicts. The commandments concerning our relation to our Creator are, of course, inevitably implied in the very act of creation, but it is otherwise with the commandments directing our conduct towards each other. These commandments are imperative in that God has actually ordained the existent human order, but there is

nothing absolutely necessary about them. God could have willed the creation of a humanity in which private property would not have obtained at all, and therefore no theft; in which unstable or quite fortuitous marriage would have been appropriate, or even random destruction of man by man in the then different human economy. Divine command might even now, as it did in the days of the patriarchs, set aside the more usual legislation, and then there could be no reasoned protest of man against God, but only pious obedience to the order, which would be constituted right by God's will. All the virtues are thus reduced to one: implicit obedience to God's laws. True ethical inquiry is not concerned with the question, What is good? That question is settled: Good is what God decrees. We are concerned to know only, what God's will is; and this also God has revealed to us, in his Word and through his Church.

In political doctrine the same insistence on initial and determining fiat would lead to similar conclusions. There are no inherent natural rights, nor a rationally necessary social contract. All political order is by ordinance. There need be no slavery in the state; but, if slavery is established, then the slave has no inalienable rights against his lord. All privilege is by grant, and no rights are vested. Does this Scotist exaltation of political absolutism reflect and respond to the growing centralization of royal power, especially in France, as some students of Scotism surmise? [13] The subjection of feudal autonomies and prerogatives to the rising might of Philip the Fair commanded the attention of men in the early fourteenth century. What were vested rights before this prevailing will which affirmed itself as pope, king, and emperor in one person, resisting and humiliating papal counter-claims, securing its own Pope, settling him in Babylonish captivity in Avignon, with a royal castle across the Rhone from the papal palace, to maintain the sovereign's dominion? The policy of Philip the Fair was thus anticipating the proud words in which, three centuries later, Louis the Fourteenth was to sum up absolutism, "I am the state, *L'État c'est moi.*" So the doctrine of Duns Scotus, though in pious theological pronouncement implied certain ethical theses which, in a decidedly secular statement were to shock British and Continental thought in the century of the Grand Monarch, as Thomas Hobbes was to advocate them in his *Leviathan:* right and wrong are what the sovereign power makes them by its commands and prohibitions.

In various ways the Scotist attack on the philosophy of St. Thomas actually served to undermine that which Duns Scotus himself had intended to support and strengthen: theological authority. He had humbled the reason of Thomist Aristotelianism in order to exalt faith

The sublime truths of theology could not be proved, and, for Scotus, they needed no proof. But after him came others who took him at his word, that the truths of faith do not admit of proof, but who unlike him were interested in what does admit of investigation and of proof. So it was that, by his divorce of philosophy and theology, which the Aristotelians had sought to unite, Scotus actually undermined the whole structure of scholasticism and of medieval culture. Henceforth men would be turning from theology to philosophy and science and, leaving religion to faith, would claim for their study of nature the autonomy of reason and freedom of critical inquiry.

Likewise in ethics and social philosophy, as has already been indicated, the Scotist doctrine led where its author would scarcely have followed to the end. In expounding it, Duns was piously espousing the sovereign will of God as the final sanction in morals: this is righteousness, to do His commandments! But the ambiguity in which ethics was thus involved, as to whether the 'good' was really good for God, led to an insidious relativism. As Occam explicitly maintained, the difference between good and evil being due to divine ordinance, there is no good or evil inherently. This relativism could be entertained in the pious vesture of obedience to Divine authority, but not in that vesture only. In political and social theory the inference that might is right would remain as an ever-luring alternative, and in practice the denial of fundamental principles would lead to unprincipled living. The revival of nominalism, with its concentration on the particular data of experience, as it cited the varieties of authority and law, in conformity to which in various states men ordered their lives, would suggest and even advocate the inference that morals are purely conventional. As is the lawmaker so is the law and so is the obligation. What was wrong at Avignon might well be right in Rome, or if not in Rome then somewhere else. A troubled subject might then seek a more suitable lord, if only he could find him. So William of Occam, imprisoned as a heretic by a pope in Avignon, made his escape to Munich, to do his part under the scepter of Louis of Bavaria, who was leading in the struggle with papal power which Occam was also promoting. Occam's words to his new lord are significant of his vigorous spirit and tenacity of personal convictions, but do they not also disclose the malleability which standards and principles were already assuming in many minds? —"You will defend me with your sword, I shall defend you with my pen."

Thus sapped from without and from within, the scholastic structure was collapsing. Medieval thought had undertaken to achieve within the frame of orthodoxy an encyclopedic survey of God, of nature and of

human nature, a rounded philosophy of life. Launched on its enterprise, scholasticism reached its fruition of reason in the Thomist philosophy. But though the Church with keen insight sealed with its approval this achievement and canonized Thomas Aquinas, the Aristotelian synthesis of reason and faith met with manifold resistance, some of which, as we have seen, served to widen the cleavage between theology and science. Thirteenth century Aristotelianism itself, however, while it added a new and more reasonable version of orthodoxy, also introduced a new spirit of rationality, of confidence in reason, which was bound, as the range of its problems expanded and also shifted, to lead to the arousal of new interests and the raising of new issues. So both the manifold opposition to Thomism and Thomism itself were preparing the way for a changed outlook in thought and for a new order of life.

CHAPTER IV

THE RENAISSANCE: REVOLT AGAINST AUTHORITY



1. The Secularism of the Renaissance

The Renaissance was the reawakening of the European mind to the right and to the opportunities of undogmatic thinking, after the long centuries of ecclesiastic authoritarianism. It was also a renewal in the hearts of men of a zest for living here and now, a new interest in the present scene, a frank and avid worldliness. Critical on principle, the Renaissance was a challenge to the established sanctions of orthodoxy. Though it espoused new models, it did not mean to follow any models: the new discipleship was only incidental to the pioneering venture. The passion for all things Greek which took possession of the early Renaissance was itself a part of the exploration and the discovery. The arousal of old Greek ways of thought, objective, critical, worldly, led the modern mind, beyond a merely Greek revival, to attack its own problems in its own way.

In its resistance to ecclesiastic tradition, the new movement in thought was bound to appear in its initial phase prevailingly negative. Manifold demolition was needed to clear the ground for new construction. Dogmatic authority had to be probed, exposed, discredited. This opposition was not meant to be hostile to religion or to the Church. Sectarian reformer or philosopher might well believe that they were but clearing good doctrine of some prevailing errors. Only gradually after attack and counter-attack were the lines of combat drawn more definitely and hostility openly acknowledged.

We have noted already the disruptive effect of mysticism and Scotism on reasoned orthodoxy. The emphasized cleavage between reason and faith led increasing numbers of men to the independent pursuit of knowledge. But that real knowledge is to be had and that it is from a study of the facts and not only by inference from dogma, was maintained even in the thirteenth century, by Roger Bacon (1214-1294) who in many ways anticipated by over three hundred years his better-known namesake. Roger Bacon looked beyond church-doctrine to the great body of nature as his source of knowledge. In ethics also he would consult the facts of life and men's actual judgments about con-

duct. Morality concerns our threefold task in life: how rightly and most perfectly to fulfil our duties to God, to ourselves, and to our fellowmen. What is of interest here is not so much the elaborated ethical theory but the broader human outlook. Just as the direct study of nature is to unlock her manifold secrets and lead to marvelous inventions—horseless carriages, flying machines—so by the scientific investigation of human conduct men can gain clearer insight and learn greater self-mastery and more perfect virtue.

The introduction of Aristotelian ideas and the reinterpretation of them, as we have already noted, enabled scholasticism to achieve its greatest system of philosophy and theology. The vast expansion of the classical library made available for the later middle ages by the spreading knowledge of Greek, by the increasing circulation of works of classical philosophy and literature in manuscript, and after the middle of the fifteenth century also in printed form, served to present new alternatives to the mind, new ways of thought and practice, new worlds to explore and to conquer. To the more cautious and loyally orthodox, the new learning, Platonic, Neoplatonic, or Stoic, promised a philosophy more in accord with Christian truth than the Aristotelian. But in other more secular minds the motive was one of uncommitted inquiry, a pursuit of truth irrespective of its harmony with traditional authority. The passion for the new learning and the zeal for direct investigation of nature, erudition and experiment, stimulated each other. The great world of nature and its unvanquished mysteries, which odd medieval minds had been clandestinely exploring, now aroused a consuming enthusiasm, an ardor of speculation which revived especially in Italy the early days of Greek thought. This interest did not remain erudite; it proceeded to independent construction. After textual criticism and interpretation, after translations and commentaries, the Renaissance espoused professedly original systems of philosophy. Their actual originality might be doubted; the significant point is that they were advanced and valued as original. Even if Bernardino Telesio's treatise *On the Nature of Things* (1565) does share more than its title with Lucretius and more than occasional ideas with Roman Stoicism, yet original it is meant to be, Telesian.

Humanism and naturalism represent a twofold secularism and a twofold opposition to otherworldliness. The more humane literature, *literae humaniores*, of classical antiquity appealed greatly to this secular spirit. Even as early as the fourteenth century we find Petrarch boasting that King Robert of Naples forgets bed and board over his humanistic writings. When we read of the growing passion for the new learning, we are reminded of Socratic Athens and of the early morning

described by Plato, when Protagoras was holding sophistic levee in the rich house of Callias, with half the town's élite attending him like courtiers. When Chrysoloras came from Constantinople to teach the Florentines Greek, men young and old came to his classroom as to a sanctuary. Leonardo Bruni (1369-1444), as he deserted civil law for the study of Greek, expressed the devoted zeal of the period: "Thou when it is permitted thee to gaze on Homer, Plato and Demosthenes, . . . wilt thou neglect this opportunity so divinely offered? For seven hundred years no one in Italy has possessed Greek letters, and . . . if this one and only doctor of Greek letters disappears, no one can be found to teach thee!" [1] And more than a century later, Machiavelli, writing from his farm at San Casciano where he was living in virtual exile, describes how after his day's occupations he returns home and dresses up for his evening with the classics, four hours "in the ancient courts of ancient men." [2] In every large town of Italy, Byzantine scholars and Italian masters of Greek and classical Latin read and interpreted in crowded auditoria the masterpieces of antiquity. Enchanted with ancient glory, men were assuming pagan names and manners and pagan ways of thought, and the note of monastic-medieval renunciation sounded faint and remote to their ears. The Church itself was carried away by this classical enthusiasm. "Instead of Augustine and Jerome, popes and cardinals employed themselves with Virgil and Horace, Ovid and Catullus. Homer attracts more attention than the newly discovered manuscripts of the Greek Testament. Learned bishops refuse to read Jerome's Vulgate lest their own Ciceronian Latinity should be corrupted, and St. Paul's Epistles are deliberately put on one side by Cardinal Bembo on account of their unclassical Greek." [3]

2. *The Discrediting of Professed Saintliness*

As the pillars of theology and the Scriptures themselves were thus depreciated and set aside for the works of classical genius, the prestige of the Church declined in one department after another. Alleged historical documents which the ecclesiastic hierarchy had employed to sustain its structure of temporal rights and dominion, were exposed as spurious by the researches of Lorenzo Valla. Criticism was mastering its apparatus, and empty pretensions crumbled. If the examination of doctrines disclosed the bad thinking of theologians, their inability to reach truth, the probing of venerable but false documents exposed the ecclesiastic abuse of the truth. On one side was unwarranted appeal to faith; on the other dishonest exploitation of credulity, so persistent that in the end the ecclesiastics had come to believe their own frauds.

By what right, then, were the clergy to be acknowledged guides in morals? Were they good men and moral counsellors despite their unclassical Latin, their poor science and reasoning, their spurious documents? Or was their moral teaching true though their own lives were evil: were they like the Pharisees of old, saying, and doing not? The Renaissance rejected both of these alternatives: it unmasked the corruption and the moral hypocrisy in holy places, and it challenged the professed orthodox ideals and standards. The shepherds were benighted and vile; the flock were resolved to be no longer sheep. Thus lashing to scorn the morality of the Church and rejecting the sanctions of its ethics, Renaissance thought undertook to build on new foundations a new structure.

The exposure of priestly immorality was variously motivated. Sometimes it was a new form of the intense and aggressive piety which had already and repeatedly undertaken monastic and ecclesiastic reform. Or it was a moral rebellion within the Church, threatening schism and achieving it, as in the Protestant Reformation. Or again it was a cynical attack from without, the flaying of holy corruption from motives unholy, the gloating of lewd satirists over disgraced piety that had been shown up to be no better than they themselves were and meant to remain. Or yet again, and here was the most promising note for ethical advance, ecclesiastic practice was probed to the heart and the orthodox principles criticized by men who were consecrated to the True Perfection and who sought a truth and a perfection worthy of their consecration. It is the third kind of arraignment, coarse gloating satire, which more particularly concerns us now, for it is characteristic of Renaissance morals.

The Gospel tells us that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, but there is another region in the souls of men in which there is lewd jollity over one saint that goes astray, and when many are shown to have been no saints at all, there is boisterous jubilation. These latter sentiments are not always malicious; sometimes they are but the chafing and the chaffing of unworthiness at the sight or the report of perfection. At all times and in all religions priestcraft has provided examples of hypocrisy and corruption: what is of interest at this point is to observe the ready satisfaction which some men have found in connecting religious profession with immoral practice.

For this conclusion the clergy provided abundance of premises. Boccaccio's story of the converted Jew visiting Rome anticipated as it also may have suggested Voltaire's notorious epigram: the Jew is confirmed in his Christian faith, for how could such a rotten Church

thrive unless God sustained it? Michelangelo's sonnet on Rome in the pontificate of Julius II sums up the matter in two lines:

> Here helms and swords are made of chalices:
> The blood of Christ is sold so much the quart.[4]

In the course of the Middle Ages this satirical tendency, though of course not at all dominant, had been on the increase. The so-called Goliardic poems of wandering students and gifted wags provide striking examples. They reveal the liveliest responsiveness to beauty, zest for living, expansive and contagious joy, lyric vigor, exuberance, but no controlling or directing ideal. Feasting and dissipating when and where they could, or else sweeping the crumbs from the tables of the rich, these minstrels and wastrels were ready for anything except restraint. They took life as it came and glorified laxity. Against the austerities of monastic vigil was their nightly rioting; against the sin-laden hymns of the Church, their ballads of not-a-care, or their boisterous parodies of creed or liturgy; against the troubadour's idealized-mystical adoration, the frank sensuality of their songs of love. Monk and priest received the particular attention of the Goliard, and of them he spoke his full mind without concessions to delicacy. On the higher planes of genius, this release of animal spirits and this obscene guffaw at all pretense and sanctimony was to find expression in the *Gargantua and Pantagruel* of François Rabelais, as the more passionate undertones of the rollicking minstrelsy, in the ballads of François Villon.

3. Levity, Sensuality, Violence

The lewd scorn poured on the frailties of professed ascetics was itself a manifesto of levity. It finds expression in the unlaced sensuality and violence that marks so much Italian writing of the period. There is no call for reciting here an unsavory catalogue of works which earned in and for their day this sort of popularity. It should be enough to recall the sort of stories which even Boccaccio's genius chose for his *Decameron.*

We should not mistake the passionateness and the sensuality of the Renaissance. It was not an altogether uncontrolled spirit; it did recognize discipline: strategic or aesthetic, but not ascetic. It espoused lust, elegant lust; it resorted to violence, but with finesse; it did not disdain thieving, but in the grand manner, not pettily or clumsily; nor was it above deceit or even treachery, but with the craft of a master. In his dismissal of faith, though not of superstition, the Italian of the Renaissance chose reason, but chose it not as a controller and director, rather

as a tactician of the passions. No longer feeling or pretending to humility, he was yet wary of humiliation and bided his occasion to affirm his self-esteem: proudly disdaining to make a flourish of excellences which he would compel others to recognize and proclaim. He was too consumed with pride to risk appearing conceited. But if the citadel of public recognition did not surrender, he was ready to storm it with violent braggadocio. He knew magnificent liberality, magnanimity as a lofty gesture, but he had dismissed Christian forgiveness of injuries. His sense of honor exacted the avenging of every insult. Revenge, however, was an art; a clumsy requital would disgrace the avenger as much as supine endurance. Not a club but a rapier was required, a beautiful retaliation, *una bella vendetta,* which may demand and justify long patience. Even the pope's mule in Avignon, as Daudet had it on good authority, knew how to keep and deliver its kick after seven years.

What the Renaissance scorned was not so much evil, not the sensual or violent act, not at all, but the bungling and the mean vulgarity of the performance. A genius can glorify the darkest or the foulest subject into a masterpiece. So the artist in action, without scruples but never stooping to crude devices, justifies his act by the distinction and expertness with which he acquits himself. Plato had sought to elevate beauty into an ideal of moral and spiritual perfection. These Italians of the Renaissance reversed the procedure. Virtue, *virtù,* was a sort of artistry in action, beautiful performance, combining easy grace, prevailing craft, refinement of power, versatile and untroubled sensuality, the dominion of a man never at a loss in any eventuality.

If one wishes to grasp the contrast between the ideals to which medieval Italy aspired and the principles or unprinciples which Renaissance Italy openly acknowledged, let him read side by side *The Little Flowers* or *The Life of St. Francis* and *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini* (1500-1571). Choose any page at random: it would be more instructive than discussion. Does not Cellini boast of his vindictive exploits with as much relish as of his artistic achievements: equally proud of his artistry and of his swordsmanship? But why not revise the order of our reflections? The man who cut up the churlish innkeeper's new mattress to shreds, who avenged himself on his faithless mistress and her paramour by forcing them to marry, so that he could savagely abuse her, no longer paid courtesan but Pagolo's wife; who cannot forget the perfect dispatch with which he stabbed Pompeo behind the ear right in the midst of his guards: he is also the man whose recital of the bronze-casting of his Perseus remains to this day a classic account of

the tenacity, the devotion, the creative vitality, lightning wit and decision of genius. Pope Paul III is reported as stating explicitly that "men like Benvenuto stand above the law," and Cellini himself, while piously recording his prayers to God in tight places, has a ready doctrine which he formulates even while praying: God will help you if you help yourself. Here is, not so much Cellini's vindication of his aims and ideals, but his frank and even flaunting avowal of them and the proud account of his manifold mastery and artistry in realizing them. Cellini's candor was not assumed: he wrote his *Life* to please himself, and his work was not published until a century and a half after his death.

There is indeed evidence of moral chaos in Renaissance Italy, and it admits of lurid portrayal. Clergy and laymen, with or without the mask of hypocrisy, seem to vie with each other in lewd or violent excesses. The quarrels and vituperations of humanists, the unspeakable obscenities in tale or satire, were themselves displays of rhetorical mastery of Latin style which were cheered with guffaws of admiration. Pope Nicholas V rewarded with five hundred ducats a work too filthy to be quoted in translation even in our plainspoken day. But we should be misjudging the real temper of the times, if we centered our attention on the more notorious and atrocious instances, or even if, in considering the more normal though still flagrant cases of unconstraint, we did not look behind the act or speech to the sort of motivation and principle which Renaissance men avowed. Cardinal Riario was accused of cheating a professional gambler of fourteen thousand ducats in two games. At papal coronation-banquets, cardinals brought their own wines and cupbearers, and no specific insult meant; so common was the risk of poisoning. The insidious white venom of the Borgias made a legend. Poet and novelist could not sate their avid public with their tales of inexhaustibly resourceful adulterers. Brigands and condottieri, sculptured on horseback, rose unashamed against the walls of churches, as in San Giovanni and San Paolo in Venice. Along with passions sensual and violent there were foul perversities of lust and abysses of cruelty or treachery which tax belief, like the crimes of Sigismondo Malatesta of Rimini, the tabulation of which requires a catalogue.[5]

But all these tales are told in the one statement that the Renaissance had loosed the old restraints not only in fact but on principle. Not the lust and the violence of the age, but the indulgence of them without qualms was significant: not the actual conduct but the professed standard. The basic demand was for enjoyment and display of self, affirmation of will and the lust and joy of it.

4. Rampant Self-Assertion: the Matrix of New Ideals

This emphatic self-expression was bound to be different in different temperaments. In Petrarch (1304-1374) it was a passion for classical perfection, to match the masters whom he emulated: as great in prose as Cicero and in verse as Virgil, to earn his immortality as they had earned theirs. A lyric intimacy of expression contended in him with a laureate's conscious display; a restlessness, weariness and longing for solitude, ever doubled by an insatiate love of fame: enough for others, even for hearty Boccaccio, to have been his, Petrarch's contemporaries! Fame did not disappoint either one, but not as they had relied on her. Posterity has remembered Petrarch's sonnets to Laura and Boccaccio's *Decameron*, but it was rather to their classical achievements that both had trusted for immortality. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) renounces common pleasures for the higher joys of the mind. With aggressive intelligence he challenges all comers to dispute his nine hundred theses or disprove his Platonism; with lofty faith he would reconcile Christianity and Greek philosophy and explore all deep mysteries. Lorenzo dei Medici (1448-1492) was a richly endowed and variously avid personality, loving power, profits, pageants, pleasures, and always poetry. He oppressed the common folk and he joined in their festivities; lust and learning enthralled him equally. At his table, a symposium of the best genius of Italy might conclude on the lofty note of Socrates or might be the prelude to a debauch, or else to a frolic with the peasantry, whose hearts he knew and possessed and whose treasury of song he enriched. Lorenzo lived not only in classical retrospection but in the present, his present, lusting for expression and enjoyment, in free Tuscan living, in living Tuscan speech. Who does not know his lilting refrain?—it has been called the *Leitmotiv* of the Renaissance:

> Fair is youth and free of sorrow,
> Yet how soon its joys we bury!
> Let who would be, now be merry:
> Sure is no one of tomorrow.[6]

This joyousness in living was sung, painted, sculptured, built into the very substance of the Italian Renaissance. St. Francis' songs in praising nature and all therein, early showed the pious appeal of this intimacy with life: with Brothers Wind and Fire and Sister Water, with flowers and herbs and birds. Giotto (1266-1337) began his art by drawing his father's sheep with a sharp stone on a rock; if he did not always share the austerities of the Franciscan order, he did portray St. Francis' geniality, and the Christian joy breathed from every stroke of

his brush. In a more secular age this human responsiveness sought and found less pious expressions. The paintings of Sandro Botticelli (1444-1510) especially his *Venus* and his *Spring* were as fresh utterances of this new spirit as Lorenzo's songs; the Campanile of Giotto and Brunelleschi's dome were monuments of it. Alberti's keen eye caught this note in the Florentine cathedral: "Who will hesitate to call this temple the abode of delight? Wherever you look you see everything devised for joy and good cheer." [7] Outspoken humanity animated the Madonnas of Fra Lippo Lippi (1412-1469), tolerant of others' projects because meaning to follow his own:

> Flower o' the pine,
> You keep your mistr . . . manners, and I'll stick to mine! [8]

As pagan ideals became contagious, in place of ascetic intensity and celestial adoration, more sensuous beauty, the beauty of Apollo and of Venus, came to possess and inspire the painters of saints and madonnas. Then stern Savonarola exposed and denounced this pagan invasion of Christ's temple.

A rich human carpet, this, of hues and tones bright or somber but never thin. What impresses us is the invariably positive, emphatic note, as vigorous in research as in rapacity, passionate even in its disdain of passion. But this very release of impulse and abandon of temperament led actually to more general sensuousness and then to franker sensuality. When zest for pleasure sought to rationalize itself into a doctrine, it espoused not only the loftier Epicurean hedonism of the Garden and of Lucretius but also the easier Cyrenaic indulgence. These men spent their lives on classical learning or speculation, on painting or poetry or war or intrigue: in all this with the zest of voluptuaries. Why should they not gratify and glorify the senses when their whole life was a versatile gratification?

5. *Morals Gay, Courtly, and Sardonic*

Lorenzo Valla (1405-1457) mastered and dictated to his age the standards of Latin elegance. He thrilled in the combat in which his Latin scholarship, exposing venerable documents as forgeries, imposed silence on the champions of papal dominion. He cherished the memory of his trial for heresy, how he answered the Holy Inquisition outright that "he believed as Mother Church believed: it was quite true that she *knew* nothing, yet he believed as she believed," and how King Alfonso dismissed the inquisitors, telling them to leave his secretary alone. But Lorenzo Valla was versatile in his enjoyments and demands: they were not limited to erudition and argument. "Would that man had fifty

senses, since five can yield such delight!" [9] He had exposed other pious frauds, so he turned his attention to the most saintly pretense of all: the ascetic negation of pleasure.

Against the advocates of a stern Stoical and dismal devotion to virtue, Valla chooses the smiling counsel of the Epicureans. Only a perverse view of human life and of nature leads us to distrust pleasure in our idolatry of virtue. Our own natural desires and satisfactions are not entitled to offhand condemnation in favor of alleged honesty and integrity of soul. All the advantages of power, fortune and condition, health, beauty, keenness and luxuriance of sense, wealth and comforts individual and social, are valued because of the pleasure and satisfaction which they yield.

Moralists may deliberately twist their view of life, extol meager starved virtue, and even glorify asceticism and "the superstition of virginity"; but the healthy judgment of men does not support them, and in the end human nature is bound to have its way. A deal of alleged virtue, it appears, is only conventionally imposed on us; we should be prepared for radical departures. Thus there seems to be a respectable agreement to condemn Plato's family communism; yet consider coolly the miseries individual and social due to monogamic rigor and jealousy! Under a system of more genial communism, beautiful Paris might easily have had his Helen, without involving his own people and hers in ruinous war. So we are advised to recoil from the bloodless inhumanity of the despisers of pleasure and even to perceive their pharisaic hypocrisy. The philosophers who write treatises on the contempt of glory inscribe their own names on the title page just the same.

So pleasure is not "a mistress among good matrons, but as it were, a mistress among her handmaids, . . . a mistress of the virtues." [10] Virtue itself has its warrant ultimately in the pleasure that it yields. Justice and laws find their final appeal and sanction in utility. The contemplative life, so highly praised by the votaries of virtue, is itself a subtle species of pleasure. And if God's contemplative blessedness is exalted, it is as an example of perfect happiness. God expects from us not cold recognition of his divine perfection, but love, blissful joy of worship. So again the angelic choir is conceived as beautiful beyond compare, and the blessed life of heaven as happiness transcending our dreams. The hedonist trusts in God and looks forward to more and greater and better joys in the hereafter.

The voluptuary's logic was challenged on the score of good taste. The really beautiful life demands higher satisfaction. Thus Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) develops his theme in a work which had great

fame and influence, *Il Cortegiano, The Book of the Courtier.* It is a series of symposia on the perfect gentleman, the perfect lady not neglected. The scene is set at the court of the Gonzagas in Urbino in the year 1507. The discussions do not concern courtesy and etiquette only, but the tone of social discourse, outlook on life, daily career, serious interests and amusements, games, tournaments, code of honor, loyalty, devotion in friendship and in polite or consuming love. The gay decency of Elizabeta Gonzaga's court impresses the reader, its modest self-respect without prudish affectation. These ladies hear the frankest speech unblushingly but do not invite and would not tolerate filthy circumlocutions. The discussion of the perfect lady is of great interest, for in portraying her the men are also portraying themselves. Prudent, magnanimous, continent, kind, discreet, thrifty she is, to be sure, but above all possessing the art of pleasant and seemly converse, and "a quick vivacity of spirit whereby she may show herself alien to all indelicacy; but with such a kindly manner as shall make us think of her as no less chaste, prudent and benign, than agreeable, witty and discreet . . ." [11] Too conspicuous virtue is disapproved in her, just as it is pronounced hypocritical in men. The splendid life is conceived as one that discloses a man's expert pursuit and achievement of his right aims: a life temperate, courageous, healthy, tranquil, liberal, ample, rich. *The Courtier* concludes on a lofty note of Platonic love as a guide to the ideal, but it is in the most intimate touch with everyday life, and if it does not portray the actual conduct of men and women, not even at the court of Urbino, it does reveal what the Italians of the Renaissance sometimes professed to expect of themselves as perfect gentlefolk.

The life of *The Courtier* is explicitly a life neither of war nor of work but of refined leisure. We cannot expect it to engage the more active or sterner virtues. The autobiography of Girolamo Cardano (1510-1576) or Jerome Cardan as he is better known in English, *The Book of My Life,* reveals morbid introspection, the uncanny insight into the pools and whirlpools of human passion, the strange mixture of scientific thinking with arrant occultism and superstition, which characterized the Renaissance as truly as did the gay insouciance of Lorenzo's ballads. Cardano values pleasures as relief from pain, is tormented by tragic passions that incite to suicide, but resisting the temptation moves to the next trial. His memory is crowded with injustices he has suffered, calamities which have almost ruined and destroyed him, and great achievements and glories notwithstanding. He is sardonic in his judgment of men and himself. "On a rotting tree are rotten

apples! It is nothing new that I proclaim; I merely lay bare the truth." [12] But he will not yield to despair, regarding it as his duty to God not to abandon hope. So we leave him psychoanalyzing his dreams before Freud, interpreting his portents and premonitions, recounting his maladies, confessing, or rather most callously rehearsing his vices, some of them repulsive, and at the same time trying to convince himself of his virtues: that he has never told a falsehood from his youth, that he has borne poverty and disaster and all the pricks of adverse circumstances patiently, that no one has ever been able justly to charge him with ingratitude. He also counts the teeth he has left: fifteen, one rather weak but still doing its share. And fifteen species of things he finds, to make human life abundant and bearable: "air, sleep, exercise, bread, meat, milk, eggs, fish, oil, salt, water, figs, bitter-rue, grapes, and strong onions." [13]

6. The Higher Ideals of Genius: Michelangelo and Leonardo

This brief survey of Renaissance morals has noted standards rather than actual conduct, not so much what men did or did not do as what they expected or tolerated in themselves or others. We may surmise that the Borgias were no more typical of the morals of 1500 than St. Francis was of 1200. But the significant thing is that the Renaissance produced and accepted the Borgias, and medieval life St. Francis. The new epoch, even in unsettled Italy, was not without its finer characters. The career of Aldus Manutius (1447-1515), master publisher in the first age of printing, is a record of consistent devotion to high achievement no less than of inexhaustible energy in times of turmoil. And in an epoch during which humanists besmirched the teacher's calling as much as popes and cardinals their holy office, the name of Vittorino da Feltre (1378-1446) stands out as a teacher and moulder of youth, training and disciplining mind and body, inuring youth to hardships, cultivating self-control, imparting respect for ability whether in rich or poor, regard for genuine solidity and worth rather than for surface polish, emphasis on purity of speech and manners and personal integrity throughout. But still the fact remains that Vittorino was the outstanding exception.

Undermining the Christian-medieval structure of ideals, the Renaissance did not replace it by the ancient-classical, nor yet by a modern reconstruction. Its freedom was rampant, its vitality lawless, its exuberance chaotic. Old dogmas it flouted with scorn, yet readily accepted new or newly-revived occult mysteries. Even so it alternated high mystical aspiration with the coarsest sensuality. Possessed by the desire for something great and lovely past belief, it lacked guiding principle

and direction in thought and conduct. Who has perceived and uttered this condition of Renaissance life better than its supreme artist, Michelangelo Buonarroti? (1475-1564)—

> A heart of flaming sulphur, flesh of tow,
> Bones of dry wood, a soul without a guide
> To curb the fiery will, the ruffling pride
> Of fierce desires that from the passions flow;
> A sightless mind that weak and lame doth go
> Mid snares and pitfalls scattered far and wide;—
> What wonder if the first chance brand applied
> To fuel massed like this should make it glow? [14]

Michelangelo's reliance, as the sestet of this sonnet shows, is on art. The vision of beauty exalts the soul, and noble expression matures it. It is beyond our province or competence to pay any meet tribute here to Michelangelo's art, but we should note the gifts by which his preëminence in creativeness was sustained: consuming fury and sweep of flaming genius, intellectual immensity of conception, scientific grasp and technical bold perfection, and through it all the awesome tenderness of might. There is no frivolous delicacy here, no trifling perfection of form or line or color: all is intense, sublime, abysmal. As was his art, so was his mind and so his heart. "Deep calleth unto deep," and his mind early responded to the depth and height of Plato, to the saving power of Christian piety, and later to the stern intensity of Savonarola. For the sake of his art he served patrons who did not understand, but he had no illusions about them; he knew that with Pope Julius he was as a giant with a giant; he strove, but he did not open his heart. His contemporaries found him somber, a lowering tempest; he preferred his solitude to their loves. He was past sixty when he found in Vittoria Colonna a worthy possessor of his soul. The idealism of this Platonic love illumined the deepening twilight of his life.

In the realm of ideas there is only one Renaissance artist of whom one thinks along with Michelangelo, and that one was more than an artist. Michelangelo's was the tragedy of supreme achievement which yet left his flaming genius unconsumed and unsatisfied. In the life of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) the tragedy was one of too lavish and versatile endowment: genius enough for a multitude of men who could not all be living his one life. To Francesco Sforza he chose to recommend himself as first a military engineer; his arts and sciences included mathematics, physics, mechanical and hydraulic invention, aviation, astronomy, anatomy, philosophy, architecture, sculpture, painting, drawing (incomparable), art-criticism. Neither in the Renais-

sance nor in any other epoch did one man ever combine scientific and artistic genius so various and of such high order. The two interfused: in his scientific thought creative originality leaps centuries ahead of his age and sweeps in a bold glance vistas of knowledge and application the discourses of which puzzled his contemporaries and consigned his uncomprehended manuscripts to oblivion, until only in our day his intellectual stature begins to be recognized. In his art is eternal experimenting, probing, speculation. He is so concerned with analyzing the principles of his creative work, the traditional and the conceivable principles, that the critic and the aesthetician retard the creative artist.

If the record of all else in Renaissance culture were to be blotted out, the thousandfold treasury of this one man would still enable us to judge of its vision, its venture, its achievement. The last years of the fifteenth century saw the completion of Leonardo's *Last Supper.* The story of this masterpiece, mischance of genius, peeling in flakes and dust-particles, bunglingly restored in oils, neglected, abused, and only in our time preserved with competent devotion: is it not also the story of Leonardo's scientific and philosophical manuscripts: is it not the story of so much of the Renaissance? This age abounded in thoughts and visions of genius, recording an epoch, prophetic of the future. Not all these painted visions adhered to the walls of men's memory and understanding, and many flaked off in oblivion; but as some of them are restored, we realize what we owe to them. The Renaissance was chaotic, violent, lewd; but it was also striving after that which even now one can perceive or at least surmise on a quiet afternoon in the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. He who has not seen Leonardo's masterpiece has not yet understood the intense serenity and the spiritual concentration of the Renaissance at its best.

7. *The Renaissance in the North: Rabelais and Erasmus*

By concentrating on Italy our brief survey has revealed perhaps more clearly the intensity of impulse and the variety of prospect which characterize the Renaissance. But although Italians, inspired by classical enthusiasm and already thinking of themselves as Romans, might look down on the rest of Europe as barbarian, neither the new learning nor the new spirit was exclusively Italian. North of the Alps, philology, erudition, criticism, satire, romance, poetry, philosophical reconstruction, social and religious protest and reform mark the transition to the new age. Two men from across the Alps call for more special though brief notice, because in their works two basic strains of the Renaissance found expression: its unbridled and obscene rejection of

all discipline, and the tolerant and liberating bent of its erudition and criticism. We turn to Rabelais and Erasmus.

Is Scripture like a nose of wax, which everyone twists and moulds to suit himself? The most unscriptural of books has had the same fortune at the hands of critics and commentators. Interpretation here leaves us with questions. Was François Rabelais (1490-1553) a religious and social-educational reformer who played the lewd wag for reasons of safe strategy? Or was his work a satire of explicit men and conditions of his time, shielded by allegory which the translator or critic may remove for us and so decipher his real meaning and allusions? Or was he a godless lewd reprobate with no sense of respect for anything, revelling in filth and obscenity; or less severely judged, was his work plain tavern tomfoolery, not much coarser than other writing of the period, only longer-winded and more liberal of guffaw and spittle in the telling?

We need not so miss the spirit of Rabelais as to try to bind his book in a formula. For his book is precisely this, unbound. In the history of moral ideas, the boisterous story of the giants Gargantua and Pantagruel is the Book of the Great Unloosing. His prancing stallions do not need saddles, reins and the bit, not primarily: first of all they need range. Range is what Rabelais seeks for modern man; and if men are to have range they must sweep aside their manifold confines and barriers.

In the terminology of a later age, Rabelais undertakes to free men from the tyranny of taboos and inhibitions, and this he would do by violating them flagrantly and laughing them to scorn. The pretenses of sanctimony, the peacock display of pedantry, the tyrannical frauds of authority, the hobgoblins of superstition, the incommodities and checks of alleged decency: all these shackles and blights he spits upon and goes on his way rejoicing. What according to the Freudians the human mind does when asleep, that and more Rabelais does when awake: in plain noonday he means us all to do as we jolly please. Only thus, by the release of thwarted impulses, is the full range of man's powers to be revealed and realized.

One must not, however, be too solemn about this emancipation: it is a rollicking adventure withal. Its great word is the motto of the Abbey of Theleme, which Gargantua provided for his good Friar John: *Fay ce que vouldras*, Do what thou wilt. This abbey was to have no walls, nor clocks or dials; free in space and careless of time or schedule of any sort, the Thelemites were to come and go as suited them. "All their life was spent not in laws, statutes, or rules, but according to their own free will and pleasure. . . . Because men that are free,

well-born, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions." [15] All that men require for the perfection of their capacities is free activity. This is the wisdom of Gargantua, and it matures in his lusty son Pantagruel: theory and practice both. To Pantagruel in Paris, Gargantua writes a letter which has been called the battle-hymn of the Renaissance. The past age was "darksome, obscured with clouds of ignorance"; in the new age of enlightenment and liberty and power, Pantagruel is to be "completely well-bred and accomplished, as well in virtue, honesty, and valour, as in all liberal knowledge and civility." [16]

So, as we perceive the larger design of Rabelais, we begin to comprehend all that entered into his immense book. "His incommensurable and indescribable masterpiece of mingled humour, wisdom, satire, erudition, indecency, profundity, levity, imagination, realism, reflects the whole age in its mirror of hyper-Aristophanic farce." [17] At the conclusion of the Second Book, Rabelais in his own person reads a Pantagruelian homily to his reader. His text is plain: Make yourselves merry, and fly from all prying and pretense. And plain is the application: Abhor and hate the "great rabble of squint-minded fellows, dissembling and counterfeit saints, demure lookers, hypocrites, pretended zealots, tough friars, buskin monks, and other such sects of men, who disguise themselves like maskers to deceive the world." [18]

The popularity of Gargantua and Pantagruel was notorious; it was in fact a public scandal. But Rabelais was not the only best seller of the sixteenth century, which, we should remember, was also Martin Luther's century. Sixty editions of the *Colloquies* of Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) were published during his lifetime, and a Paris bookseller is said to have sold out one edition of twenty thousand copies. In the world of erudition and criticism he was the undisputed arbiter of his age. The demand for his writings became proverbial; the ink was barely dry on his pages before they were reduced to type in Froben's printery in Basel. In an age of religious controversy, both sides sought the advantage of his eminent support. Pope Paul III, whom Benvenuto Cellini suspected of plotting his death by having ground diamond mixed in his porridge, considered the more conspicuous attachment of Erasmus and his scholarship to the Papacy: but a cardinal's hat would have called for a revenue of three thousand ducats! Melanchthon sought to win him for the Protestant cause; if, however, he could not actively espouse the new reform, Martin Luther appealed to him, would he not at least refrain from attacking it, remain neutral? Holy disdain alternates with respect in the letter which the strenuous reformer addresses to the first critic, but the last warrior, in Europe.

With Luther he could never have gone, for his was not a partisan's temper. Erasmus was not an aggressive sectary or protagonist; his trust was in the gradual fruition of ideas in a culture of tolerance. To Luther he writes: "It seems to me that one gains more by moderation and by order than by passion." [19] It was not because he supported or trusted in the Papacy that he would not break with it. Open his *Praise of Folly* or his *Colloquies* almost at random: the evidence is plain that of the old hierarchy his judgment was not very different from Rabelais'. But he could not view the prospect of a violent schism, with a new, counter-orthodoxy to challenge the old and to exhaust in destructive strife human energies which should go into the work of civilization and maturing intelligence.

There is thus kinship between Erasmus and Rabelais: in their opposition to bigotry, in their high regard for tolerance and freedom of thought and self-expression, in their suspicion of authority be it ecclesiastic or Ciceronian, in their genius for satire, more exuberant in Rabelais, subtler in Erasmus, and above all, in their religious regard for human happiness above institutional demands. "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

Both learning and criticism contributed to this culture of tolerance. Humanism thus became, with Erasmus, really humane: an agent of emancipation from stunting dogmatism. For wisdom is various, and the paths to human well-being are many. Erasmus' *Adages* were more than an anthology of Familiar and Unfamiliar Quotations. This book revealed a treasury of mankind's sage counsels and proverbs, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, interpreted by a man who in his own way could be all things to all men, to win some to more genial sanity. He took his gold wherever he could find it. Too learned to be a pedant, too sober to be stern, too loyal to truth to be a zealot, Erasmus pled for a sense of humor, for good nature, for equity and mellow wisdom: which is tolerance in practice and theory.

A man should not be oppressed by his power, as a king that is galley-slave to his own easily-gratified lusts. This is the liberating power of reason in our life that it makes us masters, not thralls of our own convictions. For a great living thought is always greater than any version of it; dogmas and laws are sustained by human needs, and by growing human needs revised or quite abrogated. The greater truth, as it cracks the forms of the lesser, may seem unreasonable and absurd. So the Christian gospel seemed to the Greeks, foolishness. But this spirit of whole-hearted, alert, responsive, generous folly is needed, if men are to attain to their utmost. This and much more is in *The Praise of Folly.*

The *Colloquies*, Erasmus' most famous book, is an elementary and advanced reader for tolerant and growing minds. Of its many dialogues one may be selected: *Ichthyophagia; or Fish-Eating.* Here is a philosophy of life unfolded in the converse of a butcher with a salt-fish-monger! There is a rumor that the prohibition of meat-eating is to be relaxed: would that temper men's relish for meat during Lent, or sharpen their taste for fish; since men are ever eager for what is denied them and dislike what is imposed? But why are not all laws recognized as pliable and subject to circumstance and the demand of human welfare which they are all meant to subserve? More evil than the transgression of a law is the stupidly tyrannical imposition of it, for the latter undermines all men's confidence in law and incites general lawlessness. But the upholders of order are more concerned with the enforcement of externalities, negligent of the substance. Men should reëxamine their standards more fairly, for their ranking of virtues and vices is largely traditional, and so is their ordering of their duties and obligations.

Beneath the crust of ritual and the surface of formal conformity, Erasmus sought by critical tolerance saner ideals, more humane standards, principles and practices assuring the common good. There was little of the heavenly spirit in him, no mysticism, no rapture. His was the more worldly but also the more sober counsel of a mind too tolerant to be aggressive in reform and too reasonable to be ecstatic: irony safe and sane, and unheroic.

CHAPTER V

THE REFORMATION: P' /TEST OF THE AROUSED CONSCIENCE



1. Forerunners of the Reformation

The Reformation of the sixteenth century, which broke large northern branches of Christendom from the parent-tree of Rome, was only the culmination of various movements of resistance to papal dominion. The struggle of William Rufus and Henry I with St. Anselm of Canterbury; the princely and baronial chafing all over Europe at ecclesiastic ascendency; the growing resistance of both lord and peasant to the holy exorbitance of bishop and priest and monk; the repeated withdrawal of saintly souls from churchly or worldly corruption, as in the humble Benedictine or Franciscan self-rededication to Christ; the spread of mystical devotion especially in Germany, not resisting its heretical tendencies, nor always conscious of them; the bold portrayal of ecclesiastic and monastic corruption by Goliard minstrels and by poets whose works are milestones in the early literatures of France and England; the stubborn dissemination of heretical doctrine, especially in Provence and in the north of Italy, by sectarians preaching resistance to a corrupt hierarchy and to social and political oppression; the more reasoned criticism of traditional doctrine and the unmasking of Romish pretension by keen secularly-minded thinkers:—all these prepared the way and the setting for the organized revolt against Rome, for the establishment of the autonomous Protestant churches with their radical revision of theological and ecclesiastic sanctions, of the social-economic and political program of the Church, and of the Christian outlook of everyday life individual and social.

All through the Middle Ages sectarian waves of heresy rolled westward from Asia Minor through the Balkans up the Adriatic towards Italy and Provence. Resisting the established and hostile orthodoxy, they rejected its hierarchy and organization priestly and monastic, and repudiated much of its ritual and reliance on sacraments and external observance. They emphasized simple piety and personal saintliness, but frequently lapsed into excesses. Under various names, these sectarian

movements aroused fanatical but also pure devotion. The movement of multitudes East and West occasioned by the Crusades scattered these pious heretics across Southern Europe. Paulicians from the East, Bogomiles from Bulgaria, Patareni from Bosnia seeped into Italy and Provence, spreading their beliefs among the people, giving rise to local sectarian movements, Cathari, Albigenses. Provençal and Piedmontese sectarians kept in touch with their Eastern brothers, and themselves were sometimes called Bulgari. In the year 1167 they held a council near Toulouse, and during the century of St. Thomas Aquinas they were a recognized menace to orthodoxy; in 1228 one third of the Florentines were reckoned to be Cathari.[1] It required the preaching of a special crusade against the Albigenses in the south of France to crush them, and in this religious struggle, which spread into a bloody conflict between the French nobility of the North and of the South, the flourishing Provençal culture was swept away.

Not all sectaries were intentionally heterodox. Within the Church, monk or layman, moved by the spirit of apostolic poverty, sought to recover the pristine austerity and purity of the Christian life. The movements of reform and moral reconsecration in the Benedictine Order, and the rise of the Franciscans in the thirteenth century are important instances. The Waldenses, originating in Lyons after 1170, were mostly simple pious folk who in addition to assuming Christian poverty, insisted on learning God's will themselves and read the gospels in the vernacular. In Belgium and France, the Beguines or Beghards, from the twelfth century, sought the blessings of Christian piety in isolation from the world and in a life of humble charity. Some of these devotees were closely related to the tertiaries of the Franciscan and of the Dominican order, but in one way or another the official Church was bound to discipline their unauthorized piety. Where discipline failed, the alternative was suppression, which in the case of the Waldenses led to heroic martyrdom.

The fourteenth century, the century of the Babylonish Captivity of the popes in Avignon, of the undermining of Scholastic rationalism by Scotist and Occamist criticism, the century of the classical revival, of Petrarch and Boccaccio, is also the age of John Wyclif, whose moral and ecclesiastic program contains ideas germinal in the Protestant Reformation.

Papal greed for power and profits disturbed English national policy and drained the substance of England. The system of annates and the frank or covert simony in the assignments of church-offices infected bishop and priest with unchristian rapacity. Both as an English patriot and as a devout Christian John Wyclif (*c.* 1320-1384) protested against

the Roman Curia which had corrupted the Church into an instrumentality for fleecing the people. The Church of Christ, he reasoned, should be Christ-like: it should not have any temporal power or possessions. If each priest knows that he holds his office only by virtue of the people's trust, arrogance and rapacity will yield to more godly ministration.

From this attack on the temporal power of the Church, Wyclif, meeting official condemnation with firmer resistance, proceeded to challenge the basic principles of the ecclesiastic hierarchy. The whole system of external observance and sacerdotalism, whereby a wall had been erected between Christian men and Christ, with surpliced barons as gatekeepers, was declared by Wyclif null and void: images and holy relics and pilgrimages, transubstantiation and magic sacraments. Against the pernicious assumption by pope and priest of a supernatural power to impose obligations and to remit sins in the name of God, the new teaching emphasized man's more direct dealing with God in Christ. A priest cannot pardon nor a pope wipe out sin: perhaps they themselves are not among the elect.

So all men must dedicate themselves to God, everyone, know God's will and loyally fulfill it, not relying on priestly mediation or dispensation, but trusting devoutly in God's mercy. The rejection of a sacramental or magical contrast of clergy and laity was also an emphasis on piety in everyday living. The godly life was not a life of monastic retirement, of professed celibacy and opulent religiosity, but of honest active doing of God's will in this workaday world, in the home or in the marketplace. Not the body is to be mortified but the evil passions: anger and greed that lead to strife and war, pride and hardness of heart and an unforgiving spirit. The Christian law is the law of love, of active charity and devotion to God and man. To teach Englishmen this law, Wyclif translated the Bible into English, and putting it in the hands of his poor priests, sent them out two by two among the people.

Wyclif's resistance to ecclesiastic rapacity and his opposition to papal intrusion in English politics won him the support of many English lords, from John of Gaunt down. Their support stood him in good stead in his struggle with Rome and made possible his dying in his bed in due season at Lutterworth. But he who sent his poor priests to read the Gospel in English to the common people, taught a Christian way of life that was bound to recognize the wickedness of all exploitation and oppression. The Lollard movement of Wyclifites engaged the peasantry, the hard-working England, because it spoke the loving words of Christ to the weary and heavy laden, inspired them with hopes of fuller justice and more humane Christian conditions of life. The dis-

possessed could not then prevail: the political and social instrumentalities for making their will effective were lacking. But though in England and later in Germany the leadership of the Reformation still trusted in princes and town-magnates, yet the seeds of a Christian democracy were being sown which in later ages were to yield at least a partial crop. In the history of organized struggle for Christian social justice, the rôle of Oxford University as a center of Lollardy is an honorable chapter. Wyclif the reformer, we should remember, was a university professor, as was John Huss after him; and so were Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon.

The Vision Concerning Piers the Plowman, the three versions of which date from 1362 to 1393, is now believed to have been the work of William Langland. In this poem of Chaucer's great contemporary, the forthright account of English life, in the portrayal of an unchristian church, an oppressive government, a loose and unprincipled laity and an ox-like peasantry, is itself a protest as crushing as the sermons and treatises of Wyclif or the preachments of the Lollards. Without Chaucer's merry twinkle or his gaily ironical turn, Langland is earnest in rebuke or indignation or praise. His irony is stern. For all his portrayal of the bovine stolidity of the common toilers, he knows their plain worth. It is the honest Plowman whom Christ, the Carpenter's Son, chooses to guide men to his divine truth, not the self-styled legates of God.

Though *Piers the Plowman* has been called a Lollard poem, it is not rightly understood as a reformer's tract. The power of the poet is the greater because he does not preach. In his poem common life is uttered with living effect, even as in the paintings of Flemish and Dutch masters. A few lines, some of them full etchings, must suffice; they are cited here in a modernized version. Of lagging justice: "The law so lordly is and loath to reach decisions"; of bought dignities, priestly and secular: "And bastard children have been made archdeacons, and soapers' sons for silver have been knights"; of hard-working destitutes: "Poor folk in cottages, burdened with children and with landlord's rents"; of papal dignitaries: "The country is the more accurst that cardinals come in"; of ecclesiastic corruption: "So out of holy church all evil spreads." [2]

Wyclif's teachings bore more immediate fruits in Bohemia. The year before his death a Bohemian princess had been married to Richard II, and Czekh students had followed her to England, had been moved by the new ideas at Oxford, and on their return home had brought the reformer's writings to the University of Prague. No one read them more earnestly than John Huss; he did not accept all of Wyclif's

doctrines, but in the Englishman's reasoned program of ecclesiastic reform and in the patriotic plea for freeing the nation from papal exploitation, Huss found a more adequate expression of many of his own Czekh countrymen's protests, Christian and national. As popular preacher and as rector of Prague University, appealing by Czekh sermons to the people and by scholarly argument to the learned, he translated or adapted Wyclif's message of reform to the needs of Bohemia.

Moral integrity and deep love of his people set the tone of Huss' teachings and his program of reform. He protests against ecclesiastic arrogance, opulence, corruption, against the exploitation of the people by foreign churchmen, against the sacramental barriers erected by the clergy between Christ and his lay worshipers, against reliance on ritual, on masses, penance and pilgrimages, to the neglect of true repentance, a contrite heart and a clear conscience. His reform is not mainly theological, a revision of doctrine, but moral and social, a reform of conduct and conditions of life. In church and school and university he would have his Czekh people learn from native priests and masters in native speech the words of Christ. By emphasizing the moral teachings of the Gospels, he would bring layman and priest together. In the spirit of Christ he would make social brotherhood a fact in his land, and relieve economic and political oppression. So in justice and purity, in simple faith and charity, prince and priest and peasant were to live together a Christian life.

The motto of John Huss was "Seek the truth, know the truth, respect the truth, hold the truth unto death," and he sealed his Christian convictions with his martyrdom. At the Council of Constance, in 1415, the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund betrayed his promised safe-conduct to Huss. From a noisome dungeon he was haled before the surpliced lords of the Church, and calmly, forgiving but unflinching, stood his ground and went his way to the stake. At Prague University he had declared: "It is better to be vanquished speaking the truth than to vanquish by lying." So at the Council of Constance, facing the flames: "Truth vanquishes all, for he who is being killed for the sake of Truth gains victory. . . . In the Truth I have proclaimed according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I will this day joyfully die." [8]

Huss' disciple Jerome of Prague followed his master to the stake in 1416. Bohemia flamed in revolution and religious wars. More successful in resisting foreign hostility than in checking internal dissension, the Hussites, torn by struggles between radical devotees and moderate compromisers, lost in concessions and in defeat and in later yielding to Jesuit propaganda most of what their leader had sought to win for his people. But a part of them, known as the Bohemian Brethren, per-

sisted in devotion to the Bible as supreme authority, in denial of the ecclesiastic, sacramental or ceremonial shells, and in insistence on inwardness and intimate piety. The Herrnhuters and the Moravian Church later modified but also continued the Hussite tradition. And in Germany, over a century after the death of the Czekh reformer, Martin Luther came to realize a unity of thought and purpose with him. "We are all Hussites without knowing it," Luther wrote. "Paul and Augustine are Hussites to a word."[4]

2. *The Moral Reform of Martin Luther*

The Protestant Reformation has been interpreted as due to the revolt of the Teutonic North against the arrogance and the exploitation of the Roman Curia. The rise of cultural nationalism and the growing initiative of a self-reliant laity, the middle class, were likewise important motives in the movement of church-reform; they served to direct its course and determined some of its political and economic consequences. And doubtless the maturing of critical intelligence in Europe during the age of Humanism compelled a radical reconstruction of important church doctrines. Due recognition of these factors, however, should not lessen the emphasis on the truly religious dynamic of the movement, and this is disclosed strikingly in Martin Luther (1483-1546).

As Luther's struggle with Rome grew in range and complexity, he was bound to recognize, if not to appeal to the various grievances and aspirations which led princes and people to join his ranks. That was not merely strategy: some of these motives he shared, yet they would not explain his initial and unflinching consecration. In Luther's reaction against ecclesiasticism a deep spiritual demand and a twofold conviction are uppermost: the demand for assurance of his union with God, and the conviction that churchly legalism and reliance on external observance are barriers to this union, that therefore our trust can never be in any devised instrumentality but only in a loving faith: a liberation of man's soul in Christ Jesus. In principle Luther emphasizes the preeminence of the moral factor in the Christian life, but in his development of that principle he sets himself in opposition not only to papal pharisaism: he rejects any gospel of good works. The moral note which he accentuates is not the sounding strain of outward conduct; it is the inner attunement of the soul.

In Martin Luther's spiritual upbringing, pious devotion combined with a plain secular regard for the virtues of an honest active life. His father Hans Luther, a sturdy peasant miner rising in the world, distinguished sharply his duties to God from his obligations to the priests.

But in the son this sturdy moral conviction and a naturally energetic and buoyant temperament were shaken by a killing sense of spiritual need, a sinner's anguish. It forced him, against his father's wishes, to cast aside his plans for a lawyer's career and enter the Augustinian monastery. He impressed the brethren alike by his ascetic rigor and by his excess of unrelieved conscience. Even pious Staupitz, the Augustinian Vicar-General, could not understand this young university student whom contrition, conversion, confession still left in anguished uncertainty about his soul's union with God. Staupitz pointed out a way to peace, but it was Luther who walked in it and went beyond his teacher. When he reached his goal, he had an inalienable assurance of God's free gift of righteousness through loving faith in Christ.

His own salvation had come to him in the monastery, but not through the monastic life. Neither through penance nor through absolution had peace come to his soul, but alone through union in faith with Christ. This one thing he now knew: that forgiveness of sin was not through priest or bishop, but by God alone, and directly by God in Christ. Even before Tetzel's scandalous sale of papal indulgences forced him to draw the inferences of this major conviction, Luther had made it the dominant principle of his religious life. As a priest and confessor he might admonish and advise and guide, as Staupitz had guided him. But for forgiveness the sinner had to trust to Christ. The peace of a pardoned soul could not be earned by man through any good works, much less be procured through priestly offices.

The kernel of his teaching, a central idea in religion and in ethics, Luther thus possessed before ecclesiastic corruption forced him into the stormy career of a church-reformer. Flagrant disregard of this basic Christian truth, in the churchly traffic of indulgences, roused him to specific resistance. The condemnation with which he was confronted led him to realize how deep the roots of corruption spread in the life and thought of the Church. So his own protest and proposed reform, ecclesiastic and moral, grew more radical.

The sale of indulgences showed how a perverted principle led to practices more and more pernicious. The Church in the name of God had condemned the wicked sinner: to reënter the fold, he had publicly to acknowledge his sin, proclaim his repentance, and prove his real change of heart by some mark of unusual devotion, in ascetic or charitable self-denial. In time, especially after public confession was replaced by private, a system of penances was devised, to be imposed by confessors for various sins. Theologians from the thirteenth century claimed that the authority to commute penances was a papal prerogative. The Catholic Church, it appeared, was the dispenser of an

inexhaustible treasury of the merits of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints. Of this capital of superfluous expiation the Pope through his legates could allot to men as needed. A special service to the Church might earn for a monastic order or for a cathedral the papal grant of a capital of indulgences which these could in turn purvey to needy sinners. Plenary indulgence had been offered to secure recruits for a crusade as early as 1095; later, men were promised remission of sins if they paid specified sums to finance some papal enterprises. So more and more flagrantly the practice spread whereby the evil-doer could pay the stipulated price and with good relieved conscience go about his business with God's pardon in his pocket. In place of men seeking forgiveness for their sins directly from God through the grace of Christ, in repentance and rededication, the Church mediating between men and the Savior, mediated for pay, and for pay relieved the sinner of the worries of thorough repentance.

To the Borgias and the Medicis, who in the Renaissance "enjoyed the papacy," the granting of indulgences was a source of profit which could be exploited on a really grand scale. Pope Leo X, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was a lavish enjoyer, and he swept the papal coffers clean; cards and bounties cost him 6000 ducats monthly, and though he got seven times as much by the sale of offices, he was heavily in debt. And he had grand ambitions for which he needed larger resources. So Leo proclaimed a plenary indulgence that would secure release from purgatory, not only for the purchasers but also for their dead kinsmen or friends. Albert of Brandenburg, a Hohenzollern, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz and Primate of Germany at twenty-four, heavily in debt for his holy appointments, was to dispose of the indulgences in Germany, the Fuggers banking house of Augsburg collecting the proceeds in payment of their loans to the Archbishop, and the Lord presumably honoring the pardons thus dispensed. Albert's agent Tetzel, a Dominican monk, advertised his holy wares in the most attractive terms. The sinner was accommodated in every way; the necessity of contrition and confession was waived, the payment serving every purpose in the circumstances.

This story, familiar to most readers, has been rehearsed here because it discloses the milestones on the wrong popish road as Luther saw it. When Luther in 1517 nailed on the church-door in Wittenberg his ninety-five theses against indulgences, he turned from this road aggressively, and once having turned, resolutely proceeded in the contrary direction all the way through: to the initial error back of indulgences, and so to the ecclesiastic manifold perversion of the Christian life and of Christian faith. The system of indulgences was concerned with re-

mission of punishment for sin; it neglected the religious essential, the repentant anguish for the sin itself. So the ecclesiastic system of masses, fasting, pilgrimages, monastic and lay discipline of conduct, because it was preoccupied with ceremonial exactions and religious works, yielded Catholic performance but not a Christian life.

Luther's great treatise of thirty pages, *The Freedom of a Christian Man,* declares in one word man's liberty and his subjection. "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian man is the dutiful servant of all, subject to everyone." For in our subjection in love are we also liberated, and in the freedom of our love is our law. The union of man with God in Christ is a truly moral union: man's will self-identified with Christ in faith, which is the true fulfillment of the law. To this union unaided man cannot attain. Against Erasmus, Luther maintains that the idea of man's moral initiative and freedom is mere dust and illusion. Were it not for Christ's love we should all be slaves to sin. Nowise trusting in ourselves but in God alone, we must surrender; we are then one with Christ in faith, and in this union we are no longer slaves but free and righteous and at peace. In this union there is no constraining fear of penalty or hope of rewards; thoughts of hell or heaven no longer motivate. So Luther emphasizes the disinterestedness of true virtue and piety.

If Luther's theology centers in God's way with sinful man, Luther's ethics is one of loving piety. Morality concerns man's devotion to God expressed in his own life and thought and in his dealings with others.[5] The life of love and faith is not a particular godly compartment of life: clerical, monastic, celibate. In any walk of life man may live with God. Thus God's grace was no longer viewed as a benefice sacerdotally controlled and dispensed. Luther wiped out the barrier between laymen and the clergy, between secular and religious acts, between the two levels of sanctity, lay and clerical. Not one part of life but the whole of it was charged with spiritual possibilities. The husbandman at his plow could serve God as well as the priest at the altar. This did not mean that all could or should be priests, but that the priest was a minister of God in his office as the husbandman and the housewife in theirs, and all fellowmembers in Christ. As the layman could thus live a life truly and fully religious, so the 'religious' man was not to be divorced from the normal human relations. If in God's eyes marriage was fit for any man, it could not be a pollution for the priest. The priest as the husbandman would be the better Christian for being a good husband and father. Men and women were meant by God to marry, to rear their children, work, play, plan, build, study, trade, and in all their various walks of life, in joy and in sorrow, minister to each

other in Christian love and faith as the priest ministers in the hour of worship. Here was a view of godliness and piety that entered every corner and crevice of life and spiritualized it all.

It cannot be maintained that Luther held consistently to this religious ideal. Self-consecrated he was to do God's work, but he did it sometimes with his right hand and sometimes with the other. A warrior against papal-ecclesiastical interference in government, he himself undertook the direction of princes in the reorganization of Protestant Germany. He brought the Bible in German speech to the German people; he inaugurated a system of public schools to teach everyone to read God's Word, and was himself a higher critic in his treatment of the books in the Bible. Yet, in his conference with Zwingli about the Eucharist he wrote in chalk on his desk at the conference the words, "This is my Body," and inflexibly literal in his theology, risked a split in the Reformation rather than yield one iota. Though he preached the freedom of a Christian man, he exacted conformity in belief and practice. Himself a banned heretic in danger of his life, he suppressed heresy in his own ranks, and was prepared for severe treatment of the offenders. Himself a peasant-born, one of the many, he despised the multitude, *Herr Ommes* as he called it, Lord Everybody. In the crushing of the Peasant Revolt he urged the victorious princes and nobles to be merciful, but with ranting peasant pretensions he had no patience whatever: before his counsel of mercy he imposed a ruthless demand for submission.

With tolerant critical intelligence and with the purely secular critical upbuilding of civilization Luther had no sympathy. Unlike his chief associate, Melanchthon, who was a humanist by training and general outlook, Luther was alien to the spirit of the Renaissance. He would not have traded St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans for the whole of classical literature. Melanchthon's humanism tempered somewhat the Lutheran formulation of theology, as in the Augsburg Confession, but Melanchthon bowed to Luther's will more than he bent it. For Luther did not rely on rational conviction any more than on ritual and other externalities. He was God's warrior, and his truth God's truth. The philosopher's trust in logic or experiment was in the end as unavailing as the ecclesiastic trust in sacraments or good works. As "the Pope is an antichrist," so "reason is a harlot," in Luther's judgment, and Copernicus, "a new astrologer and a fool." His character combined strangely a fine spiritual perception and nobility of conscience with the coarseness of a peasant's fiber. He railed at priestly superstitions and preached enlightenment, but his *Table-Talk* bristles with witches and portents and devil's magic. His attempted demolition of

the priestly barriers between man and his Savior still left men in the end subject to an infallible Scripture expounded by a dogmatic church.

The very resistance which Luther's church met from Rome on the one hand, especially during the religious wars and in the Counter-Reformation, and on the other hand from disintegrating radical movements and from more secular and religiously relaxing criticism, imposed the need of a firm strategy on the new Protestant orthodoxy, and by the same token stiffened it spiritually and made it less responsive to the needs of the morally alert modern conscience. Notwithstanding all these facts, the kernel-idea of the Reformation, as Luther espoused and expressed it, was the charter of a new spiritual freedom which in time was bound to go beyond Luther's own immediate program and, within the Church bearing his name and outside of it, reach or seek a fuller realization.

3. Calvinism as a Religious and Moral Discipline

The Reformation movements which we have been considering were manifold protests against ecclesiastic oppression, imposture and exploitation. In the name of Christ, and so trusting to God's word, to the Bible, men turned against Christ's self-styled legates and repudiated them. Men sought free approach to their Savior, confident of justice and hoping for grace. As these protests found organized expression, the new churches were bound to institute principles of order and a régime, but in its initial motive the reform was an emancipation. The layman jerked his hand free of the priestly clutch, and humbly but hopefully walked by himself to the throne of grace.

One Protestant movement, and that most energetic and destined to play a great rôle in moulding the ideals of Western civilization, was from its very outset conceived as a thoroughgoing discipline of life and thought. Genevan Calvinism rejected the pretensions of the papal hierarchy to authority as null and void, but it reemphasized the principle of an authoritative church. The office of the Church of Christ, to examine and dictate the lives of men, was reaffirmed. The reform swept out discredited church-officers, discarded the Romish system of religious direction as unwarranted and corrupt, insisted on using the Bible as God's own *Corpus Juris* for the rule of men, rather than papal bulls or edicts of church-councils, radically revised and restated men's ways of true obedience to God. In all this, however, the basic idea was unaltered but rather underscored, that men were to obey God's will, and that the prime office of God's ministers is to execute God's will in human lives.

To set aside the old system of Christian obedience in order to insti-

tute a new system, called for a character of unwavering convictions and a will of iron. John Calvin (1509-1564) had both. As a student, his readiness to note and his desire to correct the faults of his comrades is said to have earned him the grammatical epithet "the Accusative." He was an intense protagonist, thoroughly possessed by his ideas and duty-bound to spread them. When convinced that certain ideas were God's truth, his advocacy of them was unwavering in its consecration. An advocate by temperament, he was a lawyer by training, and he conceived of human life, of religion and morality and social relations, in rigorously legalistic terms.

Calvinist discipline is a logical conclusion from Calvin's conception of God's way with men. True worship of God requires true understanding of our relation to God, and a first principle of this understanding is our utter dependence on God. Calvin's rejection of all external observance and sacramental magic is only the beginning of his thorough conviction that nothing whatever that we may or may not do can earn or contribute to our salvation one whit. With Luther he goes back to Augustine, and beyond Augustine to Paul, but more rigorously than any of these he declares man's utter depravity and man's incapacity for any good. We children of Adam would be all lost but for God's grace, and as recipients of that saving grace we are wholly undeserving and passive. For men to rely on fasting and penance and alleged holy works to earn them God's pardon and grace is thus impious. There is nothing we can do, here or in the hereafter, whereby we can contribute to our redemption. If God elects to bestow on us his blessed grace, we are saved by his mercy; if not, we are damned by his justice. Our only hope of salvation is in God; in God is our only good, and God's will is the sole determinant of good. Predestination is an ultimate fiat of God's will, and God's will is the final source and rule of all righteousness. What God wills is good just because he wills it.[6]

If all good is thus grounded in God's will, our moral problem becomes primarily one of trust and obedience. If there is no hope and no confidence except in God, even so there is no fear for him who has put his trust in God, and there can be no indecision for him whom God sustains by his grace. Calvinism begins with a recognition of man's depravity and with Divine predestination, but it does not proceed to resignation and fatalist quietism. Were man relying on his own strength and wisdom, he might well quail before the quest of righteousness and the onslaught of sin. But he is by divine grace the bearer of God's own purposes which cannot fail. The least wavering on his part were an insult to God. Our frailty is by God's grace turned to strength:

in redoubled moral endeavor we reaffirm our assurance that God has put his seal of election on our career. Weakness is not to be indulged but mastered. By sheer will-power Calvin ruled his ailing body, a régime of incredible discipline as his biographers record it. As he dealt with weakness in himself, so he controlled it in others. We are God's elect, charged to do God's will: nothing can overwhelm us, and nothing shall.

The very surrender of any self-reliance here issued in iron will through consecration. The men who trusted never themselves but always God's will for them and through them, moved on to overcome and refashion the world. What is sublime in Calvinism is the dynamic vision of human life as a divine charge. Calvin who had negated man's moral capacity and the rational basis of good proceeded to reaffirm the moral reconstruction of the world by Christian men as the heart of Christ's religion. The controlling motive in Calvinist Christianity was not concern for the salvation of one's soul. That was in God's hands, God's predestination. Man's chief end was rather to glorify God and enjoy him forever. The Calvinist's main care was to do God's will. He regarded himself as God's instrument; so he mastered himself, so he undertook to refashion human life, his own and that of others, in accordance with God's law. Thus Calvinism became preëminently the religion of the imperious and aggressive conscience.

This law of God was not left uncertain, to be searched out and established by our reason. God has revealed it directly and unequivocally in his Holy Word. The establishment of God's law and rule in the lives of men thus meant in practice the stringent regulation of belief and conduct by a Biblical code. In principle all issues were to be settled and all policy and doctrine formulated by an appeal to divine authority in the Bible. In practice, Biblical authority was to be sought and found for the course demanded by one's religious and moral convictions. Bible reading, commentary, instruction became major items of a Calvinist life: the exaltation of Sabbath observance, the sermon outstanding, and church-attendance imperative. Men were to learn God's will and to do it. For this end were God's ministers ordained, to guide men in this understanding of God's Word, to spread this knowlege, admonishing men to obedience, instructing civil governors of their task under God, administering unto men the sacraments ordained by God in the Bible. Creed, ritual, individual and social conduct, all were to be subject to Biblical rule.

The execution of this program in Geneva cannot be examined here in any detail. Not easily were men reconciled to the scrutiny and control of their daily lives, even in most personal matters, which Calvin

exacted. The reader of these chronicles is impressed by the exaltation of law, by the stern devotion to duty which animated the Genevan ministers of God: the voice of Sinai rather than the voice of Galilee. These men of God were warriors waging a battle with the powers of evil. Christ's words, "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me," assumed sinister overtones in Calvinism. Indulgence, lenience, pity for the wicked are here viewed as the devil's traps; when it is a question of God's honor, "we ought to trample under foot every affection of nature. . . . The father should not spare his son, the brother the brother, nor the husband his own wife." [7] Apostasy, infidelity to God, blasphemy and heresy were most heinous sins in Calvin's eyes, and we can understand his unrelenting treatment of Servetus. His ruthlessness to Servetus was his devotion to God.

Thus to be a sentinel at his post, loyal to God's charge, was the Calvinist's first duty. This loyal devotion is to espouse God's truth against heresy, defend God's name against blasphemy, remember the Lord's day, attend the Lord's worship, resist the Lord's enemies and their chief, Satan. A man whose life is consecrated to God keeps himself pure and undefiled: not in monastic asceticism but by faithful fulfillment of his conjugal and parental duties, and by moderate satisfaction of appetites to meet the body's needs. Sober, frugal, decent and simple in apparel and demeanor, the Calvinist's outward life is to disclose his true subordination of the less to the more important. Justice, truthfulness, honesty in all dealings are exacted of us in the Bible, and the Calvinist was admonished to obey the spirit as well as the letter of the law.

Two aspects of Calvinist morals call for more special notice. They involve fields of activity in which Calvinism was destined to exercise profound influence upon the course of modern civilization: in political and in economic relations.

On Calvin's premises we should expect him to be an advocate of obedience to established law. Even when government is oppressive, the Christian's duty must be one of patient submission. Calvin no more than Luther would have countenanced popular rebellion. Princes and magistrates rule by divine right and ordinance, and to resist them is to resist God. But what are men to do when the rulers defy God's will, when to obey them is to resist God? Then, Calvin did not hesitate to conclude, the higher obedience must prevail. This might mean passive resistance and endurance of all that it might entail; it did not yet mean the right of active rebellion. In occasional utterances of Calvin more recognition is given to revolt against ungodly tyranny than he is prepared to advocate in systematic treatises. But, once admitting the principle that the will of God is sovereign and prevailing over any other

authority, the ground was prepared for the organized resistance to religious oppression, and for the refashionment of governments in accordance with the demands of men's Christian conscience: in the Netherlands, in Scotland, in Puritan England, and in the career of Pilgrim and Puritan on American shores. Calvin's levelling of all men to like passivity in God's hands, as it erased rank and dignity, left all men equal before God: thus sowing in politics the seeds of democracy. Two great words of John Knox (1505-1572) show the early fruition of these ideas. "If princes exceed their bounds and do against that wherefore they should be obeyed," he told Mary Queen of Scots, "it is no doubt but they may be resisted, even by power." [8] And when she asked him scornfully: "What are you within this Commonwealth?" he answered: "A subject born within the same, Madam. And albeit I neither be Earl, Lord, nor Baron within it, yet has God made me (however abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same." [9]

Calvinism was a strenuous gospel; in the economic field it was bound to emphasize the discipline of hard work, the virtue of industry. Productive labor and a thrifty way of life kept men out of the devil's temptations. But an industrious life also led to the amassing of the world's goods, and as the Gospel says, "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." There was grave hazard in the engrossment of riches. In abandoning the monastic ideal, the reformers advocated men's service of God in their daily occupations. But if, as Luther said, the housemaid served God at her sweeping as the priest at the altar, then even so did craftsman and trader. To maintain this fidelity to the task and calling in which God has set us, without becoming wordly and forgetting God, was the Protestant's problem. The idea that all a man achieves is due to God might and did lead the rich to regard their prosperity as a mark of divine approval, in a manner of thinking dangerously recalling that of Job's three friends. Wealth-getting might itself thus attain a certain moral dignity. This logic might proceed further: it is good discipline for the servant to labor hard and be patient and satisfied with his meager lot; and it is good for the master by good management to become steward of an ever increasing property: and in whatever station man can or may live his life, he should glorify God.

Does this course of ideas, advocating not only man's serving God *in* their daily tasks, but *by* their task and vocation, thus morally dignifying gainful pursuits: does it help to provide a clear Calvinistic conscience for the middle class magnate in his trading and hiring and in his piling up of fortunes: does it clear the ground morally for the

capitalistic spirit which modern economic conditions in manufacture, commerce and finance were stimulating? This conclusion has received considerable attention in our time, especially due to the vigorous advocacy of it in Max Weber's essay, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.*[10] The recognition of profitable work as duty, the moral respect for prosperity and the promotion of it as a responsibility, in a way which elevated acquisitive greed to zealous stewardship; the calm acceptance of the stern actualities of the economic order as divinely ordained, the poverty of the poor and the wealth of the rich: these ideas persisted, and even after their initially religious motivation was no longer dominant in men's minds, a self-justifying quasi-moral complacency sustained the capitalist in his exploitation of the less favored. To connect Protestantism, and Calvin explicitly, with the rise of modern capitalism, might involve some arbitrary distribution of emphasis. But in the main the inference seems to hold: from the religious dignifying of productive and gainful work at one's calling, to the readier exploitation of the economic advantages which modern life placed within the reach of the propertied classes. The admonition to serve God in one's calling and daily business stirred not unnaturally the zeal to 'build up the business'—and in due course of time, in a more secular mood and setting, might and did justify the unperturbed conclusion that 'business is business,' a conclusion which, be it not overlooked, Calvin himself would have regarded with abhorrence.

The Catholic ideal of monastic withdrawal and of sacerdotalism faced the hazard of a cleavage between religion and the daily lives of men. The Protestant ideal of piety in the secular pursuits of life was confronted with the hazard of invading worldliness. The gravity of both hazards is manifested, in medieval and in modern life.

4. The Condemnation of the Established Social Order as Unchristian

We have noted the essentially practical-moral motivation of the Protestant Reformation. It is disclosed alike in what the reformers accepted from the Catholic tradition without protest and in the character of the excesses which the Reformation occasioned. Protestantism was radical in its revision of Catholic theology, but always concerning God's way with men: in theodicy, salvation, godliness, divine worship and ministration. The more metaphysical issues were left as they stood. The doctrine of the Trinity was reaffirmed in strict orthodoxy by the principal reformers. Servetus and the Socinian movement were off the main tracks of religious reform and aroused no general sympathy.

Thus theologically respectable in their reaffirmation of the Nicene

Creed, the great reformers were also conservative in their espousal of the moral and social ideals of the solid substantial classes. Calvin preached the Bible in support of middle class morals; Luther appealed to the nobility and to the decently established people of Germany. But there were less 'reasonable' minds, prepared to go greater lengths in the name of Christ, alike in neglecting the ordinary scruples of acceptable moral conduct and in challenging established institutions political and economic.

The followers of Johannes Agricola (1494-1566) drew "antinomian" conclusions from Luther's doctrine of justification by faith. If one has received the blessing of God's grace, the conventional rules and restrictions of conduct concerned him as little as the traditional ecclesiastic ritual. No sins could stain the soul which Christ's blood had washed clean. Here in a Protestant setting was the laxity of Christian converts against which St. Paul had protested; here was the old 'supermoral' excellence of the *perfecti* in the Catharist heresy, in assured holiness dismissing the ordinary ethical requirements of the godly life: religious exaltation itself seemingly nursing loose conduct. Yet these Antinomians, scorners of laws, gave only an extreme and perverse form of a profound idea which was basic in the Reformation and was bound to yield its fruits in a more mature and expansive conception of morality. The emphasis on the spiritual kernel in true piety, as it transcends external observance, transcends also outward moral conformity. On the pattern of Jesus' spiritual revision of the Mosaic code, the Reformation was to go beyond the act to the spirit animating the act. Of this spirit and more thorough moral devotion, not satisfied with mere conduct, the Antinomian negligence of moral laws and the resultant laxity may be regarded as perversions.

An undercurrent in the uprising against ecclesiastic overlordship was a social protest of serfs and peasants to whom the free gospel of Christ was a gospel of freedom from any kind of oppression. Challenging social inequality as unchristian tyranny, these revolts undertook a program of levelling down which, stripping the lord of his ill-gotten superfluities, might clothe the naked and yield them house and land and the crust of bread which they earned. Movements of various initial motivation tended to issue finally in social rebellion.

Half a century before the German Christian-social uprisings, the luxury of the rich had been denounced as corrupt and their pretended art as lewd idolatry by Girolamo Savonarola of Florence (1452-1498). His social reform undertook the suppression of gambling, of pornography, and of indecent festivals and private impurity. His followers

tore jewels and fineries and rich apparel off the ladies and cavaliers and piled them on their holy bonfires. But beyond lewd luxury, Savonarola defied the exploitation of the poor by the rich as he had defied bishop and Medici and pope. His rule of Christ in Florence was to be a rule of social justice, of universal honest labor, of freedom from oppression. His ability to distinguish great art and literature from alleged culture pandering to the depraved tastes of the luxurious, is not easy to determine. Among his followers were rude destructive fanatics, driven by a religious hysteria, yet his friends included also some of the great artists and thinkers of Florence. His followers were unreliable: at the next turn of mob-excitement they stood around his stake as they had stood around his bonfires, cursing the devil and praising the Lord.

The tendency of church-reform to turn into a social-economic revolt has been noted in English Lollardy. It showed itself in the Hussite movement, in the Taborite party, the more extreme members of which were ready for Christ's millennium, in which there were to be no mine or thine, no highborn or lowborn, no subject or ruler, but all free and equal before the Lord.

The most extensive revolt, stubborn in its devotion, was the German peasant uprising with which some of the Anabaptists were connected, and which cost Luther much anguish and disclosed the range of ruthlessness of which he was capable. The Anabaptists carried the Protestant rejection of the Church-hierarchy to its logical extreme. They preached a free church in a free state. If each man was to be guided by the Holy Spirit in interpreting God's will for him as expressed in the Gospel, variety of sects, not unanimity was to be expected, and rebellion against the established order as unchristian. The peasants heard the gospel of emancipation and interpreted it in their own most natural way. It was a rude shock to them when Martin Luther sided in the name of Christ with their oppressors. Neither Luther nor Calvin understood the full social inferences, political and economic, of the Protestant doctrine that God deals directly with each man. The doctrine of the spiritual worth of each man in God's sight had to germinate long before it yielded its fruit, in a soil prepared by critical thought and by a complexity of political and social-economic factors, in the modern democratic ideal. Its full harvest is not yet, but coming.

The fact that modern democracy and social-economic liberalism derive in a real measure from the same ideas which by other routes of inference led to the capitalistic spirit, shows the manifold fertility but also the manifold hazard of the Protestant bold venture of conscience, to put Christ's religion to work in the daily lives of men.

5. Renaissance and Reformation: A Retrospect and a Glance Ahead

The Renaissance and the Reformation represent a twofold revolt against authoritarianism. Different motives and different aims control the development of these two movements, and their destiny in the life of modern civilization. The Renaissance is the revolt of the critical intelligence. The revival of Hellenism was but the manifestation of a revived secularism, a zest for the here and now: a new lease of vigorous thought, self-reliant, bold in experiment and speculation. In place of self-neglect and self-disdain, we now have the liveliest self-observation, a lyrical quality of mind. Interest in oneself deepens interest in one's immediate environment: humanism leads to naturalism. Man studies the physical world, not as the threshold to the heavenly, but as his real home and dwelling place: studies to understand its laws for the sake of the understanding, but also for the sake of the power which understanding yields. Not through magic but through science is nature to be mastered. In the seventeenth century Francis Bacon and Hobbes both declare that power is in knowledge. This knowledge is brought down to earth: it may be expressed in the universal language of Latin or of mathematics, but thinkers and writers are in direct contact with their social milieu; they think and write increasingly in the vernacular. European thought comes to reflect the variety of national temperament, and it also seeps down as it were and enters the spiritual life of the large masses. On the one hand is an inner change in Western culture, and on the other hand it is externally refashioned by the application of science to the exploitation of the resources of nature: an inner and an outer worldliness.

We may perceive more clearly, then, the motivation and also the tremendous cultural significance of the Renaissance. But we should not overlook the immaturity and the unsteadiness of this new rush of life and adolescent sweep and enthusiasm. The Renaissance mind is a free mind, prizing new instances above old citations, fertile, self-reliant even when inclined to scepticism; indefatigable it is, but also fantastic. For all its disdain of superstition, it is still credulous, with a penchant for the occult and marvelous. It is uncontrolled, inchoate and intemperate. Renaissance Europe stands as it were with its mouth open, aching to speak out but not quite knowing what to say. One thing it seeks: a test, a standard other than dogmatic authority and pontifical fiat. The modern knowledge is to be man's knowledge, lived, tested, and proved by man, and the modern virtues are to be man's virtues, and his life a man's life, a life of search after achieved not re-

vealed truth, and a striving after attained, not vouchsafed perfection.

If the spirit of the Renaissance is the revolt of the critical intelligence, the Reformation is the protest of the aroused and alert conscience. The individual soul which for centuries had hoped to reach the ear of God only by ecclesiastic intermediaries, now appeals from the institution directly to God's throne. Martin Luther's declaration, "My cause is God's cause," is characteristic, and typical of the modern conscience. Even within the folds of Roman Catholicism, we find echoes of the same spirit. So more than a century after Luther, Pascal protests: "If my writings are condemned in Rome, what I condemn in them is condemned in Heaven. . . . Lord Jesus, I appeal to your tribunal!" [11]

Protestant secularism is very real, but we should not mistake its inner spirit. In their initial motives the reformers were even less wordly than Rome in the Renaissance. To be assured of this, one has only to compare Luther and Calvin with the Bembos, the Medicis, the Borgias. In fact, it is for the sake of a more thorough deliverance from worldliness that the Protestant reformer turned secular. He would free the religious conscience from formal authority and from the institution; he would bring the soul of man directly to God. Each man is himself to read God's holy word, and it is for this purpose, to enable the people to read the Bible themselves, that public education systems were organized, the first ones in Germany, at the special demand of Luther. The traditional ideal of a double-level sanctity, lay and clerical, is abandoned, and along with it the monastic ideal and the celibacy of the clergy. The new Protestant conscience is not to flee the world. It is to be in the world, but not of it, in it participating in all the activities of domestic, social, economic, and political life, but transforming and spiritualizing these very activities. It is to be secular, but not worldly. Protestantism is thus an effort to reconcile and fuse secularism and spirituality.

It is needless to point out that this ideal undergoes modifications. A new type of authoritarianism arises; rigid Bibliolatry replaces the more flexible Catholic basis of the Living Church. Protestantism, whose merit presumably was to have been its vigilant openminded unorthodoxy, develops its own tradition, unyielding and often bigoted. But modern thought presses on, critical of the new orthodoxy as of the old. The intelligence of modern man, his scientific integrity, and his religious conscience find ever new prospects, and likewise new problems. The progress of science, with the conquest of nature and the wide spread of knowledge, lead to a new civilization, to a new

social order, to a radically new order of thought. To deal with their new issues men need critical standards. Authoritarianism gone, what are we to respect, to what can we appeal? What secular standard is to replace the standard of theological tradition? So we see our problems squarely before us.

Part II

MODERN ETHICS: TO THE TIME OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

CHAPTER VI

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN ETHICS



1. Modern Life in Its Historical Setting

The conventional division of our civilization into three periods, ancient, medieval, and modern, has been criticized by historians as likely to mislead. It might suggest more definite breaks in the historical process than the actual facts disclose. By centering attention on one or another of these periods, it might yield a wrong perspective: a pious estimate of the medieval as the age of revealed and recognized Truth, in relation to which antiquity was at best only an introduction, and modern culture largely a deplorable misdirection; or else a classicist view of the 'Dark Ages,' and of modern civilization as only the partial and also confused recovery of "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome"; or yet again, the more self-assured view of our modern civilization as itself the real sunrise of man, of which antiquity was the early dawn and medieval life the too prolonged twilight.

Now even our broad survey of Western civilization, from the first chapters of Greek philosophy through the course of medieval culture, has served to reveal, on the one hand, the need of caution in any opposition which we may be inclined to make of medieval and ancient ideas. But on the other hand it has exposed the essential differences in spiritual temper and outlook which characterize these two periods of history. We have seen Greek philosophical ideas enter vitally in the formulation of Christian theology, and ancient problems and issues seek restatement in the development of scholasticism, for which Aristotle came to be the master of those who know. But equally calling for notice is the profound change in tone and atmosphere which Christianity introduced in European thought: the new spiritual landscape and objective, and the correspondingly new civilization which resulted. From Augustine to Aquinas medieval thought moved from a Platonic to an Aristotelian philosophical orientation. Yet can the difference between Aristotle and Plato be compared with the difference between either of them and their respective Christian advocates? So likewise our modern age has been described as utterly breaking with its immediate medieval past in order to revive and regain its ancient

classical heritage. But while the Renaissance was in part a return and a revival, essentially it was a new life, as radical as the new birth of the pagans converted to Christianity. The Reformation similarly was nothing sudden but the result of a long process of protest and attempted revision in the relations of Church and state, of clergy and people. But though it was a manifold reform, yet the Reformation was more: a transformation of the rôle and meaning of religion, of what it could be and should be in the life and in the thought of men. The concurrent influence of these movements is reflected in the complex modern temper. As we cross now the threshold of modern civilization, the human and the cosmic scene both change; the change is real and radical, but it is not abrupt, nor is it a complete breach with the past.

The history of ideas in the West, from the dawn of philosophy on the outskirts of the Greek world to the present, covers a span of twenty-five centuries. The first of these two and a half millennia begins with the cosmologists of the Milesian school in 600 B. C. and finds its definite termination in the achieved systematic theology of St. Augustine, about 400 A. D. The second period of a thousand years, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, begins with the collapse of Imperial Rome, marks the rise of Papal Rome, and closes with the definite decline of the latter. When St. Augustine was writing *The City of God*, the empire was divided; a hundred years earlier six men had claimed the imperial crown which Constantine finally assumed in the Byzantium that was to be his city, Constantinople. Almost a thousand years later, when Petrarch was inaugurating modern scholarship and modern literature, declared successors to the seat of Christ's Vicar were wearing the tiara, not in Rome but in French Avignon, and before the end of Petrarch's century two popes were blessing and anathematizing in the name of God, and later a third claimant was to add to the pontifical confusion.

Two more pairs of dates will help fix in our minds the connection of renascent modern thought with its ancient past. Twenty centuries after the birth of Democritus (460 B. C.), the first systematic atomist of antiquity, the works of Copernicus and Vesalius, published in 1543, marked the inauguration of definite scientific methods, in astronomy and anatomy. Two thousand years after 399 B. C., when Socrates sealed with his death the high principles of theory and practice which Plato and Aristotle were to perfect, Giordano Bruno, burned in 1600 by the Inquisition in Rome, vindicated by his martyrdom the modern secular saintliness, consecration to the pursuit of truth wherever it may lead. Fifteen centuries ago, St. Augustine was deriding the superstitions and denouncing the vices of antiquity, challenging pagan religion to

show any pure moral ideals, and forecasting the disintegration of festered Rome. Five centuries ago, humanist and reformer, in bitter or in lewd satire or in stern homily, were stigmatizing the corruption of pope and bishop, monk and nun, and proclaiming the new version of human life and the new vision and voice of God. And in our time prophets of a newer day are proclaiming the decline of modern civilization, its inevitable and deserved fall, and the rise of a new social order, communist or fascist or some other.

Here we are right in the middle of the third thousand years of Western culture. Are we now about to rehearse the centuries of gradual dissolution, despite outward pomp and empire, which marked the close of antiquity? But the decline of antiquity was the rise of a new vision of the spirit, which after these twenty centuries is still the most sublime and saving gesture of humanity. After the Dark Ages Christian intelligence undertook and achieved its vindication in medieval culture. Can we hope that the twilight in which we seem to be moving today is a twilight not before night but before dawn: that we are reaching the end of the dark ages of materialism; that the modern mind, without surrendering the tools by which it has achieved its mastery of material nature, will now more fully vindicate its own self-recognition and achieve self-mastery and a more humane life individual and social? This would be a new humanism indeed, a renaissance and a reformation more thoroughgoing than those which we examined in the two previous chapters. With this uncertain glance ahead, we turn now to consider the modern spirit which has refashioned and transfigured our civilization inside and out.

2. *The Search for a Moral Standard*

The Protestant Reformation, in its reaction against the monastic ideal of saintliness, in its effacement of the double standard of Christian perfection, lay and clerical, in its aspiration to imbue everyday secular life with religious significance, had the germinal ideas of a thoroughgoing ethical reform. But in the newly established and militant Protestant churches the demand for institutional cohesion found expression in the articulation of a new orthodoxy appealing to Biblical sanctions. In its moral outlook it was sometimes moved more deeply by the Decalogue than by the Sermon on the Mount.

Despite bitter struggle and long religious wars, permanent success of the Reformation in the Teutonic North and in Great Britain was being definitely assured. In France the Huguenot cause wavered and was lost; in Spain church reform never had a chance; and in Italy it was ruled out by the more radical and manifold reaction, moral and

intellectual, of the Renaissance. When the Italian of the sixteenth century was moved to moral aspiration, his vision was apt to be Platonic or Neoplatonic rather than Pauline-Biblical.

Even though a Pope in Rome might thank God "for the grace vouchsafed to Christendom" [1] in the massacre of St. Bartholomew's (1572), Catholic reaction to the Protestant upheaval was not one of violent resistance and anathemas only. Orthodoxy undertook a reform of its own. Certain historians have judged that precisely the explicit religious challenge of Protestantism was needed to rouse the Church to a more vigorous reaffirmation, thus checking what otherwise might have been its thorough disintegration by the Renaissance. It was not only the rising dominion of Spain nor the redoubled terror of the Inquisition which checked the rapid spread of the Protestant movement and sustained the Papacy, but the reassertion of ecclesiastic vitality and the new Catholic ardor and astute strategy of the Jesuit order.

The missionary zeal of the Jesuits, which reclaimed large regions in Central Europe for Rome and which within the lifetime of the founder, Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), spread their activities from Brazil to Central Africa and to Japan, cannot engage our attention here; nor yet their organization disciplined with military strictness autocratically generalled and demanding for its effectiveness mutual moral-religious espionage. We can only allude to the Jesuit initial reliance on intensely concentrated meditation as a means of achieving utter devotion to the purpose of the order. The Jesuit tactics call for more special notice, for they were of grave moral import. The object of all this discipline was to win soldiers for the Society of Jesus, to win the world for Christ; and in order to win the world, the Jesuit was ready to enter the world and to accommodate himself to it. The Jesuit generals sought out men of social standing and substance; they realized the modern power of culture and of capital, both, and the strong hold of worldliness on modern men. In their enthusiasm to spread the faith, they were prepared to make concessions to human frailty in a manner which invited moral hazards. In the pursuit of a good cause, or in exceptional and extenuating circumstances, a man might transgress established laws and the ordinary moral code without guilt of sin. Escobar's casuistic treatise on Cases of Conscience (1627) was a notorious instance of the diplomatic accommodation of principle to various emergency in matters of morality. Here was a sinister version of St. Paul's procedure: "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

Where righteousness and piety were so sinuous, men could readily believe themselves capable of meeting relaxed requirements. The

Pelagian tenor of the Jesuit-Molinist doctrine of grace was not so much motivated by moral energy of will as by laxity of principle and by worldliness. Jesuit pliancy aroused indignation in minds bent on eternal verity and righteousness. Pascal's *Provinciales* are the immortal record of that upright resistance. But the Jesuit's implied renunciation of any finality or universality of moral principle warranted sceptical inferences, and the Jesuit accommodation of divine law to changing circumstances allowed of more frankly secular empiricist development.

Although the spread of Protestantism compelled the traditional Catholic orthodoxy to undertake a more convincing and acceptable definition of its position, this redefinition, when it was formulated, had to make its appeal to critical minds already accustomed to think in terms of evidence and proof rather than of authoritarian pronouncements. Two years before the opening of the Council of Trent in 1545, modern physical and biological science, as was noted, had been vindicated in the famous works of Copernicus and Vesalius. The new methods, theoretical and experimental, promised mastery of the laws of nature. The demand for a like mastery of the laws of human character was inevitable.

The secular reaction against authoritarianism which characterized the Renaissance, exacted a scientific-philosophical restatement of morals. The importance of a critical standard of moral value was thus accentuated. For minds relying ultimately on divine revelation and so conceiving of virtue and vice as obedience and disobedience to God's will, both the source and the sanction of morality might be defined in authoritarian statement. A moralist's problem might then be merely one of exposition and exhortation. To be sure, even then one might refer moral distinctions to the necessarily perfect choice of Divine Reason, or else one might regard them as beyond justification, depending upon the unsearchable fiat of God's will. Still, in either case, we might be told, Divine Reason or Divine Will had expressed itself. Morality would consist in directing our reason and our will to accord with the Divine.

If now, however, we were to assume deliberately the secular standpoint, then instead of confidently formulating moral principles in terms of religious dogma, both morality and religion would present themselves to the undogmatic mind as problems requiring solution in terms of a view of the world sufficiently comprehensive to admit of their reasonable inclusion and sufficiently well established to command a conviction on its merits rather than on mere faith and dictation. To what sanctions and standards were critical minds to appeal in the secular re-

statement of the moral values of human conduct, of right and wrong, obligations individual and social? In ethics as in the other fields of philosophical inquiry, the first recognized need of the modern mind was the need of a standard, the demand for a systematic critical method.

The independence of ethics from theology is advocated explicitly by Pierre Charron (1541-1603) in his book *On Wisdom*. Charron begins with the Socratic motto: Man should know himself. In the first part of his work he undertakes a survey and an inventory of man, his members, humors, passions, conditions. In the second part, in order to free morals from their vassalage to theology, he undertakes a natural history of religion, remarkably bold and keen for a son of the sixteenth century. Religion is shown as a reflection of general culture. There is scarcely anything, high or low, that has not been adored somewhere. The perfection of human life is in the marriage of true virtue and true piety; but this cannot be attained so long as men demand of morality a subservience to religion.

Charron's conviction of the autonomy of ethics leads him to firm utterance. "I will that a man be good without paradise or hell: these words seem horrible and abominable to me: if I were not a Christian, if I did not have fear of God and of damnation, I would do or would not do thus and so. O mean and miserable one, what thanks deservest thou for what thou dost? . . . I will that thou be an honest man, even though no one should ever know it: I will that thou do the good because nature and reason (that is God) willeth it: the law, and the general policy of the world, whereof thou art a part requireth it; so as thou canst not consent to be any other, except thou go against thyself, thy essence, thy good, thy end; and then let come what may. . . . Those who make probity follow religion and be subservient to it pervert all order." [2] The Church compelled Charron to alter this passage if his book was to escape condemnation. But for all his restraints and retractions, he was already a modern critical spirit. In the first year of the seventeenth century, one year after the burning of Giordano Bruno as a heretic, Charron was laying the foundations of an autonomous secular ethics, deeply convinced that moral perfection was in the normal unfolding of man's native character.

It is in his insistence on the autonomy of ethics and in his conception of virtue as normal human expression that his significance consists rather than in his detailed exposition of morals contained in the third part of his book. He calls man's practical wisdom *Prudhommie*, honesty or integrity, fundamental excellence or soundness of human character. He distinguishes it from the proper and pedantic prudence,

subservient to authority and custom. His is a virile virtue, the native, self-reliant, and generous fruition of man's nature. It is the normal direction of man's will towards the good in every department of life. Here we have a more serious and systematic advocacy of the faith that was also in Rabelais, that man needs only the fullest normal development to realize the fullest perfection. This moral self-reliance in Charron combines strangely with a sceptical view of man's intellectual capacities.

3. *Expansion of the Moral Universe: Giordano Bruno*

The distinctive note of Renaissance philosophy, the note of humanism, cosmological and ethical, and the defiant non-conformity and pioneering zeal have been observed already in a number of men. No one reveals them more impressively than Giordano Bruno (1548-1600). Bruno's character is an epitome of the strains and strivings of the early modern spirit. His inquiries are marked by poetic longing and speculative ecstasy, rebellious chafing and scorn for dogmatism, ardent partisanship, and a certain keenness for the repulsive. An intense and defiant protagonist, his mind required a cause and a challenge in order to yield its utmost. Had he not entered the Dominican cloister, there seeking refuge from the lures of a too fiery adolescence and there hoping for the transports and peace of the studious life, posterity might never have had occasion to remember him; and no doubt, by arousing his resistance, Dominican rigor served to stimulate him intellectually. But he could not abide in his cell, and out of it was condemned to life-long wandering and in the end to persecution and martyrdom.

Forced to flee from the Neapolitan cloister which three centuries before him had nourished St. Thomas Aquinas, he marched to Rome, but found there Thomas' Aristotelianism without the Thomistic spirit of inquiry. Replying to repression with defiance, he proceeded north, casting off his monastic garb and again resuming it, trying to believe himself a good Catholic but consistently refusing to reënter his cell. He would not bow down to ecclesiastic discipline, be it Catholic or Calvinist or Lutheran. From Geneva to Toulouse, to Paris, to London and Oxford, back to Paris, to Wittenberg, Helmstädt and to Frankfurt, he won the support of secular minds, princes and nobles and courtiers, and of the young, but the robed and surpliced intelligence suspected and resisted his ways and his teachings. Lured back to his Italy by the invitation of Giovanni Mocenigo, he came to Venice and fell into the trap of the Inquisition. Through eight years of imprisonment he grew in firmness of resistance. The man who, when first arraigned, had

sought refuge in the double truth doctrine, met his death verdict and walked to the stake with the words: "You who sentence me are in greater fear than I who am condemned."

Against the Thomistic Aristotelianism of the Church, Bruno advocated the new view of the world and a new outlook and new ideals for mankind. His spirit is one of stalwart independence. He does not turn from Aristotle to a newer authority, to Telesio or Nicholas of Cusa. He stakes his fate on the Copernican astronomy, but stakes it as a champion and not as a mere disciple. He perceives and develops the cosmic-philosophical implications of the heliocentric theory. Against the Rome-centered meager universe of church-tradition, Bruno conceives an infinite system of systems, without center or periphery, a universe manifesting and permeated by Deity. In his conception of God he recalls Plotinus and foreshadows Spinoza and Leibniz. In Lucretian words Bruno may describe matter as the heart and soul of nature, but in a Platonic spirit he reveals the soul of man as athirst for the infinite and intelligible world, its true homeland and its destiny.

The construction of a system of moral philosophy was one of Bruno's cherished projects, but he did not carry it out. A likely forecast of its fundamental principles is supplied in his two ethical essays written during his stay in England, *The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast*, and the dialogues *On the Heroic Enthusiasms*. These two works reflect characteristic features of his philosophy: his attack on dogmatism and superstition and dull conventional conformity, his intrepid championship of the single-minded pursuit of truth, his poetic sense of the tragedy of moral aspiration, of mortal man ever consumed with the thirst for the ideal that ever eludes his grasp.

The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast is a thinly veiled allegory.[3] Zeus, eloquently repentant, is portrayed as taking counsel with the gods about the renaming of the heavenly bodies. To stars and constellations, he says, we have given names recalling vile memories; we have written the stories of our scandals all over the sky; "our shame and nakedness are laid open, and made manifest to the eyes of mortals;"[4] the whole world is despising us for it. It is time to change all this: the names of the celestial bodies should no longer tell stories of vice but rather proclaim exalted virtues. This proposal stirs a lively discussion: if each star is to be named after some virtue or excellence, it becomes essential to determine what names the brightest stars should bear. What moral excellence is most worthy of the first place in heaven?

By this clever conceit Bruno advocates a new scale of moral values, in opposition to the vices of coarse sensuality and the alleged virtues of ecclesiastical traditionalism. The objects of his attack are lust and

avarice, theft and trickery and low hatred, but more fundamentally dull conformity and superstition. The triumphant beasts whose expulsion is the theme of his work, the celestial bears, dragons, lions, scorpions and the like, are in reality the bestial forms which sensuality and superstition assume in mentally supine men. In a theological system of morals, faith and submission to dogmatic authority are exalted virtues; but dogmatism breeds sophistry, cunning, imposture and hard intolerance; the submission to it makes for stupid inertia or else hypocrisy; superstition is cruel, malicious and bestial; sensuality brutalizes. Against them all Bruno champions Truth, Prudence, Wisdom, Law, Judgment, Courage, Culture, Repentance, Simplicity, Solicitude, Philanthropy.[5] These are the brightest stars in the life of man. The highest place of all is assigned to Truth. Supreme by inherent right, it determines the place and the proper rôle of the other virtues. Amid all changes it abides, even though men's visions of it alter. It provides the light and the goal, and devotion to it is the dynamic for any thorough and just reformation of human life. It is both compass and beacon-light.

A darker and tragic sense is revealed in the work *On the Heroic Enthusiasms.* The pursuit of the ideal that alone ennobles human life is a pursuit without end or final consummation. The true life of the spirit is a life of unremitting struggle, exalting but inconclusive. Only a beast can live supinely in the present, and uniform contentment is a mark of dull animality in a man. The mother of sensual bliss is ignorance, but "heroic love is a torment, . . . it feels ambition, emulation, suspicion and dread."[6] Through the infinite capacity which it possesses, our finite mind is eternal: finite in itself, it is yet infinite in its ever-outreaching aspiration. The heroic soul ever outstrips itself, but in so doing is overwhelmed and tragically brought down: so exalted in endeavor, in achievement so meager! Bruno sings of a boy in a boat, venturing too far on the treacherous waves that threaten to engulf him and his exploring temerity. Likewise the heroic soul is "engulfed in the abyss of incomprehensible excellence."[7] Or again, in the sonnet, whether Bruno's or Tansillo's, on the soaring zeal of man:

> Now that these wings to speed my wish ascend,
> The more I feel vast air beneath my feet,
> The more towards boundless air on pinions fleet,
> Spurning the earth, soaring to Heaven, I tend:
> Nor makes them stoop their flight the direful end
> Of Daedal's son; but upward still they beat:—
> What life the while with my life can compete,
> Though dead to earth at last I shall descend?

My own heart's voice in the void air I hear:
"Where wilt thou bear me, O rash man? Recall
Thy daring will! This boldness waits on fear!"
"Dread not," I answer, "that tremendous fall!
Strike through the clouds, and smile when death is near,
If death so glorious be our doom at all." [8]

Bruno's ethics is thus seen clearly to touch hands with his cosmology. To him the Ptolemaic world seemed enclosed and meager, and his mind was ravished by the thought of a limitless universe, an infinite system of systems. In the world of values, he visions man as a pilgrim on an endless quest, ever-perfectible and never perfect, thus ever ennobled and never content, and through it all ever dragged down by the coarse one that is also himself.

4. Scepticism Serene and Tragic: Montaigne and Pascal

Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake in Rome in the year 1600. But by a strange irony, the very official who had demanded Bruno's transfer from the Venetian to the Roman Inquisition also arranged for Galileo to lecture at the University of Padua! When Galileo in turn faced the Inquisition, charged with teaching heretical doctrines, he stated that he was not competent to decide whether his doctrines were in strict accord with the Word of God, but he felt certain that, the Word of God being true, his surest way of conforming to it was by establishing the truth of his own doctrines. In spite of this wisdom pious or ironical, Galileo had to abjure his heretical teaching that the earth revolved around the sun, and spent his last years in imprisonment. Yet in more than one sense time proved his traditionally reported words, *E pur si muove!* It moves just the same!—in spite of ecclesiastic anathemas: the earth in its orbit around the sun, and likewise the critical mind of man towards the truth. But this pursuit of the truth is a criticism not only of traditional ideas but of the very possibility of truth. This sceptical vein in modern thought invites our attention.

Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

In the critical ethics of Charron, just as in the moral and religious thought of Pascal, there is a strong sceptical undercurrent. Charron sails with it, seeking a landing-place ashore. Pascal tragically strives to stem the current. Before them both, Montaigne had been content to drift and observe the flood of incertitude. His motto was a confession in a question: "*Que sçai-je?—What do I know?*"

We should not be misled by Montaigne's motto in thinking that he is to be caught in this or in any other formula. His scepticism is

not his doctrine. He is always frank and always various, ever leaving the clearest impression of himself yet eluding definition. Completely free of the doctrinaire tendency to reduce the concrete realities of life to abstract statement, Montaigne is a direct reporter of himself and of his environment. Both of these he finds to be protean in character: "their most universal quality is diversity." If he speaks variously of himself, it is because he regards himself variously; in him are all contrarieties and turns and manners: "bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; prating, silent; laborious, delicate; ingenious, heavy; melancholic, pleasant; lying, true; knowing, ignorant; liberal, covetous, and prodigal: I find all this in myself, more or less, according as I turn myself about; and whoever will sift himself to the bottom, will find in himself, and even in his own judgment, this volubility and discordance." How is he then to be dogmatic? Even while framing his formula, his ever mobile experience renders it antiquated and unfit. His sceptical vein is thus primarily frankness of utterance. He does not formulate or advocate; he is content to reflect and relate. His *Essays* are a mirror and a meditation.[9]

Montaigne's is a mellow wisdom, possessing but not possessed by knowledge, and least by erudition. He knows his books as he knows his friends; he does not merely read his sages, he converses with them, and in the converse ancient wisdom is distilled and made his own. Montaigne is no pedantic ant gathering his crumbs of learning from here and there into a heap of commentary. Anticipating Francis Bacon, he learns wisdom from the bees. They gather their sweetness from this flower and that, but the honey is neither thyme nor marjoram but their very own. So Montaigne's *Essays* may be permeated by Seneca or Plutarch, yet it is not so much about Plutarch or Seneca that we learn from Montaigne, but always about himself: "Of what language soever my books speak to me in, I always speak to them in my own." The lives and thoughts of other men and the large world of nature, as they enter his experience, are reflected in but also colored by the ceaseless play of his own temperament.[10]

Thus understanding others, and himself most of all, he learns caution in judgment. Bigotry is pathetic conceit, and when fanaticism leads to persecution, its injustice is as horrible as it is absurd. Himself uncertain, Montaigne would not disdain the professed certainty of others. Time had been when he shared Seneca's Stoicism, and to its appeal his soul could still respond. Time had been when the Catholic faith was a reality to him; it might still become his firm refuge before the twilight closed over him; it still remained a fair alternative. Below his library was his chapel; above him, the tower bell sounded duly the *Ave Maria.*[11]

Never closing the gates of firm conviction, Montaigne yet remained outside. The gates were so many and various. For all his suavity and genial humor, Montaigne understood what firm convictions are and what they mean to man, and he would not entrust his life to what his reason did not and could not sustain. He reviewed the welter of customs the world over, and he shrank from moral dogmatism. Cannibalism, theft, murder, the most unbridled license have been sanctioned and approved by men in good faith; good and evil generally have been judged by people in terms of their own peculiar habits and conventions. This recital in the book of another might lead to cynical depression. Montaigne is only led to reaffirmed ironic tolerance. Let Papist and Protestant and confirmed philosopher of whatever stripe affirm and dispute; he was content to observe and reflect. His father was a devout Catholic; his mother, his brother Thomas, and one or perhaps two of his sisters were Protestants. But more than policy and tactful goodwill saved him from sectarian aggression. The leisure of indecision which he cherished afforded scope to his ever alert and never settled mind. In the absence of established truth, suspense of judgment appeared most loyal and truthful.

Here was a mind alert and temperate, sane, straightforward, candid and ironic without bitterness, a mind of good sense and good humor. Montaigne was equally against the superstition of the peasant and the dogmatism of the pedant. He shrank from utter self-commitment, and that was a major principle in his morals. We may call it self-preservation of his moral judgment, reserve in decision. Emphatic devotion is imprudent; one should always rely on a certain safeguard of reluctance and never wholly bestow oneself. One should not overdo even the pursuit of perfection.

Was all this Stoic self-possession? Stoic fortitude and dignity of soul had commanded Montaigne's admiration, but he could not continue to share Stoic inflexible assurance. Better justified and more rewarding appeared to him the Epicurean friendly enjoyment of life. To be sure, there are inevitable grave prospects; death is at the end of the road. Earlier in his life, he had considered it the chief object of his thought, but he came to think otherwise: "though it be the end, it is not the aim of life," [12] and so it cannot be the main concern of our mind and thought. We should keep to our part of the road.

Yet we must perforce decide and act. Though we cannot attain absolute certainty of the moral sanction and direction of our life, we are not entirely at a loss. Within the narrow and shifting zone of visible prospect we may see at least our next step sometimes and proceed sanely. We need not hope for certainty, nor wait for a miracle of

illumination, though it might come for all we know. In any case we can decide on the balance, with good will but soberly and without extravagance,—and likewise without remorse in the sequel. Where no assured forecast is to be had, no repentance is in order. He who thus day by day can live his life without vanity but without cowardice, he who knows "how loyally to enjoy his being," [13] attains such perfection as is granted to our short-fingered humanity.

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

Pascal was a mind too rigorous to champion unvindicated ideals, and a soul too intense to live without loyalties. The spiritual conflict in which he was thus involved was explicitly a religious one, but in principle it was the conflict between a 'will to believe' and an exacting and therefore sceptical intellect.[14]

Stoic and sceptic, clashing in his soul, led Pascal to Christian piety. His two favorite writers, Epictetus and Montaigne, each portrayed only one side of our human estate. Epictetus expounded man's fortitude, self-possession, firm fulfillment of duty, but our stricter intelligence gives the lie to this exalted conception of man's grandeur. The Stoic dignity is in fact pathetic presumption. Montaigne depicted ironically the inadequacy of man. He was content to remain a good-humored surveyor of the instability which is human life; but our moral earnestness is humiliated by any such easy acquiescence in man's wretched perplexity. To Pascal this sceptical abdication was intolerable, this "heedlessness of salvation" of Montaigne, "without fear or repentance." [15]

This issue, as Pascal saw it, was not an issue between two mutually exclusive alternatives, nor was there a third alternative distinct from these two. The truth, as Pascal sought it, could solve the contradiction only by fusing the two contradictory views without negating or subordinating either one. When we thus come to share Pascal's insight we can understand the apparent contradiction and paradox which run through his *Pensées*, or *Thoughts*. It is the contradiction and the paradox of man which are revealed in this most human book. Double not single is human nature, and it is because Pascal found in Christianity the only account of man's character which takes adequate note of this duality that he accepted it as the true and saving solution of the riddle of human life.

So the moral-religious thought of Pascal, and especially in the *Pensées*, is a dual meditation on the misery and on the grandeur of man. A man's duties and proper range of activities are bound to depend upon his natural capacities and scope of being. But how are we to prescribe

to ourselves and to others, we who are in such ignorance of our cosmic status? Is our career a mortal or an immortal one? Surely our whole plan of life depends upon that issue, yet no reason can settle it. The geometric method may draw valid inferences from prior premises, but it must be content to begin with its initial stock of axioms and definitions, and it does not prove the ultimates of life and existence. Should we try to reach after finalities, nature eludes us. "Justice and truth are so subtle that our instruments are too dull to grasp them exactly. . . . Reason clamors in vain; it cannot fix the worth of things." Our eyes deceive us; a passing whim or disturbance, the moment's lure, the buzzing of a fly upset the even tenor of our mind. The best argument in the world cannot prevail over some unreasonable fancy or ingrained prejudice. We yield stolidly to the pressure of custom; our self-engrossment prevents us from judging ideas or projects on their merits. Our thinking is impulsive, partisan, unstable, inconclusive. Men are as ants that have lost their way, scurrying hither and thither. Shall we, with the sceptic, divert ourselves in observing the ants' confusion? Pascal's reaction was one of tragic perplexity: "When I consider the short span of my life, absorbed in the eternity before and after, the small space that I fill and even that I see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces which I know not and which know me not, I am dismayed and amazed to find myself here rather than there; for there is no reason whatever why here rather than there, why now rather than some other time. Who has put me here? By whose order and direction has this place and time been allotted to me?" [16]

Significant despite the sceptical outlook was Pascal's demand for finality. He admitted the inconclusiveness of our judgments, but he did not accept it. He could never resign himself to placid indifference in the choice of alternatives. More than the cause of Jansenism was at stake in his issue with the Jesuits. The more ultimate aim of Pascal's *Provincial Letters* was to discredit Jesuit probabilism, the complacent duplicity in matters of moral and religious judgment, the worldly negligence of unswerving supreme loyalties. So, neither pliant accommodation in thought and conduct nor ironic uncommitment! Pascal did not ignore his perplexity, but would not endure it.

The tragic character of man's doubt is itself disclosed to Pascal as an earnest of man's grandeur. Man's very wretchedness in perplexity reveals him as more than perplexed and wretched. He is miserable, but knows it; "spatially the universe comprises and engulfs me as a point; by my thought I grasp the universe." "Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature; but he is a thinking reed." [17] The foundation of moral life is in our thinking well, and a first principle of thinking well is for think-

ing to recognize its own implications. It is a reaching after infinitude, after certainty, after divine perfection of truth. This boundless aspiration, this very scepticism keen to perceive error, discloses a commitment to truth, an ideal capacity: Does it not divulge to us the heart of reality?

It is out of the boundless depths of his need that Pascal lifted his eyes to God: "This infinite abyss can be filled only by something infinite and immutable." Despairing of a formal demonstration, Pascal sought a conviction of the will by his 'wager.' Our conduct and career assume eternal and infinitely grave import on the alternative view of Divine Providence, in comparison with which any advantage or disadvantage of ours in a merely fortuitous world are bound to appear despicably petty. Though we cannot be certain of God's existence, yet we must make it practically the first principle in the ordering of our lives. So great is the disparity in the stakes that we had better wager on and with God.[18]

To make his all-important postulate effective in his life and thought, Pascal was ready for a régime of ritual which shocked his intellectual integrity and might shock ours. Act as if you believe, take holy water, go to mass. "This will make you believe and will stultify you, *cela vous abêtira.*" This current of his thought we cannot follow here, nor yet his more detailed reflections on the Christian religion. It is not a reasoned ethics which Pascal expounds; his convictions here are of the heart. "The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know at all." Just as from the material order to the mental, so from the mental order to the order of values there is a leap. It is not by reasoning but by superior and sublime perfection in process that Christianity prevails over Stoic pride and sceptical abdication and nonchalance. The Christian religion alone can cure our two vices, pride and sloth; it cures them "not in expelling one by the other, according to the wisdom of the world, but in expelling the one and the other by the simplicity of the Gospel." [19]

5. *The Varieties of Moral Experience: Francis Bacon*

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was the self-declared herald of the new method of inductive logic, by which modern science was to reach knowledge based on the direct observation of nature. This method of empirical inquiry is advocated by Bacon also in ethics. Before we presume to formulate lofty principles of the Highest Good, before we set down universal moral laws and standards according to which men ought to act, let us first investigate men's actual conduct.

It is in this explicit proposal of descriptive ethics that Bacon's ethical

naturalism finds clear expression. The science of morals is like medicine. As the physician's art requires knowledge of the body's constitution, of the disease affecting it, and of the method of cure, so in medicining mind and character we should learn the temperaments and dispositions of men, the passions to which they are subject, and the appropriate remedies or discipline. In both medicine and morals it is futile to deplore, just as it is fatal to ignore, the first two. Bodily constitution and disease, character and the passions affecting it, must be plainly recognized, and only by understanding them may we hope to deal with them. Thus, in morals as in physical science, nature to be mastered must be followed.

What interests Bacon primarily is therefore not the formulation of the moral ideal but the inquiry into the foundations of character and the motive forces in human conduct: the varieties of moral experience. The moralist should approach human nature without illusions, welcoming good but not averting his glance from evil: on the contrary, centering his attention on the frailties and corruptions of men, spying on human-kind, to understand in order to withstand. "The Basilisk, . . . if he see you first you die for it, but if you see him first he dieth; so it is with deceits and evil arts." This is the art of Machiavelli, in which Bacon was no doubt well trained at court, and which he valued, if his references to the Florentine are to be trusted. He seeks gospel warrant for his method: we should learn the wisdom of the serpent, but this requires knowledge of the serpent and of his ways: "his baseness and going upon his belly, his volubility and lubricity, his envy and sting, and the rest; that is, all forms and natures of evil. For without this, virtue lieth open and unfenced."[20] For this purpose moral treatises are of slight value in comparison with recorded observations. Bacon would consult the spies and chroniclers of men, historical and diplomatic memoirs and correspondence: Tacitus, Guicciardini, Machiavelli. It has been remarked,[21] however, that Bacon neglects the richest treasury, in the dramas of his great contemporary, whose Richard III is a connoisseur in the art:

> I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall,
> I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk;
> I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
> Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
> And like a Sinon take another Troy.
> I can add colours to the chameleon,
> Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
> And set the murtherous Machiavel to school.[22]

Man tends to preserve his being, to grow, and to multiply. The first two activities are largely individual and passive, but the third actively relates one's life to that of others. Thus arise the duties which man owes his fellowmen: some of them general, the common duties of all men; others specialized depending on one's profession, relation or place. The welfare of all is the goal of moral endeavor, and accordingly defines the subordination of individual desire to social interest. Bacon would find here a parallel to the Christian doctrine of self-denial and brotherly love. Benevolence, upheld by the secular examination of human nature, finds its summit in Christian charity. But human nature unaided does not attain unto this. "Love your enemies" is divine, but it is scarcely human. Do we have here, despite Bacon's resistance to traditions, a Thomistic-Aristotelian view of man's rise to perfection: unaided human nature proceeding towards a sublime goal, yet not reaching the pinnacle save by Divine grace? In that case the secularism of Bacon's ethics is compromised in consummation. He seems to give the Christian supreme virtue the reverence which is traditionally its due; but his own inquiry into human nature has not disclosed to him more than desires, affections, and social pressure. One misses the note of genuine benevolence and social feeling in him. Communicative good is superior to individual good: why? Because in the end it is thus that our life extends by being multiplied in the lives of others. Men "readily agree to protect themselves by laws, that the course of injury may not come round to them in turn." [23] This strain of thought in Bacon's ethics is in line with his counsel to keep an eye on the basilisk. It is ramified in his political philosophy; and its implicit cynicism may serve to explain his meager view of the moral nature of man: his preoccupation with affections and passions, and his neglect of conviction and devotion, of disinterested loyalty, of conscience and duty in the thoroughly moral sense of the word.

From the outset, modern ethics involves a reëxamination of the character and conduct of man. The very effort to construct a secular system of moral values independent of any theological source and sanction, raises the problem of the source and the sanction of morality. Ethics is thus led to consider the conception of law itself and the grounds of rights and obligations in human life. The naturalistic bent of the modern moralist leads him to investigate the origin and the fundamental structure of society. Ethics and social philosophy touch hands in this enterprise. The examination of their relation in early modern thought will be our next topic.

CHAPTER VII

MORAL PRINCIPLES AND SOCIAL ORDER



1. Statecraft without Scruples

The transition from medieval to modern culture was marked by the breakdown of theological sanctions and authority, by the demand for the recognition of man's right to free investigation, by the vindication of the importance of human life here and now. In describing this new spirit, we used the term secularism by preference to the term worldliness, which a theologian might well have employed. But we noted likewise a decided worldliness in the Renaissance: an easy contentment with the immediate satisfactions of sense, an alleged practical spirit bent on ambition and achievement, a neglect of conscience, an impatience with any appeal to sovereign principle. Laws and authority were valid if effectual and prevailing. Duty and obligation were referred to power. Ought I to do this or that, meant, must I do it, that is, is there anyone who can make me do it? Men were no longer penitent souls weighed down with a burden of sin; they were now conscious of long-missed opportunities, lusts and ambitions ungratified, unspent powers. Must one really be hampered by so many scruples and obligations? It was an age of dissolution of standards and an uprising of impulse, an age sceptical, sardonic, sensual.

Criticism and negation, to be sure, were not only disruptive. The new age was likewise an age of deliberate secular reconstruction of law. It needed a ground of political and moral obligation to replace the theological authority which had been eclipsed. It sought a fundamental principle of social order, resting not on supernatural fiat but on the knowledge of human nature. Confidence in the reality of these principles of reconstruction inspires the researches and speculations of Jean Bodin and Hugo Grotius. An absorbing interest in the cause of social order dictates also the thought of Thomas Hobbes. These men differ in their views of human nature and in their social-ethical conclusions, but they all agree in perceiving the close relation of social culture and moral character. The moral problem arises in man's dealing with other men. What is this problem essentially and in detail, and what its adequate solution?

Here, and also in the subsequent course of modern ethical thought, progress in definition of fundamental principles resulted often from the shock of radical doctrine and the vigorous critical reaction. This is, of course, a commonplace in the history of philosophy. The Sophists declared that the human mind pursues will-o'-the-wisps and that there is no real knowledge to be had. Socrates' vigorous reply to this anarchy inaugurated the classic period of Greek philosophy. Even so, modern political theory was stirred to action by the bold rejection of any universal and imperative principles of social order. This unprincipled challenge can be studied best in *The Prince* of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527).

The state of affairs in Italy during the Renaissance was critical and called for radical strategy. The greater Italian cities had risen to prosperity, wealth, and culture. Venice, Genoa, Milan were centers of trade, rich, proud, and intensely political. Florence was a second Athens of intellectual and artistic culture. But for all her wealth and pride and glory, Italy lacked security. The Italian cities were prey to foreign invaders, plundered also by the mercenaries that were their supposed protectors, and forever engaged in various strife, of church against state, city against city, Italian versus foreigner. Machiavelli's Florentine and Italian patriotism was humiliated by the ugly facts. Long years of diplomatic service did not strengthen his moral fiber, but they sharpened his intellect and made him an astute if somewhat cynical man of the world.

What did Italy need to become united and safe? A strong man equal to any emergency. Italy had seen such a strong man in Cesare Borgia, the bastard of the cardinal Rodrigo Borgia; the latter is better known, though not known as any better, by the name of Pope Alexander the Sixth. Machiavelli's attitude towards Cesare Borgia was an epitome of his social philosophy. He did not himself share Borgia's tyrannical purposes, nor did he approve of his unscrupulous and often unspeakable methods. But he was swept away by the Duke's consummate logic-in-action: "precision of aim, and the strength of soul to steer unswervingly for that aim." The main question for Machiavelli was not, What kind of government is best or most righteous, but rather this, How can one govern most effectively, how grow in power most assuredly and with the least risk?

Before a state can be secure it must be well ruled. To rule a state well requires understanding of human nature and no illusions about man. Machiavelli's *Prince* was one of the first modern works in which the writer professed to take off the mask and show us human nature in the raw, man as he really is. Men are, generally speaking, of only

negative worth: ungrateful, unreliable, untruthful, ungenerous, unheroic. This is a fivefold moral lack of man; the ruler must turn it all to his profit. The prince's virtue is, by relying on men's vices, to achieve and maintain mastery over them. This mastery, to be lasting, must rest on ever-expanding power; for growth is as essential to nations as to individuals, and a state which does not extend its boundaries stagnates and decays within them.

So the main business of the prince is war. To preserve his power, he must outwit his rivals, he must strengthen his hold on his own subjects, and this again requires knowledge of the frailties of human nature and how they can be exploited to one's own advantage. It is better to be feared than to be loved, but it is still better to pretend to love while actually inspiring fear. Having a reputation for keeping one's word is a fine thing; it may put your enemy off his guard; and by all means, if it suits your convenience, observe your treaties and promises. But do not let any sentimental honor hamper your cause. A contract is to be kept or broken depending upon which side your advantage lies. You say that this is ruinous to morality and justice and fair play? On the contrary, Machiavelli would answer, many a state has been ruined by such qualms about justice and honor. When the country is in danger, men should consider only how it is to be preserved. And in times of peace as well as in time of war, the problem of the state is a problem of effectual self-maintenance; men should not allow moral principles to confuse their policy or divert them from marching to their goal.[1]

Machiavelli's frank espousal of statecraft without moral scruples finds its champions to this day in low places and in high. Necessity knows no law; war is war; politics is politics. Thus early in modern thought was the challenge thrown to morality which has not yet been met: the challenge that there are no basic principles of right and wrong which may not be readily brushed aside for reasons of state. Against this challenge the best conscience of Europe and America is a standing but still ineffectual reply: that only upon respect for justice can any stable human structure be built, whether individual or social, that not cunning or power but righteousness exalteth a nation.

Machiavelli's nationalism was a modern trait which the last four centuries have only served to accentuate. His emphasis on conflict and aggressiveness, his historical method, his striking portrayal of the actual policy of tyrants and tyrannous nations: all this was a profit. But he dissociated public from private morality, and limited public morality within state-boundaries. His ethics and politics thus strangely combine distinctively modern ideas with barbaric notions of group-morality.

2. *The Natural Foundations of Social-Political Order*

Against the Machiavellian eulogy of over-mastering power, more critical modern thought demanded, beyond cunning and compulsion, the principles of right and law which men and nations must recognize and on which they could rely in peace and in war. So in his *Republic* Jean Bodin (1530-1596) sought objectivity and stability of principles, but just on that account was critical of tradition no matter how firmly established.

Bodin agrees with Aristotle in regarding morals and politics as complementary. The end of society is the moral perfection of its members, and its fruition their lasting welfare. The state is not an external bond between individuals. It normally finds its basis in the family, itself the most normal and indispensable of human institutions. Families are to the state as organs to the body: if these are well-ordered and well-related, the body politic fares well. Accordingly Bodin resists vigorously Plato's communism and the Platonic tendency to depreciate intermediate institutions between the individual and the state. Beginning with his recognition of the family as the foundation of all political society, Bodin emphasizes the importance of community associations, political, economic and social. The state is a system of systems, the community organizations serving as knots that lend strength to the political texture.

Politics thus becomes, in Bodin's hands, social science in the fullest sense of the term. He subjects every social institution to criticism. Sexual morality and domestic relations are to his mind no mere individual concern. But while his ideas and requirements in this sphere disclose almost Puritanical severity, his very anxiety for domestic ills and social catastrophes which they may portend makes him an advocate of easier divorce. When the family bond has actually been torn, recognize the fact openly; do not make individuals the helpless victims of an institution, lest you plunge them into more desperate extremes. This same respect for human dignity and its rights is shown in Bodin's explicit opposition to slavery or serfdom. Yet he would safeguard the individual, and thus society, from the dangers of too precipitate emancipation. Wholesale loosing of bonds may only serve to release a mob of untrained and unmanageable vagabonds. Before emancipating landless men teach them some handicraft.[2] Bodin's advocacy of social reform combines the philanthropist's hopes with the caution of a conservative. A similar balancing of judgment is manifest in his distinction between sovereignty and government, particularly in his espousal of popular sovereignty combined with his opposition to popu-

lar government. Likewise in his treatment of revolutions, he proposes to remedy them by making many reforms, but always very gradually. He respects law, but is not awed by its abstract sanctity. Laws are sacred because they are essential to the people's welfare. That is their final justification and the basis of their sanction. It is to the interest of the people to have the law prevail.

If in these various ways we see in Bodin a sixteenth century pioneer in modern empiricist ethics, we should not be surprised to find him in many ways still a son of the middle ages. One of his books is a historical-critical treatment of religion and a plea for tolerance. But in another book he writes as a crass believer in witchcraft and a fanatical advocate of persecution, torture and the death-penalty. Systematic and thorough emancipation from traditional authority and superstition, emancipation all the way through, is perhaps too much to expect of a sixteenth century mind.

The demand of the modern spirit for a scientific study and formulation of moral-political principles was intensified in the case of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) by calamitous experiences individual and national, directly due to sectarian fanaticism. Incredibly precocious alike in erudition and intellectual power, his early fame and the important posts with which he was entrusted in his native Holland involved him, while still a young man, in the modern struggle of ideas. At the University of Leyden a dispute had arisen between two professors of theology, Arminius and Gomarus, over the question of Divine grace: Is man in any sense an active contributor to his own salvation? The revival of this Augustinian discussion, which in the course of the seventeenth century was to find a Catholic-Jansenist version in France, assumed in the Netherlands the form of a struggle between rigid popular Calvinism and the more enlightened and liberal thought of the day, which the Arminian party championed. The dispute passed beyond the frame of theological argument, or rather the theological dispute served to accentuate intellectual and social-political animosities which flamed up, confusing issues and principles, and giving a free rein to fanaticism and demagoguery. Maurice of Nassau's exploitation of this struggle to advance his own personal ambitions, the shameful trial and execution of the liberal leader Oldenbarneveld, the imprisonment of Grotius and his later expatriation, were all calamities due to unrestrained sectarianism. Grotius therefore sought a basis of law, whose essential validity all men could be brought to recognize, and respecting it, live intelligently and in peace. His masterpiece, *On Law in War and in Peace* (1625), written in Paris following his escape from the Louvenstein prison, is epoch-making in the history of international law.

The principles which theology supplies seem to him inadequate to provide a basis of jurisprudence. Theology rests explicitly on special divine revelation. This Grotius nowise questions, but he points out that the law which God has willed to reveal to a certain chosen people is obviously not obligatory on other peoples to whom it has not been revealed. The Mosaic law is not authoritative for Gentiles, and even the laws of the Christian dispensation are imperative only for those who have adequately recognized them. Whether Grotius would be prepared to say that the Christian law should, and with God's help ultimately shall be universally recognized and thus valid for all men, cannot be affirmed. His broad Christian loyalty is as real as his resistance to sectarian bias, and between the two motives he is not able to articulate with explicit clearness a purely secular jurisprudence and ethics. But his resolution to find non-sectarian universally valid law is indubitable.

In distinction from special religious laws or from civil regulations of limited application and warrant, Grotius maintains that there is a natural law grounded in the essential character of man wherever found and thus universally authoritative. This natural law, Grotius agrees with Aristotle, rests on the essentially social nature of man. Man's social sense is more than mere animal gregariousness. Our reason transforms what otherwise would have remained mere gregarious impulse into a distinctive sense of law, of right and obligation. "To this sphere of law belongs the abstaining from that which is another's, the restoration to another of anything of his which we may have, together with any gain which we may have received from it; the obligation to fulfil promises, the making good of a loss incurred through our fault, and the infliction of penalties upon men according to their deserts." [3] All these are manifestations of the same social principle which does not derive from any special convention or promulgation human or divine, but rests on the very constitution of human nature.

The reason why God sanctions this law is because itself is the expression of sound universal reason. The law has divine sanction, but it does not depend on it. Not even God's will can alter it, any more than God can will that twice two be other than four. In thus delimiting the reach of omnipotence or the range of God's will, Grotius is not merely registering a seventeenth century protest against Scotism. He is suggesting the fundamental principles of a philosophy of religion. God's will sustains the moral law because of its natural reasonableness. Shall we go a step further and say: our idea of God is the ideal of the essentially reasonable, that is to say, of the moral principle in nature? Grotius does not explicitly take this step, but his thought inclines to it.

Grotius distinguishes two sorts of proof of the system of law. The

first, more abstract, proceeds from the necessary agreement or disagreement of a thing with the rational and social nature of man. The other, more popular, concludes the probable validity of a law from its general acceptance by all nations or by the most civilized. He thus seeks to combine the more popular reliance on the *consensus gentium* with a stricter method of rationalism. He is no utopian, and faces the actualities of human life which involve men and states in conflict, but his heart is bent on advancing the cause of peace, by leading men to recognize, beyond the social and political or sectarian differences which separate and oppose them to each other, their common humanity, and by consistently urging respect for the rights that are each man's by nature: "A man's life is his own, not indeed to destroy, but to safeguard; also his own are his body, limbs, reputation, honour, and the acts of his will." [4]

3. Utopian Visions of the Perfect Society

Plato's *Republic* was the first great vision of the "pattern laid up in heaven," the ideal of the perfect state, in the contemplation of which the philosopher's conception of human values and his criticism of existing social conditions found creative expression. In various cultures and epochs the forms which such visions of the ideal assumed have reflected the characteristic spiritual outlook. Plato's was the classical ideal of human life harmoniously directed and controlled by reason. In Israel the prophets exalted the traditional profession of a theocracy to express the ethical monotheism which they were achieving: a people dwelling together in justice and peace under the eternally righteous Yahveh. As the visible lordship of the Almighty was repeatedly defied by waves of invasion which kept Israel enslaved by alien unbelievers, the prophetic ideal was kept alive by the hope of Messianic restoration. The radical revision of the popular Messianic ideal was an essential part of the gospel of Jesus: the explicit rejection of the earthly Jewish theocratic vision. The Kingdom of God, as Jesus proclaimed it, was a spiritual state, within us. In the development of Christian orthodoxy this thoroughly spiritual ideal was subjected to an ascetic monastic revision. The contrast between this life of sin and the blessed life to come found expression on a cosmic scale in Augustine's *civitas terrena* and *Civitas Dei*, the city of this earth and the City of God. We have observed already the Christian devotion which moved medieval monasticism to realize and establish the Kingdom of God.

The early modern visions of the perfect society likewise reflect the modern spiritual-cosmic outlook. The Reformation and the Renaissance, parallel and yet opposite reactions to medieval-catholic culture,

found expression in related yet contrasted social-political ideals. Wyclifite, Hussite-Taborite and Anabaptist all preached gospels of Christian reorganization of social conditions. The Kingdom of Christ which Savonarola sought to establish in Florence, and Calvin's Genevan theocracy, when compared with the Franciscan rule of Christian poverty, reflect essential Christian kinships but also the radical differences between modern and medieval outlook and procedure.

Some more distinctively modern visions of the ideal state now engage our attention. They may be espoused by devout or at any rate professing Christians, but they represent the secular modern spirit in that they emphasize a radical revision of definite existing social systems and contemplate a perfection in terms of this social reconstruction, here and now. Far ahead of the more sober and deliberate promoters of particular reforms in the life and thought of modern Europe were the seers of the new vanguard, boldly looking across the spreading ocean of the actual present to the unknown but discoverable lands of the future of marvelous and, with man's will, realizable perfection.[5]

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535)

The most famous of these modern visions was More's *Utopia* (1516); it has supplied the adjective 'utopian' describing bold, too bold, social idealism. More the humanist, the friend of Erasmus, Colet, Budé, was also the devout Christian, the ascetic who had thought of entering the Carthusian monastery and practiced mortification of the flesh. In considering the radical criticism which his book contains of traditional social institutions, and especially of established religion and enforced orthodoxy, we should keep in mind his own later career as judge and chancellor under Henry VIII and the martyrdom with which he sealed his devoutly Catholic opposition to the Anglican revolt against Rome. The *Utopia* is the work of a now canonized Catholic saint. Its criticisms and its projects should not be regarded too readily as More's own seriously advanced program of reform. We should not overlook More's genial irony, his Socratic humor, his readiness to allow ideas to have their way in dramatic philosophical phantasy.

More had lectured earlier in his life on St. Augustine's *City of God.* His own ideal state, however, is not celestial but vaguely beyond the seas. His narrator is a seafaring humanist in the company of Amerigo Vespucci. His account of the island Utopia, in the second part of More's work, is in plain and eloquent contrast to the thinly disguised portrayal, in the first book, of the manifold evils of European and especially English society. The unreasonable and oppressive laws of his time engage his attention. Punishing theft with death is both too

extreme and cruel and also insufficient as a deterrent. It encourages thieves to become murderers, whereas society should be so reorganized that in it the poor may have an honest alternative to begging or thievery. More draws a gloomy picture of the expropriation and the oppression of the peasants by the nobility and by "certain Abbots, holy men, God wote." The idle luxury of the few, the landless misery of the many make for depravity and brutishness and poison the body politic. The king and his agents extort all they can from the people, debase the value of money, and bleed the nation in ruinous wars.

At the basis of all this social corruption, More's narrator declares, is private property, which makes of men oppressors or victims of their fellows. It is not enough to limit the selfish pursuit of gain. On the island of Utopia men have cut at the very root of this evil. In our society, while people talk of a commonwealth, every man seeks his own wealth; but in Utopia "where nothing is private, the common affairs be earnestly looked upon." [6] The community of property confirms the people in coöperation and community of effort. Private finance is ruled out, hoarding and usury, as there is no use for money. Labor is for production only; every citizen works for all, no one for the profit of another. No idleness being allowed, no one need overwork, and Utopia operates on a six-hour day. With eight hours of sleep, ten hours still remain of every day for leisure and culture of body and mind, in activities organized by the state. Meals are taken in public dining rooms which also serve as social clubs. The production of needed goods is regulated by the state; men alternate in the doing of urban and agricultural labor, to the common benefit of all. Clothing serves its natural use and is not a means of vain display. Health and sanitation are definitely public business. Realizing the importance of a sound family life, the Utopians supervise marriage to assure uncontaminated and congenial unions, and the stability of the family is solemnly upheld in the interest of social order. A system of public education combines theoretical with practical training and a deliberate eliciting and development of unusual special capacity. All the way through, the individual is enabled and directed to find his own fullest life in the common welfare. But be it noted that in addition to the citizens Utopia has a slave-class.

The government of Utopia is an elective monarchy. The representatives of family groups select a king who once elected has sovereign authority but is subject to removal if he abuses the commonwealth. Utopia is really a federation of city-governments. It is organized for peace and means to maintain it. It has no interest in conquest, nowise glorifies war, and to avoid wholesale slaughter when hostilities seem

imminent, it tries to bribe some traitor in the enemy's ranks to assassinate his king, or failing all else, prefers paying for hired mercenaries to risking its own people on the battlefield.

In Utopia, with so much state-regulation, religious tolerance prevails as an acknowledged policy. For religious truth is hard to ascertain, yet is bound to prevail in the end; so the best way to be assured of it ultimately is to permit each man to believe and worship as he will. There is public ritual, but there is no compulsion of belief or propaganda. We are told of a too energetic zealot who was exiled, not because of his beliefs, but for stirring up dissension. Rejection of the belief in immortality, however, the Utopians oppose, as likely to undermine respect for human dignity and moral responsibility.

The moral ideals of the Utopians reflect a blend of Stoic self-possession with lofty hedonism. They consider felicity as the highest good and advocate the promotion of happiness, but of happiness and pleasure which is good and honest, attained in the exercise of our higher nature as intelligent beings. "For they define virtue to be a life ordered according to nature; and that we be hereunto ordained of God; and that he doth follow the course of nature, which in desiring and refusing things is ruled by reason." [7]

Francis Bacon's "New Atlantis"

More's utopianism reflects his keen consciousness of existing social-economic injustice, the ruinous effects of war, the corruption of society by luxury, idleness, and profligacy, and the evils of intolerance. Francis Bacon's ideal state glorifies the organized governmental promotion of scientific research. The staff of "Solomon's House" in the New Atlantis shows what Bacon was prepared to expect of a society which recognized the possibilities of scientific inquiry and by united and organized endeavor attacked on all fronts the forces of nature, to comprehend them and to utilize them for man's progress.

This Solomon's House is Bacon's forecast of the research institutes and foundations of our day. Bacon's aim combines pursuit of knowledge with practical mastery through knowledge, for knowledge is power. The governor of Solomon's House combines these two purposes in his statement: "The End of our Foundation is the knowledge of Causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible." [8] The catalogue of projects and researches need not be cited here: the caves sunk six hundred fathoms deep to study refrigeration and conservation of bodies and the production of new artificial metals; the towers half a mile high for meteorological and other observations;

chemical and biological laboratories, vivisection of birds and beasts for research in the cause and cure of various diseases; botanical gardens and experimental stations; study of soils; laboratories in which wonder-working and magical make-believe are scientifically contrived and then explained by trained men to the spectators, so that the common people might be disabused of superstition; and so on and so forth. The outstanding merit of this vast enterprise is its effective organization, with a staff of encyclopedic editors, digestors and tabulators of results, exploiters of new possibilities, surveyors of practical application, experts in interpretation and reduction to general principles. Bacon realized the importance of world-wide scientific coöperation. His research institute has twelve travelling fellows who sail to foreign lands to learn and to report to their own people whatever advance in knowledge is made in any field the world over.

These men of the New Atlantis, then, are committed to the supreme worth of knowledge; they are traders "not for gold, silver, or jewels; nor for silks; nor for spices; nor any other commodity of matter; but only for God's first creature, which was *Light:* to have *light* (I say) of the growth of all parts of the world." [9]

"The City of the Sun" of Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639)

Campanella, a Dominican friar of radical convictions, paid by almost thirty years' imprisonment for his suspected complicity in a conspiracy to free Naples from Spanish tyranny. It was towards the close of this period that he wrote his *City of the Sun.* His work shares with Bacon's the confidence in science as the emancipator of mankind. Campanella has a sage metaphysician for his chief ruler, and he follows Plato in selecting his government officials on the basis of tested superior intelligence. The three chief assistants of his Metaphysicus are named Power, Wisdom, and Love, and therein we see Campanella's chief hopes for a stable and equitable government. With More and Plato he advocates the abolition of private property; unlike More, he proposes abolition of the family, and without any ambiguity champions Plato's communism of wives and children. He does away with slavery, poverty, overwork, luxury and most diseases by the simple device of establishing a system of universal labor for the state, without private profits or private ambitions. His citizens of the Sun are "rich because they want nothing, poor because they possess nothing; and consequently they are not slaves to circumstances, but circumstances serve them." [10] Within the prison walls this dreamer of Platonic dreams was moved by the spirit of early Christian communism to which he appeals in his zealous

championship of social reforms, moved likewise by the prospect of the new science and cosmology to unlock the secrets of nature.

His moral and social gospel finds lyrical utterance in one of his sonnets:

To quell three Titan evils I was made,—
Tyranny, Sophistry, Hypocrisy;
Whence I perceive with what wise harmony
Themis on me Love, Power and Wisdom laid.
These are the basements firm whereon is stayed,
Supreme and strong, our new philosophy;
The antidotes against that trinal lie
Wherewith the burdened world groaning is weighed.
Famine, war, pestilence, fraud, envy, pride,
Injustice, idleness, lust, fury, fear,
Beneath these three great plagues securely hide.
Grounded on blind self-love, the offspring dear
Of Ignorance, they flourish and abide:—
Wherefore to root up Ignorance I'm here! [11]

Campanella's vision in Calabria, as Sir Thomas More's in England, shows how gripping were these new ideas of a more real justice and more humane life for the common people, and also what fruitage Plato's *Republic* was yielding in headlong minds. The seventeenth century in particular produced a harvest of social-political phantasies, Christian visions of heaven on earth, satirical dreams of perfection. One of these utopias, the *Oceana* of James Harrington (1611-1677), was really an elaborately worked out system of political reform, of interest to the historian of political theories. Written during the days of Cromwell's Protectorate, it reflects existing political conditions. In spite of its intolerable dullness it must have been read, for it had some influence upon the framers of democratic constitutions across the Atlantic.

CHAPTER VIII

HOBBES' LEVIATHAN



1. The Mechanics of Human Character

During the years in which Bacon, after his degradation from high office in 1621, was living in retirement at Gorhambury, a number of younger men attended him to profit from his philosophical conversation. Among them no one was quicker to catch an idea accurately or keener to perceive its drift than Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). But though Hobbes worked in the light of Bacon's empiricism, his own mind preferred logical deduction. Mere description and empirical assembling of data did not meet his requirements. Even brutes can have experience of fact, he remarked, and a parrot may speak the truth, yet not know it. For knowledge is not mere experience, but reasoned demonstrative conclusion. The merit of our thinking lies in the logical rigor with which we develop the implications of our axioms and in the coherence and character of the resulting scientific-philosophical structure.

Hobbes is a mind as self-reliant as rigorous. He is conscious of little dependence and no obligation. Bacon's name is mentioned but once in his works, in connection with some petty experiment, and he was readier to dispute with Descartes than to expound him. For ancient wisdom he has no relish, and scornfully calls the philosophy of the universities "Aristotelity." If he had read as many books as other men, he opined, he should have continued still to be as ignorant as others. Euclid, whose acquaintance he made after the age of forty, taught him the excellence of the geometrical method, and this method he undertook to extend to all philosophy: not only the method but also that which he conceived as its central principle. For as geometry deals with abstract motion, so motions of bodies constitute the whole field of physical science, and likewise motions in head and heart are the ideas and passions of men. So Hobbes' entire account of nature and human nature is to be of a piece logically and cosmologically: the progressive exhibition of the nature and range of motion.

Bacon and others, even while seeking the emancipation of philosophy from theology, treated the latter with reverence. Hobbes dismisses bluntly the theologian's intellectual stock-in-trade. The knowledge of the material world demands not revelation but inquiry, while the

knowledge of the spiritual or 'ghostly' world is no knowledge at all. If we are to escape arid speculation, we must needs recognize that the world we can know is always and simply a world of bodies-in-motion. All existence "is corporeal, that is to say, body; and hath the dimensions of magnitude, namely, length, breadth, and depth: also every part of body, is likewise body, and hath the like dimensions; and consequently every part of the universe, is body, and that which is not body, is no part of the universe: and because the universe is all, that which is no part of it, is *nothing;* and consequently *nowhere.*" [1] However we regard Hobbes' professions of religious piety, or his amazing exploitation of Scripture texts to clinch an argument or confuse an ecclesiastic opponent, there is no mistaking his harsh dismissal of theological speculation in science or philosophy. Priest and bishop are to live a holy life and perform their ministration as ordered by the sovereign, and beyond that, as far as concerns science and philosophy, to hold their peace.

Hobbes thus pursues the course of unwavering materialism. All that exists is matter in motion: Knowledge of the real is causal knowledge, thus knowledge of bodies in motion. Sense-perception itself has its source in cerebro-neural motions stirred by motions of outside bodies. All experience, just as all existence, involves contact and collision of material particles or masses. The heart is but a spring; the nerves, so many strings; the joints, wheels; apparition of light is concussion or motion of the optic nerve, dilation, contraction, requiring change to maintain consciousness. "To be always sensible of one and the same thing is almost the same as not to be sensible of anything." [2]

Emotion is likewise simply motion. The motions in the head which we call ideas do not stop there but proceed to the heart, and either help or hinder the vital motion, provoking us either to draw near or to retire from the bodies thus perceived. So arise appetite, desire, fear, and aversion, the first beginnings of our actions. The action may follow the first appetite, or else, counteracting emotions of fear and desire may keep us deliberating, and then our course of action will depend on which set of motions prevails. The last appetite or motion that sweeps over the others in deliberation is what we call the will, and the resulting action or omission to act is styled voluntary.

This entire process of experience and behavior is mechanical and involves strict necessity. Freedom *of the will* is a meaningless sophism. The will, as we have just seen, is simply the prevailing motion in deliberation. Freedom can only mean unobstructed motion towards the pursued object. Am I or am I not free to do this or that? means, Can I do it, or am I prevented from doing it? Whether I will or do not will to do anything, however, is not spontaneous but results from the

counteraction of motions in the heart, which is bound up with the rest of the mechanics of nature. Whether this particular man will or will not act thus or so on this or that occasion, is a question of exactly the same sort as, for instance, whether this or that candle can or cannot be lighted, or if lighted, will or will not continue to burn, indoors or outdoors in the wind as the case may be. Our very existence is involved in the motions essential to our organism, and we necessarily expend our energy in reaching the object of our desire. A hungry man grasps after food just as a board thrown into a swift river is swept along by the current. Despite the rapid flood the board may be stopped by a sufficiently firm barrier; so the man may be diverted from his quest of food by a stronger counter-motive. The mechanics of motion obtain throughout and determine the outcome, not only the action but our passion in the action.

Our nature is never at rest, but dynamic: though the motions are not always perceptible, the impulses to them, or the small beginnings of motion, are always there. This ever set alertness or readiness of man to move or act is what Hobbes calls *endeavor*. When it is directed towards the object causing it, this endeavor is appetite, be it hunger or thirst or, more generally, desire; the opposite motion is aversion. The agitation of the heart in the desire after an object is called the love of that object. More accurately, we desire that which, as it is attained, we love; so contrariwise with aversion and hate. What we neither desire nor hate, we are said to contemn. Desire or aversion are expressed as delight or trouble of mind, pleasure or displeasure. These may be either sensual or mental: lusts, delights or pains, joys or griefs. They may be modified by the opinion we have of the likelihood of attaining or avoiding the respective objects of desire or aversion, or by other men's estimates of them. These various conditions affect the many varieties of passion, but they have all the same source and ground in endeavor and in the ceaseless agitation of the heart.

Hobbes finds in all men a natural and insatiate self-assertion, a restless desire of power after power, and a desire for the clear recognition of it by others, or honor. The craving and the delight of man is to be foremost; this is manifest in the joy of gloriation and the dejection of humility; it determines as it were the flavor of the several passions, and it makes human life a race of boundless rivalry, each man seeking to be ahead of his fellows: "In it: to endeavour, is *appetite*. To be remiss, is *sensuality*. To consider them behind, is *glory*. To consider them before, is *humility*. To lose ground with looking back, *vain glory*. To be holden, *hatred*. To turn back, *repentance*. To be in breath, *hope*. To be weary, *despair*. To endeavour to overtake the next, *emulation*.

To supplant or overthrow, *envy*. To resolve to break through a stop foreseen, *courage*. To break through a sudden stop, *anger*. To break through with ease, *magnanimity*. To lose ground by little hindrances, *pusillanimity*. To fall on the sudden, is disposition to *weep*. To see another fall, is disposition to *laugh*. To see one out-gone whom we would not, is *pity*. To see one out-go whom we would not, is *indignation*. To hold fast by another, is to *love*. To carry him on that so holdeth, is *charity*. To hurt one's-self for haste, is *shame*. Continually to be out-gone, is *misery*. Continually to out-go the next before, is *felicity*. And to forsake the course, is to *die*." [3]

2. *The Natural State of Man and the Social Contract*

In the original state of human nature, moral good and evil, right and wrong, have no meaning whatever. To be sure, a man calls the object of his desire, good; the object of his hate and aversion, evil; of his contempt, vile and inconsiderable. The good or evil may be in the promise (fair, beautiful or ugly, foul, deformed); in effect (delightful or unpleasant); or in the means (useful or unprofitable, hurtful). Our motives are merely animal motions in the human organism, natural impulses, self-directed and egoistic. In contrast to Aristotle and Grotius, Hobbes rejects the idea of the inherently social nature of man and his natural rationality and sense of justice. Man's restless desire for power makes him a rival and a foe of his fellows. Here force and fraud are operative; the terms right and wrong, justice and injustice, are out of place, and so likewise property or mine or thine distinct. In the state of nature

> The good old rule
> Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can.[4]

Men's natural equality contributes to accentuate their contentiousness. The differences of men in bodily strength or skill or mental keenness are inconsiderable. No one is so strong but a weaker man may yet kill him; men may consider other men to have better fortune but not better inherent capacity, and regard others as more learned but scarcely wiser; each man in his heart believes himself as good as his fellows, and better too; and, while he is greedy to possess the goods of his rival or even change places with him, he insists on remaining himself.

To the natural equality of men corresponds a natural harmony: each man equally agreeing with all others in wanting everything in sight. As a king of France once said of a king of Spain: "My kinsman and I are

in perfect accord: we both desire the city of Milan." This equality and harmony breed war: "If any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their end, which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delectation only, endeavour to destroy, or subdue one another." [5]

Thus the natural state of man is a state of war: each man seeking his own personal aggrandisement and advantage. In this state each man is to every other man a wolf—or a lamb: an enemy and an obstacle, or else a tool and a possible victim. The strong is the master and the exploiter of the weak; the weak submits if he must, but ever bides his chance; on every level of human endeavor there is the keenest rivalry for the possession of the goods of life. The principal causes converting this rivalry into war are competition, diffidence, and glory. Men go to war for gain, for safety, for reputation. But rampant or impending, the conflict is ever real: "For WAR, consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known: . . . as the nature of foul weather, lieth not in a shower or two of rain; but in an inclination thereto of many days together: so the nature of war, consisteth not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary." [6]

In this state of nature, where each man seeks to grasp all and thus makes everyone else his enemy, nobody has a chance of lasting success. Unlimited desire here precludes security, yields man no dependable profit, and involves constant risk of complete loss. "In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts, no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." [7]

Greed, vanity, and anger may lead men to war, but there are also factors which incline them to peace. Reason counsels a course of action that leads to security. If men's constant fear of each other obstructs the realization of their desires, why not limit their anarchical freedom, provided thereby a more limited gain can be definitely assured to all? Man seeks to increase his holdings, but even more he insists on keeping what he has. So it is that the fear of death, men's demand for such things as make for commodious living and the hope to obtain and re-

tain them for themselves, lead them to turn their backs on anarchy. They choose self-suppression for the sake of a more effective self-assertion.

No genuine social motive urges this self-subordination of the individual to a social order. Hobbes' savages make use of society for strictly selfish ends. By reducing the range of their desires they increase their chances of assured gratification. But, to have this assurance for any one, all must agree to submit. Anarchical aggressive freedom must be utterly surrendered before the security-within-limits can be attained. So it is that men come together, cancel their insecurity by mutually renouncing their anarchical strivings after power, and vest all their wills in one supreme authority, Leviathan, constituting him their lawgiver, sovereign and plenipotentiary irrevocable. The state of war of all against all is thus ended and the state of law and order instituted: and with the social order and its laws, obedience or disobedience, and so right and wrong, justice and injustice, moral good and evil.

3. Autocracy and the Principles of Social Order

It would be easy to challenge Hobbes to cite documentary evidence for his report of the foundation of society; equally easy to pick flaws in his political mythology. Where was Leviathan when the articles of the covenant were being drawn by his future subjects? Who selected him and how was he chosen? Apparently a unanimous vote was not required but only the consent of a multitudinous overpowering majority: everyone, however, agreeing in advance to abide by the covenant and by the choice when made. These objections are not all petty, but they need not embarrass seriously Hobbes' account of the organization of society. For this account is not meant as a historical chronicle. It is rather an analytical statement of the necessary conditions and prerequisites of lasting peace and security. Man being by nature what he is, an insatiate brute, can attain security and peace only by universal submission to a system of irrevocable authority. This is the logical, not the genealogical account of Leviathan.

The foundations of the state in human nature upholding and also outlining the authority of Leviathan are examined by Hobbes in his list of Laws of Nature. The basic right of nature is each man's liberty to preserve himself: and thus the first and fundamental law of nature forbids man's self-destruction. Man is to seek peace and follow it, but, peace failing, by all means he can, to defend himself. From this a second law is derived: give up your unlimited rights, and be content with so much liberty against others as you would allow them liberty against

yourself. This negative reciprocity Hobbes considers identical with the Golden Rule. The third main law of nature follows from this transfer of rights. The benefits of this transfer can be assured only if the covenant is inviolable. Accordingly men are to keep their covenants under all conditions, so far only as no repudiation is involved of the first law of self-preservation. Sixteen other laws of nature are based on these three main principles. The list is not definitive; it presents in the form of laws the conditions which Hobbes considers indispensable to the maintenance of that state of mutual limitation of anarchic aggression which limitation alone has made society possible.[8]

The social contract is a free choice of anarchical man: even so the first principles of science and philosophy are axiomatic, affirmations transcending proof. But once adopted, this covenant has the logical imperativeness of a first principle. It is inviolable. The only sort of government that Hobbes admits is absolutism, in which the sovereign is the unqualified lord of his subjects and nowise accountable to them. The sovereign need not be a single human individual; Hobbes admits democracy or aristocracy as available alternatives, even though he presses the superior claims of monarchy. But the main point is that whoever exercises authority in the state should exercise it absolutely. The sovereign is to be both legislator and executive. Parliament may be supreme, and the so-called king merely its agent; or the King may be supreme and parliament only his functionaries; but under no conditions must a division of power be admitted. Divided authority is a political contradiction in terms and a breeder of anarchy. "In the kingdom of God, there may be three persons independent, without breach of unity in God that reigneth; but where men reign, that be subject to diversity, it cannot be so." [9]

We can hear in this theory echoes of the political turmoil of seventeenth century England. Hobbes' *Leviathan* is a weighty tract for the times. If peace and stability are to be secured, in England or anywhere, the sovereign authority must not be subject to any revision or control. The ultimate political sin is rebellion, for it is the repudiation of the social contract, the very essence of which consists in its inviolability. The mere assertion of the right to rebel is incipient anarchy. The worst sort of government is preferable to rebellion.

A chief cause of sedition and of the dissolution of states is the heresy of private moral judgment. God's first command to man, Hobbes reminds us, was not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Hobbes insists that what a man believes depends on how the world strikes *him* and thus cannot be ordered by another, be he even Leviathan; but freedom of belief in this sense does not mean acting in ac-

cordance with one's private conscience. A subject in society has no private conscience; his conscience is his view of what should and should not be done, and that is determined for him by his covenanted obedience to the social order of Leviathan.

The sovereign power must be supreme authority in all social relations. The entire life of the individual, his comings and goings, his social relations, profession, trade, farming, domestic life, education, worship, all are to be under the absolute sway of the sovereign power. Hobbes repudiates the temporal power of the Church. Ecclesiastic authority is subordinate to the political, or rather Leviathan is the real head of the Church. Priest and bishop officiate and minister by his leave and at his direction. Religious orthodoxy should therefore be simplified; its fundamentals are reduced to the belief that Jesus is the Christ; all the rest of theological doctrine is ecclesiastic machination for lordship over the parishioners, and is to be rejected except as coming from the Crown.

This whole doctrine Hobbes had put pictorially on his title-page. On a rolling plain is a walled city, with its high-spired church, its towers and fortresses rising above the houses. Beyond the walls country houses and castles stretch up the rising hills, and above the mountain range towers the overpowering figure of a giant whose body is made of the bodies of countless human beings with faces uplifted towards the giant's face surmounted by a crown. In his hands he holds a sword and a crozier, and below these two, in two columns flanking the title-panel of *Leviathan*, are figures symbolic of the double power wielded by this "mortal god": fortress and church, crown and mitre, cannon and thunderbolt anathemas, weapons of war temporal and spiritual, a battle and a church-conclave. The whole impression is one of irresistible might, and is countersigned by the verse from the forty-first chapter of the Book of Job which is engraved above Leviathan's head: "*Non est potestas super terram quae comparetur ei*—Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear."

4. The Ethical Implications of Materialism

Despite all this proclamation of absolute authority, the sovereignty of Leviathan is subject to very decided limitations, expressed in Hobbes' first Law of Self-Preservation. Men have banded themselves into a society, have covenanted with each other to cancel mutually their anarchical freedom and to vest their individual wills in the one will of Leviathan: why? All for the sake of a more effective self-preservation. It is this supreme aim which governs their submission and conditions their fidelity; submission and fidelity to sovereign protecting power,

sovereign because effectively protective. If it prove no longer effective, for instance, by the sovereign's surrender to an enemy, the subject's obligation obviously ceases. Would it not cease equally if Leviathan could not withstand organized resistance within the state? Hobbes denies the right to rebel, but right in his philosophy ultimately rests on power. Sedition breeds anarchy and is to be condemned, *if* unequal to the task of successfully replacing a state which flouts the subject's interests in government by a state which effectively safeguards them.

If a *coup d'état*, however, could accomplish precisely this end, how on Hobbist grounds could it be denounced? When Hobbes pronounces his social covenant inviolable, he may mean that it cannot be violated. But is it ever inviolable in the sense that it ought not to be violated? John Knox, it has been noted, had justified resistance to oppression, if the resistance could be effective: "Christian subjects unto tyrants and infidels, so dispersed that they have no other force but only to sob to God for deliverance": these should patiently endure; but resistance was the right course of action for "the people assembled together in one body of one Commonwealth, unto whom God has given sufficient force, not only to resist, but also to suppress all kinds of open idolatry." [10] But what for Knox was a question of holy strategy becomes for Hobbes a problem of basic principle, or rather a problem of the lack of any basic principle of right.

If we accept Hobbes' description of human nature as essentially anarchical, what reason is there to assume that men experience miraculous change of heart in the formation of the social contract, that they come to feel loyalty as distinct from submission to Leviathan, whom they invest with sovereign power? Does he in turn (himself not even a party to the contract) become so transfigured when invested with sovereign power as to lose his anarchical greed, and as it were by the very magic of satiety of might, acquire over-individual regard for the preservation of his subjects, and thus become capable author of laws that can intelligently be styled just? Hobbes pleases himself to scorn Aristotle, but Aristotle had made an important distinction in his *Politics* between governments pure and corrupt, that is to say, between governments in which the ruler rules in the interests of the subjects, and the governments in which the ruler rules for his own advantage: for instance, between a monarchy and a tyranny. On Hobbes' conception of human character, every man in the state of nature is an aspiring tyrant over all others. Fear of each other might lead these would-be tyrants to frame articles of peace, but where in Hobbes' creation could they find a monarch who will not be a tyrant to them, and how in any case could their own attitude towards him and towards each other be truly social,

the attitude of citizens whose allegiance is more than fear and obedience to effective compulsion?

All these objections concern Hobbes' doctrine of the basis and nature of morality. According to him, the contract which establishes society likewise inaugurates morals. Man is by nature a tissue of impulses; like all else in nature, he may be forced this way or that by effective animal motions, but in the state of nature he has no moral preferences, no consciousness of moral obligation, since his acts are the acts of an anarchic will. His behavior may be predicted, but only as the behavior of a beast or a plant or a bar of iron. It may show individual variation depending on individual peculiarity of circumstances, but no recognition of moral principles. Only when the absolute power of Leviathan is instituted and expressed in a code of laws and a system of social behavior, only then does man's conduct, in becoming either obedient or resistant to law, become also just or unjust, good or bad in the moral sense. But once more, obedience or resistance here, while following or transgressing Leviathan's authority, rests ultimately on the sense of power: anarchically exercised in the state of nature, duly acquiescent in society. Is the subject's actual obedience to Leviathan's laws aught but submissive consent: acquiescence rather than genuine moral respect? The natural state of man being non-moral, how can a moral nature be extracted from it? Hobbes calls the social state artificial, in the sense of covenanted or ordered by reason; but reason here is only regard for more effective security against rival destructive power. Are not both society and morals in Hobbes' system arbitrary, then, and artificial in the more usual and damaging sense of the term?

These considerations may indicate how precarious is the stability of the political absolutism which, above all things, was Hobbes' desideratum. Further and more important, they may also suggest the basic reasons, on Hobbes' conception of human nature, why even his view of life in society discloses no genuinely moral character. Matter-in-motion, explicitly specified as mere matter-in-motion, can yield but contacts, concussions and the like. How can it be the matrix of moral activity? The ruthless logic of which Hobbes boasted in his speculations prevents him from revising his materialism to comprehend distinctively moral human conduct, and leaves him content with a view of society in which an alleged orderly régime barely hides the riot of muzzled but unregenerate bipeds.

Hobbes' theory of human nature was bound to shock his contemporaries and to stir the most violent opposition. Hobbes met this protest with a characteristic counter challenge: Why are you so outraged by my account of human life? What opinion do you really have of your

fellowmen, when you ride armed; of your neighbors and fellow-citizens, when you lock your doors; of your children and servants, when you lock your chests? If you fear men's rapacity so much even under our system of laws, why do you object to my portrayal of lawless men in the state of nature? All the same, Hobbism was widely denounced as a one-sided and scandalous caricature of human life and character. British ethics of the period is a series of attempts to demolish Hobbism. He had reduced the moral laws to the jurisdiction of Leviathan; the Cambridge Platonists sought to show that moral laws are eternal and immutable, grounded in the very essence of human nature. He had pictured man as a natural insatiate egoist; his critics undertook to vindicate benevolence as a normal human attribute and once more to prove the truth of Aristotle's conception of the inherently social character of man. He had conceived of human life, whether anarchic or social, wholly in terms of passions and animal motions, satisfaction of desires; against this narrow hedonism, the demand is raised in British philosophy for a recognition of the morally sovereign sense of conscience and duty.

Hobbes' major importance is to be sought in this challenging stimulus of his doctrines. In undertaking to confute him, modern philosophy perfected the elements of a critical ethics. Out of this conflict, begun with acrimony and abuse and happily growing more profitably critical, emerges a vindication but also a repudiation of Hobbes. Time has vindicated his keen perception of the essentially social character of morality, but it has repudiated his view of social and moral character as derivative and artificial and as it were engrafted on human nature. In his ethics and social philosophy Hobbes had undertaken to pursue to the bitter end the logical consequences of his materialism: which is perhaps one of several reasons why this sort of cosmology, the first to receive systematic exposition in British philosophy, finds in Britain no other eminent support.

CHAPTER IX

THE ENGLISH REAFFIRMATION OF PRINCIPLE AND LAW



1. Casuistry and Rationalism

Theological ethics was not altogether eclipsed by the rise of critical philosophical methods. Nine years after Hobbes' *Leviathan* appeared Jeremy Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium, or the Rule of Conscience* (1660). Taylor's treatise was intended to supply the lack of an adequate English manual of casuistry, and includes 106 questions "solemnly handled" and 79 others more briefly treated, all duly tabulated. We have here a system of theological ethics expounding the authority of a right and sure conscience. Acting against one's conscience, even if the latter be mistaken, is wrong. An abused conscience is not to be reformed by the command of a father superior; it calls for a reaffirmation of will, but more usually requires counter-reasons to sway it. Man must lay his error aside, and then obey. Against the Jesuit's parade of authorities, and especially against the consulting of doctors in search of an accommodating decision, Taylor advocates earnest searching of heart and mind, loyalty to one's best judgment, study of God's will. As he resists placid Jesuit probabilism, so he maintains that a conscience should not be so scrupulous as to weaken resolution or to perplex action by trembling compunction. As he insists on earnest inquiry and soul-searching conscientiousness, so he demands that decision lead to action.

After examining, in the second part of his treatise, the Divine Laws and all collateral obligations, the Mosaic Decalogue and the Laws of the Gospel, and in his third part taking up Human Laws, penal, political, canonical, and domestic, Taylor considers in his concluding fourth part the Nature and Causes of Good and Evil. Actions, he judges, are constituted moral by being voluntary and chosen. Nothing is good or bad if it is beyond the reach of our knowledge or deliberation. "The sin begins within, and the guilt is contracted by what is done at home, by that which is in our power, by that which nothing from without can hinder. For as for the external act, God for ends of His own providence does often hinder it; and yet he that fain would, but cannot bring his evil purposes to pass, is not at all excused, or the less

a criminal before God. . . . All the morality of any action depends wholly on the will, and is seated in the inner man." [1]

Stoic self-reliance of reason and a secular pursuit of some principles which theologians secure by revelation characterize the thought of Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648). In his treatise *De Veritate, On Truth* (1624), he answers Pilate's question in terms of assured intellectualism. Wedded to truth alone, and confronted with a variety of doctrines and standards ancient and modern,[2] he shows no zest for partisan controversy, but also no patience with scepticism or indecision. Disdaining mere probability or piecemeal knowledge, he maintains that even without the aid of revelation our intelligence can attain universal truth of the highest order, moral and religious.

Our nature is endowed with a capacity for perceiving truth, and this capacity expresses itself in the conforming faculty or general consensus of men. By 'general consensus' Herbert does not mean that all men actually agree in accepting these common notions or fundamental ideas, but that all men would and do accept them unless impeded by misunderstanding or perverse fanaticism. Find, for instance, the basic points on which sane and reasonable men of various creeds agree, and you have the essentials of religious truth.

So it is in moral philosophy. The highest good of human life cannot be sought in any particular experience, be it pleasure or wealth or honor. Our uncorrupted intelligence directs us all, beyond any individual advantage, to the common good, beyond bodily to mental and rational satisfaction, to hope, faith, love, to supreme and abiding felicity.[3] Virtue is the normal fruition of our nature, and the certainty of it is within our reach, if we only rely on the universal truths which bind all mankind. In the language of religion these are the utterances of Divine Providence in our nature. More philosophically, we may say that man's actual possession of universal truth reveals the rational cosmic order of which he is a member.

2. *Cudworth's Eternal and Immutable Morality*

Hobbes undertook to build a cosmos solely out of matter-in-motion. Though he spoke of God, and quite scripturally, he did not require Deity to explain or direct anything whatever. Hobbes excluded also rational principles, intellectual or moral, as constitutive elements in nature. Moral laws had their source in the will of Leviathan, and the obligation to observe them was artificially imposed on man by the civil compact. Furthermore the entire process of anarchical or civil-submissive conduct of man was mechanically determined, and no principle of free initiative allowed. These three characteristics of the

Hobbist philosophy appeared fatal to any genuine morality and religion, and yet they were advanced as philosophical deductions from the premises of the new science which was winning its laurels and was increasingly dictating the course of thought in the seventeenth century. The most elaborate campaign to repulse Hobbism in its fundamentals, and especially to cut him off from his scientific base of supplies, was conceived by the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688). This ethical project was elaborately conceived but was executed only in part, and even so was not given to the world in time to serve its purpose adequately in the development of British thought.

This ineffectual character of Cudworth's ethics is not, however, due to vagueness or inconclusiveness in his own thinking. He spreads the first third of his argument over nine hundred pages folio, but can state the conclusion of the whole in a dozen pages, and indeed in a few lines. His thesis is, "that all things do not float without a head and governor, but there is an omnipotent understanding Being presiding over all; that this God hath an essential goodness and justice; and that the differences of good and evil moral, honest and dishonest, are not by mere will and law only, but by nature; . . . and, lastly, that necessity is not intrinsical to the nature of every thing, but that men have such a liberty or power over their own actions, as may render them accountable for the same, and blameworthy when they do amiss." [4]

It is only the first part of this philosophy that Cudworth himself published, the massive and insufferably erudite volume on *The True Intellectual System of the Universe, Wherein all the Reason and the Philosophy of Atheism is Confuted* (1678). Finding modern and particularly Hobbist atheism wedded to the atomistic theory, Cudworth undertook to trace at great length the history of this attachment and to prove it a mésalliance. The philosophic system which he gradually articulated demands, for the establishment of its ethical and theological conclusions, the vindication of two principles: first, that the atomic system itself, and our perception of it, involves the reality of inherent rational ideas moral and intellectual; second, that the validity of these ideas does not depend on God's will, nor on the other hand affect his omnipotence rightly conceived. Cudworth thus defends the eternal rational validity of moral principles against atheists, but also against Scotists and others who had sought to establish morality solely on God's commandments.

Cudworth's *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* is a much shorter work than his *Intellectual System,* and was not published until 1731, forty-three years after his death. The ground for it is prepared by a critique of the ethics and the politics of Hobbes. If

justice, as Hobbes believes, is "but a mere factitious and artificial thing," conventionally adopted by men when they had become weary of "hewing and slashing and justling against one another," then injustice even under the sway of Leviathan is really no evil. It is at worst but "a relative incongruity" in man as a citizen, analogous to a slip in grammar or etiquette. Unless there be natural justice, how could it be more than conventionally disallowed to break covenants, and unjust only in this sense? There is only one way out of this entanglement. If society or the body politic is really to persist, the ground of political and all other real obligation must be sought in some natural and inherent justice, not depending on authority and command human or divine but itself the basis of all law. Accordingly, Cudworth concludes, "God's will is ruled by justice, and not his justice ruled by his will; and therefore God himself cannot command, what is in its own nature unjust." [5]

There is an opposite extreme view, unreliable in politics, and also ruinous in theology. It declares: that alone is just which God wills, and merely because God wills it. In that case, as Occam and other reckless Scotists have held, there is nothing unjust or evil or abhorrent which cannot be made good, if only commanded by God. This moral chaos and ruin is entertained by men owing to their misapprehension of the omnipotence of God's will which they champion. God's will cannot make a triangle be other than what its triangularity demands, nor whiteness, nor justice. The ultimate ground of all necessity and obligation is in the essential nature of things: nothing is just or unjust by command unless it be just or unjust by nature. This position nowise establishes any principle in nature distinct from and coördinate with God. To hold the essences and verities of things independent of God's will is but to recognize the eternal and immutable wisdom of God which expresses itself in them and which is as truly divine as is the will of God.

Cudworth went to great lengths to exalt the eternal and immutable character of moral principles. But what are these principles, what is their analysis in detail, or their relation to each other, the character of morality which they serve to reveal, and furthermore the peculiar nature of moral activity and moral judgment as distinguished from intellectual or aesthetic, the nature and the ground of moral obligation and conscience, the non-rational factors in moral experience, pleasure and pain and consequences generally, the clashing of will with itself and with other wills? Of all this, which would give ethics content and body, Cudworth's formal shell contains scarcely a hint. The modern

mind set out with the conviction that the world of matter and motion operates according to universally valid laws. But it was not satisfied with this basic assurance. It undertook to vindicate it in detail, by discovering and formulating these laws. This precisely was the achievement of modern physical science. Modern thought required also, and still requires, a similar achievement in the realm of moral values. This Cudworth's formalism did not supply. For all his disparagement of the insufficiency of other methods, his own did not commend itself sufficiently to eighteenth century British minds. They were already being induced by Locke and his followers to renounce the quest of exalted eternal verities and to hope for piecemeal wisdom from daily experience, with a fairer chance of more moderate success.

3. *Genial Rationalism*

Henry More's lifelong friendship with Cudworth was endangered by the proposed publication of the *Enchiridion Ethicum* (Ethical Manual) in 1667. Cudworth regarded this work as likely to anticipate the ethics of his own *Intellectual System* or at any rate to affect the range of its influence. It was owing to More's willingness to publish his work in a Latin version, thus limiting his reading public, that a rift was avoided. Actually Cudworth had no occasion for worry. Despite the rationalism which the two men shared, More's book was concerned particularly with the specific virtues and with human life in detail.

More borrowed his title from Epictetus, and his pages are overloaded with Aristotelian and Stoic citations, but he is not to be dismissed as a mere commentator. He uses authorities but does not depend on them. Nor is his work primarily one of controversy. Or perhaps it is an attack the subtler because of the gentle urbanity of its strategy. Instead of plunging headlong against hedonism, More would envelop it and make it serve his own cause of humane and genial virtue. He would persuade by gentle reasonableness, by argument and precept and example. He would uphold the nobility of virtue, but also extol her loveliness, finding man's supreme happiness to consist in the attainment of his highest good. Ethics is compared by him to medicine: as medicine would preserve the health and well-being of the body, so ethics, in pursuing virtue, would maintain the soul in its possession, which is its health and blessedness.

His initial definition of ethics sets the tone of his detailed treatment. Ethics is "the art of living well and happily." "Happiness is that pleasure which the mind takes in from a sense of virtue, and a conscience of well-doing." Virtue in turn is defined as "an intellectual power of

the soul, by which it over-rules the animal impressions or bodily passions; so as in every action it easily pursues what is absolutely and simply the best." [6]

The moral realm, as More views it, is one of rational order. He undertakes to formulate its main principles and uses them as the foundation stones of his ethical structure. There are twenty-three of these Rational Principles or *Noemata.* The first: "Good is that which is grateful, pleasant and congruous to any being, which hath life and perception, or that contributes in any degree to the preservation of it." The second in corresponding terms defines evil. The fifth and thirteenth maintain the duty to choose good and eschew evil with an appropriate intensity of preference or aversion. The twelfth warns against the confusion of the passions: "A mind which is free from the prejudices that attend passion, judges more uprightly than a mind which by such passions, or any other corporeal impressions is solicited or disturbed." The fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth articulate the Golden Rule. The eighteenth reckons the moral value of an act as multiplied by the number of men it affects. The nineteenth holds, it is better for a man to miss some pleasure than in gaining it to cause pain to another. The twenty-first: " 'Tis better to obey God than men, or even our own appetites." The penultimate: " 'Tis good and just to give every man what is his due, as also the use and possession thereof without any trouble." [7]

The recognition of this fundamental rationality and order in the moral realm is in opposition to the view that good is essentially a matter of private taste and advantage. More maintains that there is a "somewhat which of its own nature is simply *good.*" [8] While thus lifting moral value above the verdict of mere feeling, More does not follow the Stoics in proscribing emotion. Virtue does not demand the utter suppression but rather the rational regulation of the passions. The blessed life of virtue is a balanced life; its excellence is in a proper mean or moderation. Leaning on Aristotle for this conclusion, More would expand it by pointing out the standard and measure determining the proper balance which in each situation marks the course of virtue. This guiding function in the life of man More assigns to what he calls the "boniform faculty" or capacity for good. At this point his ethics prepares the way for the moral sense theory.

Thus entrenched in essentials, More organizes his doctrine of the blessed life in detail. Blessedness consists in the enjoyment of the full perfections of our nature. These perfections or spiritual energies, the virtues, are either primitive or derivative. The primitive virtues are three: Prudence, Sincerity, and Patience. Prudence is "a Virtue, by

which the Soul has such Dominion over the Passions . . . that the mind can receive no Impediment thereby, in rightly observing, and successfully judging of what is absolutely and simply the best." [9] Sincerity reveals the integrity and singlemindedness of the good life. Patience, in turn, as distinguished from mere passivity, is the active self-possession of the soul in resistance to all that would corrupt and undo it. It is twofold in character, manifesting itself as continence, the resistance of the spiritual or distinctively human to the lure of mere animal pleasure, and as endurance, the self-possession of the soul in the face of hardship or pain and its unmoved devotion to the highest.

To the three primitive virtues correspond three that are derivative: Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. Justice is rightly defined by the jurist: "a constant and perpetual will to give every man his own." In our relation to God justice is manifest as piety, yielding to the Lord his due, our worship; in our relations with our fellowmen, justice is probity, political, economic, and strictly ethical. In our manifold dealings with each other, justice leads or is allied to various perfections of the soul: liberality, magnificence, veracity, gratitude, candor, urbanity, fidelity, modesty, philanthropy, hospitality, friendship, affability, courtesy. Likewise fortitude branches out in magnanimity, generosity, lenity, constancy, diligence, vivacity, presence of mind, vigor, manliness. Temperance, again, expresses itself as frugality, humility, modesty, austerity, a slender and simple diet, decency of bearing and gesture, contentment of soul.

Consistent with virtue are certain auxiliaries of the blessed life which More styles external goods. Here are some of Aristotle's intellectual excellences, and likewise the perfections of body and advantages of fortune which antiquity prized: a subtle, keen, tenacious mind; knowledge, art, wisdom; bodily vigor and agility, beauty, health; wealth, freedom, nobility, dominance, social favor. All these More prizes, but would ever keep in mind their auxiliary character. He would not forget that "strength and agility are more the happiness of the bull, and of the squirrel, than of a man," [10] and that much that goes by the name of wealth is but superfluity and impediment.

How are virtue and blessedness attained? More introduces his reply to this with a vigorous defense of free will, in opposition to Hobbes' determinism and to all mechanistic philosophy. In observing the animal side of human nature, we should not ignore the divine principle in him by virtue of which he is characteristically human. The active moral life is the distinctive self-expression of our nature and faculties. Not only is the pursuit of virtue in the line of our normal endeavor, but the attainment and lasting possession of all other goods—intelligence,

health, beauty, wealth—is conditioned by the attainment of virtue. In sincerity is the true mirror of our soul; in patience, its stability; fortitude and temperance are its "adamantine keepers." This conviction of the appropriateness and the supreme advantage of virtue stimulates moral effort: for perfection, though natural to us, is not easily achieved. But pursue it we must, for in it is our blessedness: "To attain this perfection in virtue is to attain the most perfect happiness, that man's nature is capable of." [11] And a life thus directed points to its supreme consummation, in the immortal society of the blessed saints, which More characteristically calls the highest *external* good, thus recognizing its sublimity, but also upholding the inherent worth of virtue here and now.

4. Cumberland's Laws of Nature

The influence which More and Cudworth may have exercised directly on Richard Cumberland (1632-1718) during his years as a student and fellow at Cambridge University cannot be traced offhand. His ethical thought combined theological with mathematical reasoning and also with naturalistic and especially medical analogies. His breadth of viewpoint, relating social feeling, moral devotion, and happiness, in mutual dependence on the basis of God's will and natural law, reached widely and served to give his work various appeal.

The treatise *De Legibus Naturae*, *On the Laws of Nature* (1672) is advertised on the title-page as anti-Hobbist. Indeed Cumberland's resolution to harass Hobbes at every turn of the road interrupts constantly the course of his own argument and confuses his heavy style. The lasting value of the work, however, is not merely in its refutation of Hobbes, but in the constructive ethical principles which, in the course of this refutation, he was led to advocate; and it is to these that we directly turn.

For Cumberland the main problem of ethics is not the specific formulation of the Highest Good nor the more general survey of the moral values of our life. It is rather this: admitting that our happiness is made up of a concurrence of various good things, does this pursuit normally involve the selfish disregard of the similar interests of others, or active concern for the common good? Thus the dispute with Hobbes concentrates Cumberland's attention on the relation of individual to social values.

His first task is to establish our regard for the common good upon the rational order of nature. We not only have this moral-social feeling, but we are bound to have it. Cumberland is unwilling to allow Hobbes the advantage of seeming to advocate a strictly naturalistic ethics based

on fact. Fact precisely is his chief weapon against his opponent. In the very nature of things, "the particular persons who promote or oppose the common good, are parts of that whole which their actions either befriend or prejudice, and therefore necessarily partake of the advantage or disadvantage thence arising." [12]

This fact may be established by rational demonstration. Just as men may perceive and prove to others mathematical truths, so they are bound to recognize "that the good of all rational beings is greater than the like good of any part of that aggregate body; that in promoting the good of this whole aggregate, the good of individuals is contained and promoted," and further corollaries of these truths. The Golden Rule is thus imposed on us; its truth rests on the very naturalness of fair play. Of this rule Cumberland has given us the most involved statement on record: "Whatever assistance any man rightly and truly believes, he may or ought to demand according to right reason, it is equitable, and consequently a dictate of right reason that he should think, that any other in like circumstances justly may or ought to demand the like help from him." [13]

Daily observation affords us abundant instances of these general truths. Animal gregariousness, the usual disinclination of wild beasts to attack their own kind, as well as our own domestic and neighborly-social experience, all imply as they also serve to illustrate the normal bent which nature sustains. "When anyone serves the public, he never loses his labour." Our resistance to injustice or oppression is more than a sense of hurt; the injury we resent is an invasion of rights which we naturally claim for ourselves and recognize in others. Thus both empirically and on rational grounds the Law of Nature is established: "A proposition proposed to the observation of, or impressed upon, the mind, with sufficient clearness, by the nature of things, from the will of the First Cause, which points out the possible action of a rational agent, which will chiefly promote the common good, and by which only the entire happiness of particular persons can be obtained." A right act thus conceived is the straitest way to our goal, the common good in which the well-being of each is to be sought, just as a straight line is the shortest and most direct way from one point to another.[14]

What we rightly call virtue cultivates men's natural perfections both of mind and body. This conception of virtue clearly recalls the Aristotelian. It would be confusing, however, to regard Cumberland's ethics merely as a modern version of the Nicomachean. It is insistently naturalistic, but it is nowise pagan. The sense of duty or conscience, the lack of which in Greek ethics Herbert of Cherbury had remarked, is not neglected by Cumberland. He explicitly distinguishes between

natural and moral good: "There are many things naturally good, that is, such as contribute somewhat to the happiness of man, which are not morally good, as being either not voluntary actions, or not commanded by any law." [15] Intelligence, knowledge, health, wealth are cited as examples.

If Cumberland's conception of moral value thus widely differs from the Greek, we should be on our guard lest we mistake it for a mere restatement of the decalogue ethics, or for a concession to Hobbes, or for an anticipation of Kant. Obligation and obedience to a law are essential to moral value. This Hobbes had regarded as involving the reduction of ethics to politics, justice and all other virtues being but the adherence of the individual to the dictates of Leviathan. Shall we not say that Scotist ethics betrays in an extreme form a similar tendency in the theologian to treat good and evil as righteousness and sin, to reduce them to obedience and disobedience of God's will? Cumberland would recognize neither a human nor a Divine Leviathan. Even in Hobbes he catches an occasional hint of the more ultimate standard, interpreting some passages to mean that the good of the people is the end which Leviathan *ought to* propose. But more emphatically, against both Hobbes and the theologian who considers virtue as obedience and regard for rewards and punishments, Cumberland maintains a certain inherent superiority of virtue which makes it worthy of being preferred and pursued.

We can see in Cumberland, on the one hand, a resistance to the Epicurean doctrine that no thing is inherently better than another or worthier to be chosen, but is good or bad only in its pleasant or painful results. On the other hand, he would also correct the Stoic disregard for consequences and happiness. Virtue, he declares, "is great part of its own reward," but it is not its whole reward. God prefers and enjoins the pursuit of virtue because it conduces to the greater good of the whole and is thus in accordance with the fundamental nature of things. But God furthermore rewards it, in this world and in the hereafter, in order clearly to authenticate his natural and eternal preference for it.[16]

Thus seeking widespread foundation for his morals, Cumberland upholds the naturalness of virtuous respect for the common good, but would not ignore its divine sanction. Confident that it tends to the increase of happiness, he would yet revere its own dignity and worth. Though assured of its ultimate reward at the hands of God, he does not rely on the hereafter for its vindication, but sees its value solidly established from the start in the very nature of things. In a very significant way we have in Cumberland's system the groundwork and scaffolding of later constructive British ethics. The systematic perfect-

ing of ethical method will, of course, lead to the overemphasis of certain aspects of human life and character, with corresponding various onesidedness, conditioning and requiring reconciliation of extremes and a more adequate synthesis. Needless to say, such a synthesis is not to be found in Cumberland. But it is the peculiar merit of his system that it broadly keeps in view the different essential elements of moral value which subsequent thought is to articulate, to emphasize, and later to organize more concretely. A careful comparison, with this view in mind, of Cumberland's *Laws of Nature* with T. H. Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics* proves rewarding. What is prospective in the former work is disclosed as in the background of the latter.

CHAPTER X

THE ETHICS OF FRENCH RATIONALISM



1. The Cartesian Method in Morals

It has been observed as a peculiarity of French thought that it has yielded many moralists but few moral philosophers. There is no French tradition of ethical theory to compare with the manifold development in Great Britain, from Hobbes to Sidgwick and Green. The British mind has devoted special attention to ethics by an analysis of motivation and a critical examination of moral standards, without necessarily leaning on a system of metaphysical principles. On the Continent, ethical theory has as a rule been subsidiary to systematic metaphysics and cosmology, subsidiary and sometimes neglected; while on the other hand it has been apt to recall its theological relations, and on that account treated with reluctance.

The systematic thought of René Descartes (1596-1650) in theory of knowledge and in cosmology earned him the title of "the father of modern philosophy"; but he wrote no systematic treatise of ethics. Our understanding of his conclusions in moral philosophy must be derived from his work, *The Passions of the Soul*, and from his letters on the highest good written to the Princess Elizabeth.

Descartes' attitude is one of critical resistance and doubt as safeguards against error. This creates a problem at the outset. While he is thus seeking truth and universal first principles, how is he to live his life, how is he to act? For this purpose he proposes, in the third part of his *Discourse on Method*, four maxims of provisional morals. First, submit to the established laws, customs, and religion, and in all other things follow moderate respectable practice. Second, be as firm as possible in any action undertaken, even where the way is not clear. Third, try self-mastery rather than change of the world-order. Fourth, choose the best of human occupations, the cultivation of reason, and persevere in the pursuit of truth. Descartes' provisional ethics is thus one of respectability and moderation, resolute consistency, self-control, and enlightenment.

Descartes' goal from the outset is rational contentment, and his means to it, understanding of oneself and one's proper nature and scope. The

knowledge of man must begin with physics and physiology, but it must end in morals. Only Descartes would put it conversely: complete knowledge of man involves knowledge of virtue, but really to understand virtue, the path to human perfection, one must begin by studying man, his soul and its thoughts but also his body and his passions.

Our nature in all its animal functions is purely corporeal and requires a mechanical explanation. On the other hand, we have the intellectual activity of the soul, which Descartes regards as purely immaterial. But there are also desires and perceptions which involve the correlation of body and soul. These are the passions. The novelty of a new impression moves us to wonder. If it is presented to us as good and agreeable, it evokes love; if as evil and hurtful, it stirs hatred. When these are contemplated as in some future state, desire of various sorts is experienced. What we regard as good or evil, as it is actually experienced, gives rise to joy or sorrow. All the other passions of the soul are varieties of these six original forms.

Descartes' account of the passions emphasizes the interaction of soul and body: in passion the two are somehow one. But how a purely immaterial soul can interact with the purely material body is not explained satisfactorily. Descartes' opinion that the pineal gland is the chief seat of the soul through which it is united to the body, requires mention but scarcely calls for discussion. This perplexity in cosmology dictates the various alternatives in later Cartesian speculation. In ethical theory Descartes' doctrine of the passions is important because it involved a new version of the moral situation. Former moralists had spoken of the conflict between the higher and the lower parts of the soul. This Descartes rejects. There is no conflict within the soul, but there is a conflict. The will is stormed by certain perceptions and feelings, and it reacts, yielding to them or mastering them, depending on the quality of its ideas. Descartes nowise ignores the plight of the soul, but he also perceives its great opportunity. An insulting attack may make our blood boil, and flaming anger may possess the soul and be translated into murderous action; but again our will may freely counteract, may stir the soul to noble reserve and self-possession. For we act as we think.

Many people rely on counteracting floods of passion to see them through the vicissitudes of life. But real self-control and self-direction is of a different character, and it is always possible: granted only that the soul have knowledge of the truth. Without this knowledge, reliance on the impulse of the moment may prove ruinous and alleged strength of soul is unavailing; while on the other hand "there is no soul so feeble that it cannot, if well directed, acquire an absolute power over its

passions." [1] Discipline will do wonders even with animals, as professional trainers know.

Descartes' ethics thus recalls the Stoic, both in its end and in the proposed means to the end. But the intention of Descartes' ethics is scarcely Stoic, likewise his moral estimate of the passions. He does not aspire to apathy. The passions are all good in their nature, if only they are not abused in excess. Were it not for our passions, we should languish and stagnate; it is in them only that the sweetness and felicity of our life is set. His ideal thus turns aside from Stoic impassivity. The Stoic has conceived of virtue as so severe and hostile to pleasure that only melancholic and entirely ascetic natures could take to it: so Descartes writes to the Princess Elizabeth. We cannot ignore the factor of satisfaction, for it is essential in human activity. In calling pleasure the motive or end of our actions, Epicurus is not wrong; but pleasure (mental contentment) is often used in the sense of false pleasure, which is followed by disgust and weariness. Many have believed that Epicurus was an advocate of vice, and indeed he scarcely teaches virtue. True blessedness of soul includes contentment. But "to have solid contentment, we must follow virtue, that is to say, we must have a firm and constant will to carry out whatever we shall judge to be the best, and to use all the powers of our understanding to judge well what is the best." [2]

To know how much things can contribute to our contentment, we should know their causes: what can and what cannot bring them about. Our well-being thus depends upon the reasonableness of our desires. If we desire what is inappropriate to us and what exceeds our power and capacities to attain, our energies are misapplied and we reap vexation and discontent. It comes to this, what perfection and what virtue lies within one's reach. The true perception of this matter conditions our contentment and controls our sense of recognized duties. This true self-esteem is a noble consciousness of our genuine worth yet nowise conceited or arrogant, a humble sense likewise of our manifold infirmities and limitations, yet not abject. Descartes regards it as the supreme excellence of the soul, and calls it Generosity. The virtue of magnanimity in the Aristotelian ethics did not express the full moral significance of this quality of the soul. "True generosity which causes a man to esteem himself as highly as he legitimately can, consists alone partly in the fact that he knows that there is nothing that truly pertains to him but this free disposition of his will, and that there is no reason why he should be praised or blamed unless it is because he uses it well or ill; and partly in the fact that he is sensible in himself of a firm and constant resolution to use it well, that is to say, never to fail of his own

will to undertake and execute all the things which he judges to be the best—which is to follow perfectly after virtue." [8]

Dante in his *Paradise* ascending the Ten Heavens, finds each soul in its proper sphere, each tasting the utmost of beatitude of which it is capable, yet some of them far more capable than others. A homelier statement of Descartes suggests a similar idea. Of two vases the smaller may be as full to overflowing as the larger, yet contains much less. This insistence on the appropriateness of virtue to characteristic nature and ability frees morals from abstract rigidity and is in line with Descartes' scientific analysis of man's emotional life. But there are ethical pitfalls in our way here. To one man five talents were entrusted, to another two, and to another, one: to each according to his ability; and as was the ability, so presumably was the expectation. In the sight of the Omniscient this is no doubt wisdom. But while reason counsels us to count our talents lest we exceed our resources, and experience teaches us a sanely conservative estimate of our gains, there is grave moral hazard in modesty about our ideals. Is not a certain heroic overreaching of ability an essential element of moral endeavor and a condition of genuine moral satisfaction?—

> A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a heaven for?

Descartes' ethics, in its relation to analysis of human nature, is inconclusive and points several ways. We are not responsible for what we can do but for what we will. Our nature and its capacities are thus and so: these our mind should recognize. But our will is free, and it is for the free activity of our mind, for our thoughts that we alone have to answer. Answer to whom? To God, Descartes would reply; for the basis of duty is our obligation to make our will accord with the will of God. God's free will is the creative source and ground of moral law and moral value. Descartes' ethical rationalism rests on Scotist foundations. God's free choice constitutes the eternal truths true and makes good and evil what they are.

But as the further development of rationalism leads to the abandonment of indeterminism of whatever sort, the problems of motivation, duty, and moral value assume new forms. If our soul is seen to have no freedom and no power to affect the body, and all our activity comes to be regarded as evidencing our immediate dependence on God, Descartes' chief virtue of generosity suffers change of emphasis and becomes pious humility. If, by a further and more radical development of doctrine, a thoroughgoing monistic determinism allows of no good or evil in the infinite perfection of God and conceives of these as only

relative to our finite nature and its concourse of knowledge and passion, the question is imposed, whether on such a basis moral values can have the kind of reality that would justify a genuine theory of ethics: whether nature and human nature allow ultimately of evaluation at all, or only of description and analysis. These problems confront us in the ethics of Descartes' successors.

2. *Rational Inwardness and Humility*

Descartes' emphasis on physical science led some of his followers to include men's acts in the vast mechanics of nature, in a manner which ruled out ethics and implied atheism. The absence of a systematic Cartesian treatise of morals strengthened the suspicion with which the new philosophy was regarded by the orthodox. To clear up this confusion and thus complete the Cartesian system, is the aim of the *Ethics* of Arnold Geulincx (1625-1669), professor at Louvain and Leyden.

Geulincx divided his philosophy into three inquiries: What am I, how is my mind related to my body, and what is my relation to the world and to God? It is of the utmost importance in ethics that we get a clear and distinct knowledge of the range of our power of action and thus of our proper moral province.

His first proposition is the Cartesian *Cogito ergo sum:* I am certain of my own self as thinking. Thinking constitutes the total activity of my mind, and my mind thinks, knows, understands itself. If anything takes place in me of which I am not clearly conscious nor understand directly how it takes place, Geulincx proceeds, then the activity in question is not really mine; my mind is not its cause. I am not the author of what I do not understand.[4]

What, then, causes such states and acts which my mind experiences but of which it is not the cause? Descartes had sought an explanation in terms of mind-body interaction, but Geulincx rejects this idea. My body is purely material and cannot cause perceptions in my mind. My mind is purely a thinking-willing being and cannot cause changes in my body or in the outside world. And there would be no difference in principle between my mind's moving my body and my mind's moving a mountain: it would be no less a miracle if my tongue trembled because my mind decides to utter the word "earth" than if the earth itself trembled in consequence. Nevertheless when I would utter this word my tongue does speak it, and as the sound of it reaches your ear your mind does understand the idea. Only one explanation, in Geulincx's judgment, can account for this coöperant activity of two substances which cannot interact, namely the activity of God, who is neither mind nor body but the ultimate ground of both. It is God that is active

in me and on the occasion of changes in my body or ideas in my mind brings about the corresponding perceptions in the mind or the corresponding 'voluntary' actions. This is Geulincx's doctrine of occasional causes.

The ethical corollaries of this doctrine are summed up in a formula which in Geulincx's use becomes a touchstone applied in every instance. Where you can accomplish nothing, there will nothing: I am author only of what I think and will; of all else that takes place in my body I am but the bare spectator. This view of man's range of power would warrant Descartes' conclusion that we are responsible only for our thoughts; but it involves radical revision of the Cartesian ideal of reasonable desire and of the Cartesian supreme virtue of generosity or true self-esteem.[5]

The cardinal virtues for Geulincx are diligence, obedience, justice, humility: a fourfold pious recognition of our limited state and range and of our dependence on God. Humility is the supreme excellence of the soul; it is true self-esteem; springing from self-examination, it proceeds to self-humbling. The blessed life is the reasonable life, and the reasonable life for a being of our humble range of power is the life of pious humility. In place of the ethics of outward achievement and world-mastery, which rests on a pathetic misapprehension, Geulincx advocates an ethics of the soul's renunciation of outward power and its concentration on its own rational activity. The pursuit of happiness is deceptive and defeats itself; wordly striving, plans and projects, all this is vain futility; but it is in our power to pursue and attain the truth and in its contemplation to find peace. A great passage from Pascal comes to mind: "All our dignity lies in our thought. It is upon that that we must depend, not upon space and time which we cannot fill. Let us therefore strive to think well: such is the foundation of moral life." [6]

3. Malebranche's Search After Truth

The demand for clarity and order in ideas which directed the procedure of Cartesian rationalism took lifelong possession of the mind of Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715) whom neither ecclesiastic learning nor Biblical philology could satisfy. But while Descartes' cosmology was stimulating as well as finding warrant in aggressively scientific speculation, and thus was rousing theological opposition, Malebranche used the new rationalism as the basis on which secular truth and religious verity could meet and confirm each other. Our soul is essentially one with the Divine Order; in this unity is all our truth and blessedness. The confusion of sense and the misguided attachments of a perverted will involve us in error and in sin. The entire philosophy of

Malebranche has been described as a commentary on the words of St. Paul: "In him we live and move and have our being": words which may be read as the conclusion of Malebranche's cosmology, the guiding principle of his ethics, and the reason for the union of the two in his system of philosophical piety.

Malebranche was resolutely loyal to the Cartesian principle of method: suspect confused notions, no matter how generally held or sanctioned by great authority; reason only from clear ideas and incontestable experiences. But precisely this loyalty led him to revise more carefully Descartes' account of the relation between bodies and minds. Clearly conceived, the nature of bodies limits them to spatial relations involving changing figure and movement, while the sphere of minds is wholly nonspatial, thinking and willing. The two are complementary and incommensurate: "the soul thinks and is nowise extended; body is extended and does not think." [7] Interaction between these is therefore inconceivable: there is no finite bond of union or medium whereby mind can move body or be stimulated by it. Malebranche agrees with Geulincx that the relation of mind and body involves a transfinite connecting medium. The true cause of the relation is always God; the finite corresponding factors in question provide only the occasions for the manifestation of the divine activity. The air disturbed by my voice beats on your ears: but the process becomes speaking, listening, conversation only because of the divinely established correspondence of modalities.

This theocentric cosmology leads to a theory of morals emphasizing the humble and loving recognition of our relation to God, and points to piety as the apex alike of theoretical and practical philosophy. In his *Search After Truth* Malebranche seeks to indicate the various sorts and sources of error and to trace the pathway to truth. The true function of our senses and of imagination is the conservation of the life and health of our body in its relation to other bodies, and to this end they are well adapted. But real knowledge comes from the intellect alone: it is obtained when the mind receives from God ideas unmixed with sensations or images, ideas expressing the mind's relation to God and to the eternal laws of God's immutable order.

As with theoretical so it is with moral perfection: our problem here is to discriminate between real and spurious goods and not to misplace our attachment. Malebranche is guided by a Socratic conviction that moral perfection is in and through enlightenment. It discloses practically the mind's clear perception of the supremely worthy and desirable. In the Preface to his *Treatise of Morals* he states explicitly his thesis, that "virtue consists precisely in the habitual and dominant love

of the everlasting order." God is the author of nature and the only really active power in it. He is the general cause of all motion in the world of bodies, and all the inclinations of our souls find their ultimate explanation in him. Infinitely perfect, God loves himself with an infinite and invincible love, and the natural goal of the beings whom he has created is thus bound to be invincible love for their author and for the eternal order which reveals his perfection. There is in our will a fundamental direction towards the good.

That we love and pursue the good is the very essence of our will; but what particular good we pursue depends on what we regard as good. The specific direction of the will is thus subject to our view and relative estimate of various particular goods. Invincibly tending towards good in general, our will may or may not be attracted to a particular good, and this "non-invincibility" of the will direction in particular is what Malebranche understands by freedom of the will. Thus all love and capacity for good which we possess, we owe to God's activity in us; but the possibility of going astray in our own preference and choice is due to our own imperfect use of our liberty. And these errors of our will have ruinous consequences. To free our intelligence from the lure of the senses and the imagination, and to direct our mind to the clear vision of the divine good and our wills to the love and pursuit of it, we children of Adam need divine grace.

Virtue is thus expressed in a devotion to things proportionate to their perfection which entitles them to our devotion: this is love of the immutable divine order. To attain unto it, is the moral ideal; this attainment is impeded by our body with its pleasures and the errors and fancies which it occasions, serious and often insurmountable obstacles. The theme of morals is thus the gradual enlightenment of the soul, benefiting from God's loving grace, cultivating moral insight and moral discipline and loving obedience, resisting the riot and rebellion of passion. These are the manifold expressions of a morally enlightened and disciplined will, the duties of man towards himself and towards his fellowmen, and his final utter self-surrender in love to God, in saintly withdrawal from the distractions of worldliness.

This ethical system of Christian rationalism we may now examine in some detail. God is infinite perfection, and any degree of perfection which we attain can only be through union with God, through clear understanding of our dependence on him and loving devotion to his immutable order. This is the first and fundamental virtue to which all others are reduced, the loving conformity of our will to the divine moral order, our thorough self-identification with it. This love, the *caritas* of St. Paul, Malebranche points out, is not mere ardor to enjoy

God's blessed presence in heaven, but wholehearted devotion to God's justice. It is not a mere longing of the heart, but utter resolution of the will in line with the Divine order. In this way alone can we realize the end of our being. For God in his infinite perfection has created us in order that we may attain unto him as fully as may be, and only in thus realizing the end of our being can we be truly and wholly happy.

To the clear thought of reason all this is incontrovertible, but Malebranche is aware of the duality of character which impedes our attainment of truth and virtue. God speaks to our intelligence, to draw us unto him, but the body is always luring us to sensual attachments. Our soul's vision is beclouded, and in its confusion it turns to the alleged pleasures of sense. The moral order demands that our delight in the possession or pursuit of anything be proportionate to its worth and degree of perfection. But our sense and imagination disturb this rational scale of devotion and fire us with ardor out of all relation to the worth of the object arousing it. This is the distracting and distorting influence of passion.

Seven characteristics distinguish this passionate emotion of the soul: a confused idea which we entertain of our relation to an object; a definite movement of desire or repulsion resulting from the idea in question; a feeling of delight or aversion accompanying the movement; the concentration or flooding of the animal spirits in the direction of the new excitement; the soul's sense of agitation by this rising tide of spirits; feelings of joy or grief resulting not from ideas but from the various ardors which the flood of animal spirits causes in the brain; and lastly, a certain inner thrill of satisfaction which keeps the soul in its passionate attachment. Malebranche recognizes three primitive passions: desire, joy and grief. All other passions are but varieties of these three: "I may say that hope, fear, and irresolution, that is the mean betwixt them both, are species of desire: that boldness, courage and emulation, have a greater relation to hope than to all others; and that timidity, cowardice, jealousy, are species of fear. I may say that alacrity and glory, kindness and gratefulness, are species of joy, caused by the sight of the good that we know to be in us, or in those to whom we know to be united; as derision or jeering is a sort of joy, commonly arising at the sight of the evil that befalls those from whom we are alienated. Lastly, that distaste, tediousness, regret, pity, indignation, are so many kinds of sorrow, caused by the consideration of something displeasing." We may classify passions, but scarcely draw an exhaustive list of them: "there are more passions than we have terms to express them by." [8]

Unbalancing our judgment, usurping attention until we are carried

away, in utter oblivion of all save the delight or the rancor and agony of the moment, passion creates disorders whose evil results persist even after the soul has in a measure come back to itself, as strewn wreckage after a storm has subsided. If we are to cope with this ruinous upsetting of all order in our life, we should clearly recognize the proper rôle of emotion. Passions involve our soul's relation to our body and through our body to other objects of sense, and pleasure and pain are suitable means for regulating these relations. In this respect they may even have beneficial influence on the soul, by rousing and sharpening attention. But passions are not meant to guide our actions. This is the rôle of our pious reason. The very thought of eternity should render our passions ludicrous in our eyes.

In a life intelligently and piously identified with God's immutable order, the one fundamental virtue expresses itself in detail in the fulfillment of our various duties. Our duty to God, our author and our model, is to be perfect as he is perfect, in clear thought and humble meditation, resisting confusion and error, and caring nothing for disputation or controversial success but only for the pursuit of truth, in loving submission to God's love and in readiness to accept just chastisement or any hardship which the service of God demands: in all ways to find our destiny in devotion to the Highest. Our duties to our fellowmen should include justice and respect, and the considerateness which even the lowest sinner may claim from us. In the various relations of life, political, economic, domestic, neighborly-social, the love of moral order expresses itself in a system of complementary duties, fulfillment of which makes men partners in each other's perfection. But the commerce of this world involves moral perils. One must be vigilant lest he be carried away with the distractions of worldliness. In the world, one should ever strive not to be of it, but to preserve one's chief and intimate thought for God alone. This is after all the duty each one owes to himself, which no interest in the externalities of social life should cause us to neglect: to concentrate thought, love, action on the attainment of our perfection wherein is our worthy happiness: to make God our goal and our good, and reason our only law.

The consummation of this moral enterprise Malebranche finds in ascetic retirement. "We should meditate night and day on the Divine law, so as to follow it strictly." As we thus draw to God, we withdraw from the world of sense. "The world seduces us by our senses; it troubles our mind by our imagination; it carries us away and hurls us to utter disaster by our passions. . . . We cannot be united perfectly to God but by abandoning the desires of the body, by despising the body, sacrificing and losing it." [9]

CHAPTER XI

THE ETHICS OF SPINOZA



1. Knowledge as Enlightenment

For a century after his death Spinoza's name was anathema, and the accounts of his philosophy taxed the lexicon of vituperation. Then in the German Enlightenment and Romanticism, with Lessing, Goethe and Schleiermacher as champions of the *Ethics*, abuse yielded to admiration; the erstwhile atheist and impostor became the "God-intoxicated" man, and Spinozism, almost a synonym for philosophy. Though in the course of the last hundred years this cult of Spinoza has yielded to more thorough if less worshipful appreciation, he has not been 'explained' or 'placed,' nor his system reduced to a formula. This is a mark of the vitality no less than of the subtle complexity of his thought. Most variously interpreted of all the great thinkers of the seventeenth century, Spinoza reflects or rather integrates in critical creative synthesis the many fertile strains of his age.

Despite his retired daily life, Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza (1632-1677) was in direct contact with his leading contemporaries, as is clear to any reader of his correspondence. Against the opinion of him as a studious recluse, buried in his books at night after bending over his lenses all day, are the facts of his active connection with liberal activities in Holland and throughout Europe. Witness his fearless support of Grand Pensionary De Witt's cause, even at the peril of his life, his unresponsiveness to the blandishments of Louis XIV's legates, and his initial distrust of Leibniz. Henry Oldenburg of the Royal Society hailed him as a free spirit, but when tribulations taught Oldenburg caution and even timidity, Spinoza continued, never a firebrand but always intrepid.

Ideas were living forces to Spinoza, forces in living well or ill, and this conviction determined his conception of the aim of philosophy. Real knowledge is not neutral or passive, and Spinoza's own knowledge was not mere book-learning. He lived with his library, but not in it. The *Theologico-Political Treatise* is an erudite book, a pioneer document of Biblical criticism; its object is to undermine bibliolatry of all sorts. Spinoza interrupted his *Ethics* to write this classic of unshackled thinking and to hoist the flag of criticism in the very citadel of tra-

ditional conformity. To enter unto the religion of thought and truth, men must first be emancipated from the idolatry of words and dogma.

We should constantly bear in mind that Spinoza is no one's disciple. He appropriates, but he does not borrow, and his philosophy is not to be understood as the completion or revision of another's, Descartes' or Bruno's or Maimonides.' All the same we should note his kinships, for in his reactions to his environment is revealed the temper of his thought. And here his catholicity is disclosed, a breadth of interest and zeal which led him, while still a rabbinical pupil, to turn from his Talmudic training to the study of Latin, the language of the oppressors of his race, but likewise the medium in which he could read the modern science and the new philosophy. The Cartesian rationalism satisfied, but it also challenged his own demand for intellectual clarity. Here was a method aiming at demonstration: not leaning on dogmatic authority, not content with probability, bent on conclusiveness. Pascal was to describe it as the perfect, geometric method, which defines all its terms and proves all its propositions. But Pascal despaired of it as finally unavailing, since its initial terms are indefinable and its first principles axiomatic, beyond proof. Spinoza's confidence in reason was more thorough than Pascal's, but his rationalism differed from Descartes' alike in the course of detailed analysis and in his idea of the *raison d'être* of reason, the self-justification of philosophy.

The Cartesian metaphysic, in setting out with the doctrine of Substance, espoused the normal monistic demand of reason. It espoused, but did not satisfy it; its cosmology remained an ambiguous dualism. Spinoza's monistic mind refused to accept this ambiguity as conclusive. A Hebraic commitment to the principle of ultimate unity led him to a more rigorous analysis of the idea of Substance, prepared in advance for radical departures in his science, as in his treatment of the mind-body problem. The seventeenth century was not only a century of positive physical science and world-comprehending mechanistic formulas. It was also the century of mystical-pantheistic reaching after the infinite and the ineffable. This latter was in part a Catholic reaction against the confident precision of the Calvinist, but in non-Catholic and even in quite secular thought it was the upwelling of a deep conviction of the inexhaustible Whole and at the same time a mystical leap and plunge. This contest in Spinoza's thought between Cartesian clear-cut formalism and pantheistic immanence of the Infinite, is fundamental and must be kept in mind if our judgment of his philosophy is to be balanced.

In the closer examination of Spinoza's system to which we now turn, we shall of necessity concentrate on the moral principles and problems:

What is the ethical theory which Spinoza intends to articulate?—What provisions, if any, does his metaphysics make for his ethics?—What fundamental demands does this ethics in its turn impose on his metaphysics and cosmology?

We should keep in mind from the outset the ethical motivation of Spinoza's philosophy. He seeks a scientific method, but his purpose is more properly described as moral-religious. He does not pursue knowledge for its own sake, but as enlightenment, that he may find his path and keep to it. We should not be misled by Spinoza's deliberate and insistent naturalistic method and confuse him with the naturalists in aim. The spur to his search after truth is not the Aristotelian: "All men by nature desire to know." Spinoza's philosophy issues from a spiritual emergency: "I perceived that I was in a state of great peril, and I compelled myself to seek with all my strength for a remedy, however uncertain it might be; as a sick man struggling with a deadly disease, when he sees that death will surely be upon him unless a remedy is found. . . ." [1] This urgent character of Spinoza's thought makes the title of his crowning work, the *Ethics,* no accident, as it certainly is not a misnomer. His entire thought points to an Ethics as its apex. Witness the themes of his other treatises, finished and unfinished: *On God, Man, and His Well-Being; On the Improvement of the Understanding; On Theology and Politics; On Politics:* these are so many programs of individual and social reform through enlightenment. Even the *Hebrew Grammar* has a practical aim: the more complete diagnosis and cure of Bibliolatry and intolerance. St. Bonaventura entitled one of his works *The Pathway of the Mind to God.* So Spinoza's philosophy would map the way to the blessed life: wherein and how human perfection is to be found, the obstacles to it, and the surmounting of the obstacles.

But if ethics is to be the fruit of Spinoza's philosophy, its roots and its soil must be in a true doctrine of nature. The great emergency makes him doubly cautious. He needs the truth, and so must have the facts. Perfection through understanding means that ethics must be based on metaphysics and physics. To perceive truly man's path to perfection, understanding of human nature is required, and to know human nature truly, we must know man's place in nature, and so the nature and constitution of all things.

We thus need reliable knowledge, and the test and assurance of it. We usually get our ideas from hearsay or from some sign or by conventional attachment of certain meanings to certain words, or else from mere vague sense-experience, not ordered by the intellect. Alleged knowledge of these sorts is unstable and various; here neither basis nor

implication is evident; we get an unbalanced and distorted view of things. Spinoza calls it opinion or imagination.

With the cultivation of our intelligence we may advance to a second stage of knowledge, grasping adequately the essential properties of things and their necessary relations. This is rational knowledge, mastery in true definition and deduction, perception of essential character and necessary connection, multiplicity through order leading the mind to unity of principle and substance, to God. The advance from the first to the second stage of knowledge is the advance from random incoherence and disorder to system and so to the universal principle of the system. This advance is not easy, but it leads to excellence; as will be observed presently, it involves the mastery, through understanding, of discordant and usurping passion, and the perfection of our life in the possession of truth.

The rational knowledge of order and unity may be so perfected as to enable the mind, not by logical analysis and causal probing but directly and clearly, to perceive God and all things in their essential nature, as in and of God. This third stage, immediate knowledge of the ultimate and perfect reality, Spinoza calls intuition or intuitive science, and recognizes it especially in the last part of his *Ethics*. Whether it is the normal culmination of rational knowledge, or else a sublime self-outreaching of mind, mystical and beyond explanation, is perhaps debatable. We should not ignore it, but we should observe that Spinoza's ethics is mainly concerned with the advance from the first to the second stage of knowledge. His principles and conclusions are formulated rationally, and he explicitly states that he regards them as adequately vindicated in rational terms.

2. *Monistic Determinism*

We have already noted that, whereas confused opinion or imagination perceives things in random confusion, rational knowledge discloses order, necessary connection, and ultimate unity. This monistic determinism characterizes Spinoza's doctrine of nature. The very idea of the ultimately real precludes a plurality of Substances. There can be only one self-dependent Substance, infinite, eternal, self-determined. We may call it God, or we may call it Nature: fundamental ground and being of all that there is. Its boundless plenitude of reality must involve or include an infinitude of aspects or attributes, each attribute characteristically constituting its essence. Two such attributes we perceive, matter and mind. Nature is thus both extended body and thinking mind. Matter and mind are not two parts or two types but two aspects or versions of the one world-order. Therefore there cannot

be any interaction between them, but the two attributes or versions of the one ultimate reality are thoroughly parallel or corresponding to each other. All that exists is a state or modification of the one basic Nature, extended or thinking. Look at the world on the surface only, and you see random variety and the stirring of particulars; but see more deeply into the heart of things, and you will perceive them all as waves in and of the one ocean. Their true being is in Nature, and this integral being of them all is the true nature of each. They are what they are ultimately in Nature, in God, and their character is thus eternally determined.

Of decisive and far-reaching importance, as even the briefest statement of Spinoza's metaphysics shows, is his thoroughly naturalistic doctrine of universal necessity. The God-Substance is the infinite source and ground of all things, but not in the sense of its creatively willing them. There is not the least vestige of Cartesian Scotism in Spinoza's doctrine. Things are not what they are because God so wills them. The expression God or Nature is here crucial. God is Nature for Spinoza, the infinite cosmic order. All that is or takes place manifests the eternal necessity of nature. There is no chance or arbitrariness or spontaneity in the cosmos. The idea of 'freedom' is due to a confusion. Ignorant of the causes of our actions, we imagine them undetermined. As well might a roof-tile falling to the ground imagine itself as having a free adventure. The attributes constitute the essence of Substance, and each attribute or aspect of Substance necessarily involves its essential modifications. All things are unconditionally as they must be, or better, they are what they *are*.

With the utter exclusion of all chance this doctrine likewise rules out all design in Nature. It is not a matter of chance nor is it a matter of choice or preference or purpose, that the sum of the angles in a triangle is what it is. All that triangles, or trees or traitors, are or do, reveals their respective nature and is in that sense self-determined, that is, would be different only if they were something else. God's self-determination likewise expresses the necessary eternal self-manifestation of infinite nature. But in neither case may we speak of the process or nature as teleological, in the sense of involving an ideal posited but not realized: as if a right triangle were to set before itself as a worthy goal that it fulfil, or withstand, the demands of the Pythagorean theorem!

The determinism of Spinoza and his rejection of teleology thus disclose the hard core of his naturalism. Spinoza's system is a pure geometry of nature. Reality is a structure available for analysis, and as we thus learn what things are or are not, we realize that the terms 'should'

or 'ought,' praise or blame, regret or preference, have no real place in the cosmos. The whole vocabulary of evaluation, perfection or the reverse in all its forms, has meaning only and always in relation to a particular demand necessarily characteristic of a particular nature. Meat is good for the hungry and drink for the thirsty and a boat for the shipwrecked mariner, and all things are good for him whom they suit or to whom they are useful. But that any of these things are 'really' good or bad, is an unwarranted addition of our own. "In Nature there is no good and no evil." [2] All things simply are what they are, and the better we understand the more content we are with understanding. To blame a man because he cannot see this alleged beauty or ugliness or this so-called perfection or ignominy, is as if we were to blame a blind man because he cannot see. All perception and reaction express the perceiver's nature. Instead, therefore, of mistakenly ascribing to God the value-distinctions which are always relative to our particular selves, we are enabled by our understanding to perceive 'evaluation' like all other reactions, as a necessary manifestation of specific nature.

The philosopher who had begun his study from urgent spiritual need, has learned and would teach us this wisdom of dispassionate objective naturalism. This he sets as a principle of procedure before himself in his treatment of human nature. In the Introduction to his *Political Treatise* and again at the beginning of the Third Part of the *Ethics*, Spinoza records his resolution "Not to mock, lament, or execrate, but to understand human actions. . . . Nothing comes to pass in nature, which can be set as a flaw therein; for nature is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action. . . . Thus the passions of hatred, anger, envy, and so on, considered in themselves, follow from this same necessity and efficacy of nature; . . . I shall, therefore, treat of the nature and strength of the emotions according to the same method . . . I shall consider human actions and desires in exactly the same manner, as though I were concerned with lines, planes, and solids." [3]

3. Doctrine of the Passions

Is this only a sober resolution to abstain from moralizing, or is it a view of human nature which affects the very possibility of ethics? The fuller implications of this principle are given in Spinoza's geometry of the passions, a doctrine which has remained a classic to this day.

In common with all things in nature, man is moved to persist in his own being. This *conatus* is not any occult endowment, but simply the distinctive nature of the person or thing in question. A man's way of self-preservation manifests a man's character and place and relation to

other objects; for the perfection of a man, or of a hatchet, Spinoza observes, is in each "serving God," that is in each playing its respective rôle, whatever it be.[4] A molecule persists in its being as long as in its nature it can, and so does a man; but a man is conscious of his endeavor and persistence. This endeavor, mentally regarded, we call will; taking account of body and mind together, we call the endeavor appetite, and the appetite with the consciousness of itself, desire. Will, appetite, desire are not determined by but themselves determine our judgments of good and evil. It is not because we deem a thing good that we desire it, but on the contrary we deem it good because we desire it: a bold glance ahead across centuries of psychological analysis.

The actual persistence of a thing, its effective self-maintenance, is its power, and, Spinoza adds, that is its virtue. "By virtue and power I mean the same thing." [5] When we speak of yeast or of a medicine as having lost its virtue, we express the right meaning of the term, which we should retain in our treatment of man. Self-maintenance and expansion, with the consciousness thereof, or else the sense of being curbed and in a measure undone, are primary experiences. These two, Pleasure and Pain, with Desire, Spinoza regards as the basic elements of our passions. As virtue is synonymous with power, so perfection is self-maintenance and rise in power, and pleasure an emotion whereby the mind rises to a greater perfection; pain is the reverse.

We may say that desire is vital drive in a man, and pleasure or pain the sense of heightened or lowered vitality. Pleasure thus regarded is therefore always 'good,' and pain always 'bad.' This view guides Spinoza's further account and classification of the emotions. Pleasure and pain accompanied by the idea of an external cause, are love and hate respectively. We try to imagine, to anticipate or to keep in mind whatever enhances our vitality. By association or imagination a variety of emotions arise which Spinoza defines or explains: hope, confidence, joy, on the one hand, and on the other, fear, despair, disappointment; approval and indignation, sympathy and envy, complacency and humility, honor and shame, and so forth.

The application of Spinoza's initial principles involves some estimates perplexing to traditional moral judgment and points to his program of moral reform through enlightenment. Thus pity, he thinks, is in itself bad, and so are remorse and repentance, and likewise humility. In them all, man is rendered wretched or infirm, and pain in itself is always evil. But pleasure, while in itself good, may be due to an idea of rising perfection or vitality which the facts of life do not bear out. Man may be miserable because he views his condition too gloomily; but likewise he may gaily trip along on the path to ruin.

Such is the nature of passion, furthermore, that it may take entire possession of a man. An emotion or passion expresses our own power and persistent self-maintenance, but also the power of other things acting on us. This power of other things may so overwhelm or usurp a man's attention as to yield a distorted view of himself in relation to other things. A man's whole being, as a result, may flame up in anger or jealousy or overweening vainglory. To deal with this fever, men have proposed heroic remedies. Most radical is the Stoic régime of utter repression of emotion, the ideal of apathy, passionless rational existence. But this proposed cure reflects a mistaken idea of our constitution. In view of what has been observed already, a complete extinction of the emotion would register, not the victory of the intellect, but its own extinction of activity in relation to the body. Man's very life and being is a tissue and a course of emotions. Mind and body coöperate or rather reflect each other in the counterplay of passions. The contest, therefore, is always a contest of emotions. The remedy, if remedy there be, cannot consist in the action of reason on passion directly, to subdue or repress it altogether. The action can only be that of an idea on an idea. And precisely here we should be reminded that the passion which a thing may be said to arouse in us reflects the idea which we have of that thing. Change our idea of it, and our emotional state or passion also changes.

The action of the mind whereby one idea prevails over another is thus not the mastery of thought over emotion, but the replacement of one emotion by another. Understand a passion, that is, perceive the idea of which it is the emotional correspondent, and it ceases to be that passion. The emotion of the other prevailing idea has replaced it. If there is to be a moral reform and perfection of man, it cannot be by Stoic apathy but through some enlightenment which replaces inadequate by more adequate emotions. If the moral outlook of man has thus revealed the range of passion, moral progress would seem to involve its culture.

But are we warranted by Spinoza in using the terms reform and progress at all, and is not the expression 'perfection of man' now being charged with a significance for which we have not been prepared, and which indeed Spinoza's naturalism seems to rule out? How is Spinoza's reason to explain to itself the nature of the 'good' for which it now seeks provision in Nature? In other words, though Spinoza deliberately set out in pursuit of ethics, what ethics, if any, is he to attain or afford in terms of his cosmology?

We have now come to what is for us the crucial issue in Spinoza's philosophy. It is important to understand what 'highest' and 'best'

could mean in Spinozism. On the level of common opinion or imagination on which most men live their lives, what can moral standards mean? The plaything or battleground of passions and external influences, subject to prejudices and the victim of partialities neither thought out nor harmonized, the usual life of men lacks order or if it has it, the order is unreasonable and spurious, bigotry stubborn yet unreliable. This is human servitude. We can describe it in terms which connote condemnation, but if we objectively regard men as living and active on that level, what would justify either praise or condemnation of their behavior? True, men on this level imagine or opine that some things are good for them and others bad. But each passion as understood by reason is laid alongside the others on the same level plane of factual necessity: nature being always and everywhere the same and acting with the same efficacy. In the life of passion there are intense likes and dislikes, but no defensible preference and therefore no moral judgment.

The vital impulse and effort at self-preservation grows into avid and unreasoning selfishness. It makes men rivals and enemies, as Hobbes had already noted. On a clear day the ailing Spinoza would step down into the sunny court of his lodgings, and catching a fly would put it into a spider's web, to watch the ensuing struggle and to meditate on the similar lives of men. The fear of harm is stronger than the desire to harm, and so men submit for the sake of security. This is the way in which most men conform to political authority, and this counsel of submission is the most immediate remedy which the disorder of the life of passion requires. Legality is as it were 'morality *pro tem*,' keeping the peace by keeping men in bounds, by a system of statutes and customs and institutions, like reins or blinders, to limit and direct the daily course of life. Theological creeds and ecclesiastic régimes serve the same end, imposing order on those who otherwise would lack it. So Goethe has summed it up for Spinoza in a pithy stanza:

> He who possesses art and science,
> Has also religion;
> He who these two does not possess,
> Should have a religion.[6]

This estimate of the state and of other institutions of authority,—curbing agencies, we may call them,—would make clear not only Spinoza's kinships with Hobbes, but also the extent to which Spinoza saw through Hobbes' legalism as an alleged moral system. The statutes of Leviathan may serve the practical uses of morality for those who cannot live as free men, but the stage of political security is not the

stage of moral concord. And how precarious the subject's security in this state is, and what hazard a people runs with a strong sovereign, Machiavelli had vividly shown in his *Prince*. Spinoza's appreciation of the Florentine rests on just this interpretation of his aim.[7] The state and the church, which curb lawless men, may and do also shackle men of intelligence. In individual and in social life, in action, speech and thought, Spinoza championed a culture of tolerance, so that men capable of rising above the anarchy of passion into the republic of reason may not be hindered from so doing. This great advantage to the individual would redound to the state, which would thus have not only subjects but also citizens.

4. The Intellectual Love of God

On the level of opinion in the life of passion there can be no real moral activity. This, according to Spinoza, is the achievement of reason in the enlightened life. How and wherein does enlightenment attain to moral values? The answer requires explicit recognition of Spinoza's distinction between passive and active emotion. In vulgar passion the mind is acted upon by external factors which it does not understand adequately; it is thus passive and its emotion is rightly called passion. When a man attains an adequate idea of whatever may be engaging him, in seeing things as they are and his relation to them in nature, his emotion expresses his characteristic activity in the circumstances. We may well call it not passion but an active emotion. Thanks to intelligence, we are no longer imposed on (in both senses of that term), but gain a larger measure of self-possession through self-understanding, that is, active self-expression.

To have an adequate idea of anything and so to be truly active with respect to that thing, means to see the relation of that thing and of ourselves in Nature. We see things clearly and adequately as we see them in their cosmic setting, in their universal context, or as Spinoza puts it, in the light or under the pattern of eternity. Intelligence is understanding of the order of Nature and the vision of things in their necessary rôle and relation therein. As we recognize the eternal order of Nature, we are emancipated from confused petulance into the clear serenity of reason. From naïve provincialism we grow into philosophic cosmic citizenship. Our whole thought is pervaded by the certainty of the perfect God-Substance in which and of which all things are. This serene yet exalted perfection of rational insight Spinoza calls the intellectual, that is to say, the intelligent or understanding love of God.[8]

This gradual thorough possession of human life by reason has important practical consequences. The effort at self-preservation in the life

of ignorance and passion, as we have seen, makes us avidly grasp or resist what is external to ourselves, quite confused and uncomprehending as to what is happening to us. Man is selfish, but he does not understand himself or his interests, and his ardor is thus unavailing. As we gain in intelligence, we come to perceive what it is all about, and so our own appropriate demand, province, prospect, activity. But as we thus rationally find ourselves in the cosmos, we no longer as before find others in our way. To the pursuer of truth every other pursuer is a fellow-seeker. The sharing in wisdom and reasonableness makes all men free colleagues. The emotional life of an actively intelligent man Spinoza calls a life of fortitude, distinguishing in it courage and generosity: rational self-preservation and sober-mindedness, and helpful friendly coöperation. The socially welding power of generous intelligence is pointed out by Spinoza: "Minds are conquered not by arms, but by love and magnanimity." [9] Man alone of all things in the world has a unique claim on man. All else we may use, preserve or destroy as suits our need. Human beings alone have a dignity which we are bound to respect. A rational man needs nothing more than a society of reasonable men, and in it alone can live in real concord. In the Fourth Gospel are reported the words of Jesus: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Spinoza might have added: Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you one.

On the principle of self-preservation in the higher, rational sense, enlightened men would thus seek to secure a larger promise of enlightenment for others, by advocating and working for a system of social, religious, and political freedom and tolerance. Spinoza's works are classics in the philosophy of liberalism and democracy, and of joyous freedom through the discipline of intelligence. The actions of the sage are not motivated by fear of evil or punishment, but by clear perception of good and wholehearted adoption of it. As man comes to recognize his own realization in the life of knowledge and truth, this virtue of active reasonableness needs no other reward, itself being blessed. A life thus ordered is not poisoned by futile worries or useless regrets; no impatience or indignation with the ignorant multitude, no lamenting over bodily ills; in the clear perception of the cosmic order, the entire life of the wise man is active, positive, constructive, serene. "A free man thinks of nothing less than of death, and his wisdom is not a meditation upon death but upon life." [10] The virtues of reasonableness, the quest and the possession of truth are self-rewarding whether there be an eternity for the individual or not. About immortality in the more traditional sense, Spinoza has little to say, but there is an eternity of

which he is assured: the eternity of the purely rational unity of man with God in the possession and love of the truth.

5. *Spinoza's Character*

This was not only an ethical theory which Spinoza was expounding, but the active principle by which he lived his own life. His daily career private and public has the rounded consistency of a circle, the particular acts like radii all issuing from or pointing to the same center of rationality. In what other philosopher is there less to blame or condone or explain away? A synagogue conclave seeks to induce him to make his life a lie for a thousand florins a year; failing in this, the elders of the congregation anathematize him; a fanatic tries to assassinate him. Spinoza waves no red rags nor yet raises the white flag, but withdraws to grind his lenses and to think the ideas that are to be his answer and to win the long day for him. After his father's death, a rapacious sister uses his excommunication as a pretext to deprive him of his share in his patrimony. This threat to justice Spinoza resists, goes to law, wins his case; but the principle of right once vindicated, he does not claim his share of the estate, keeping only one bed as a visible proof of reaffirmed justice. He declines the offers of French grandees to secure the profitable goodwill of Louis XIV by dedicating a book to him; and distrustful, he does not at first consent to have his unpublished *Ethics* communicated to Leibniz, who had gone to France on a mission which Spinoza suspects to threaten the prospects of religious tolerance in Europe. But he is ready to write treatises specially for humble students of philosophy who seek the truth, and to correspond at length with obscure strangers who ask for enlightenment. A professorship at Heidelberg is offered him; he declines the honor, uncertain of the degree of freedom or the likely interference with his own studies which the post might involve. Great Hollanders and rich press upon him funds and endowments; he is reluctant to accept, and what he does take goes largely for precious volumes needed in his studies.

His *Theologico-Political Treatise* undermines the basis of traditional orthodoxy, but he addresses himself explicitly to those who can think critically, to philosophical readers. The rest he asks not to read his book. He practices the tolerance which he advocates. He does not deride the simple faith of his landlady, but assures her that she will indeed be saved. There is in him no envy, no jealousy, no rancour, no pretense. He spends his days in the seclusion of his room, yet converses profitably with great minds as with simple. Though he does not himself cultivate yet he appreciates for others the cheer and gaiety of social

life, or the theatre. He does not seek the smoke and tumult of warriorship; these are not for him; his blows for freedom are to be in the realms of thought. But when an infuriated mob murders with unspeakable brutality the champion of Dutch liberalism, Spinoza's landlord has to use force to keep him from sallying forth at the peril of his life in the cause of freedom. He writes his master-work, the *Ethics*, which he believes to contain true philosophy, but he seems to care nothing about fame, and would have it published anonymously so that his ideas, the truth, may have a more impartial and better chance of being considered on their merits. A fatal disease is sapping his life, and he knows it; he labors unremittingly to the last, to finish his work, practicing his precept to think not of death but of life. On all who know him personally he leaves a lasting impression of courage without bluster, cheerfulness without frivolity, generous dignity of spirit, a spirit of crystal truth, serenity and love.

Who can read Spinoza's works or the pages of his life without perceiving the lofty morality attained by him in theory and in practice? Clearly, one may say, it is possible and a fact that an explicitly naturalistic cosmology may well include a noble ethical doctrine individual and social. But how is this inclusion accomplished by Spinoza? Is it simply at the price of consistency, or may we not here trace a deeper strain in his philosophy, implied and demanded though not explicitly wrought out?

6. Naturalism and Moral Values

One could treat Spinoza's ethics as in the main an expanded statement of the Cartesian. Descartes' chief virtue is generosity, that is, man's rational recognition of his scope and province, what is and what is not in his power, knowing one's place and keeping it. Geulincx, in developing this idea, proceeded to the principle of humility; Malebranche, to rational piety and devout acquiescence in the Divine plan. Spinoza's enlightened serenity, the objectivity of the sage, expresses the ever clearer perception of the universal necessity in which all things are as they are.

But is there not something sinister in this sublime benignity? We are told: To understand all is to forgive all. But would not Spinoza rather say that to understand all is to realize that there is nothing to forgive? The sage with a cosmic sense of humor, which is perhaps the essence of philosophic wisdom, comes to see all the alleged ills and troubles, passions and turmoils of men, each in its place as natural parts of the Whole. To see things in the light or under the pattern of eternity, to see things in God or Nature, is to see them objectively. Shall we call

this perfect view of things serene or shall we call it callous? It would perhaps depend on how seriously we take the moral antithesis of good and evil. We saw that in the life of ignorant opinion and passion there is no real good or evil, though men be moved and troubled by imagined good and ills. In the sight of God, that is in the universal order of Nature, things are as they are and there is no flaw or evil; but this does not mean that all things are good in the 'moral' sense of the term. That there is no flaw or evil cosmically means simply that things are not other than in their nature they can be. Perfection here would correspondingly mean things being what they necessarily are, and the term good would accordingly become a synonym for 'actual.' In God's sight all things are perfect; nothing is something else, and everything is itself.

Can this, then, be the course of enlightenment in Spinoza's ethics, leading us from the petulant self-engrossment in spurious imagined good and evil to the serene divine realization that there is no good to be distinguished from any evil? The troubled Turkish peasant calls the locomotive the devil's carriage; he may come to ride in the cars unworried as he understands the mechanism. The terrified child in Goethe's ballad sees and hears the Erl-king; the father is disturbed that the child fails to see there is nothing to be disturbed about. But in God's sight, that is, in the course of nature, the child's terror and the father's worry alike are as the dry leaves stirred by the wind. Moral insight here paradoxically seems to point to its own transcendence. Spinoza seems to say, It *is* good to perceive, beyond imagined good and evil, the eternal order and actuality of things as they simply are. Morality would thus be a transitional stage.[11] Full spiritual maturity would then involve the outgrowing of the moral. Just as legality was seen to be a 'morality *pro tem*,' so morality in turn is only in passing: a stage in the growing pains of intelligence, itself the gradual transition from likes and dislikes, scruples and preferences, to the serene knowledge of the actual as necessary.

There appears no way of avoiding these corollaries if we proceed from Spinoza's explicitly naturalistic cosmology. But as we read Spinoza, and in particular the last part of the *Ethics*, we are bound to realize that he did not intend the conclusion just articulated to be the last word of his philosophy. To take morality seriously means not only to maintain that it is better *for us* to see things rationally, but that it *is better* for us to see them thus. The doctrine that all things are as they are in the universal necessity of nature need not imply that all things are on a par. A person may not be to blame for not being as wise as another, yet after all, we should say, he *is* not as wise. God or Nature,

while owning him, may yet reverse Touchstone's apology for Audrey: "Mine own, but an ill-favored thing." The crow sings according to the laws of nature and presumably does his best; all the same the crow is no nightingale. So in the moral scale. If the enlightenment which Spinoza advocates, *is* good, then ultimately as well as immediately it is not on a par with ignorance; it is better, not merely different.

There is a meaning to the question, What ought I to do? as well as in the question, What must I do, what am I bound to do, being what I am? But this can only be if the thoroughly active achieving character of personality in some way corresponds to and indeed expresses the essential character of Nature: that Nature is not merely a level set geometric structure available for analysis, but itself a hierarchical activity. The more nearly perfect anything is, the more real and the more active it is. "It is as impossible for us to conceive God inactive as to conceive him non-existent." [12] The gradual enlightenment of the sage would then be more than episodic; it would be rather an epitome or the main theme of the cosmos. Of this more serious estimate of morality and of this more active or should one say more dramatic conception of Nature there is no lack of evidence in Spinoza's philosophy. It is not a concession to anthropomorphism. God is Nature, not a personality; we can have no human discourse with him.[13] But the achieving of perfection, the intelligent pursuit and realization of the good is in and of the constitution of Nature or God. "He who loves God cannot strive that God should love him in return." But man's intellectual love of God is eternal, and "the very love of God with which God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be expressed through the essence of the human mind considered under the species of eternity." [14] Not only mechanical causal structures disclose the pattern or constitution of Nature. Enlightenment, achieving of perfection, spirit, activity also disclose it, and more deeply. "He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his emotions loves God, and so much the more in proportion as he more understands himself and his emotions." [15] The clear knowledge, Spinoza had written in the *Short Treatise* comes "not from our being convinced by reasons, but from our feeling and enjoying the thing itself," [16] and further spoke of God as one and the same with Truth. Advance in intelligence is achievement of God. Spiritual activity is thus not only man's life in God, but also God's life in man; spiritual endeavor is cosmically important and significant; and intelligence, an index of the Ultimate.

There is a higher naturalism in Spinoza, revealing the meager actualism of the lower. In reaction against crude anthropomorphism, he

articulates a cosmology of factual structure. This is his geometry of the universe; this is *God or Nature*. But alongside Spinoza the positive scientist is Spinoza the sage, a hermit of reason wedded to perfection, pious with the piety of Nature. If the expression "*God or Nature*" sums up Spinoza's knowledge, that is, the geometry of the cosmos, the wisdom of Spinoza, his religious-moral insight and mellow conviction, requires the completing expression *Nature or God*.[17] These two elements in Spinoza's philosophy are counteracting and complementary. Though we must analyze and explain in order to understand, yet what we understand is not a frozen world-structure but a vital reality, and man's own intelligence in its career is an index and an earnest of its plenitude of active character. Though structural analysis is the outstanding feature of Spinoza's thought, dynamic finalism is its basic strain. The repudiator of Divine Providence and anthropomorphic design in nature moves towards the idea of a deeper immanent teleology, and the conviction of it is the pantheistic ground-note that sounds through the naturalism of Spinoza.

CHAPTER XII

SCEPTICISM AND OPTIMISM: COMPROMISING ORTHODOXY



1. Rationalism Humbled by Doubt: Pierre Bayle

In the struggle for intellectual and religious tolerance the seventeenth century produced no warrior more doughty or better armed than Pierre Bayle (1647-1706). Himself the battleground of clashing theological traditions, he was expert but not committed. He had read too many differing church fathers to be convinced by any. Humanistic zeal and a limitless curiosity in an age of science gave his thinking an aggressively secular turn; a prodigiously retentive memory made his mind a formidable arsenal; his own life's experiences spurred his ardent genius for dialectic. He was the master controversialist of his age.

His enemy was arrogant dogmatism. Stubbornly resisting on a broad front the advance of modern science, theology was most unyielding in her claim that orthodoxy was the only sound basis of morals. On this assumption, bigotry, Protestant no less than Roman Catholic, could be conscientiously ruthless in exacting conformity. It was this citadel of self-assurance that Bayle undertook to undermine and demolish, and here is to be sought his importance in the history of ethical ideas. The far-spread influence of his writings served to nourish a culture of tolerance hospitable to undogmatic moral philosophy. His challenge evoked a strong reaction on the part of the rationalists and stimulated them to revindicate their principles. His massive folios were the gate to the French Enlightenment. The men who had to stand in line for a chance to read his *Historical and Critical Dictionary* at the Mazarine Library were being tutored for the age of the great *Encyclopedia.*

Does virtue rest on orthodoxy? If so, heresy should be perilous to morals, and atheism fatal. How far this is from being the fact, Bayle's erudition was ever ready to point out. Mankind certainly did not wait until the establishment of Christian orthodoxy to provide examples of moral elevation. And even among the pagans it is not the incredulous and the atheists who are the most notoriously evil. The cruel are rather more apt to be superstitious; the libertines and voluptuaries are scarcely

the ones to weary their heads with atheistic dialectic. A Tarquin consults the oracle; a Catiline builds shrines; a Nero is disturbed by omens and augurs; a Heliogabalus is consecrated priest. Christian experience yields similar evidence. Bayle recites unreluctantly the loose morals of exalted shepherds of the flock, in Paris, in Venice, in Rome. On the other hand, the great atheists of history are certainly not notorious for their iniquity. In his *Dictionary* Bayle pleads regretfully for his not having referred more frequently to the wickedness of atheists: "it has been due only to the lack of materials." [1] His survey leads him to ironical apologetics. God does not allow the ferocious and dissolute soul to lose the restraining influence of a belief in his existence: it is only the reliably valiant and honorable whom he permits to drift into atheism.

Without irony, Bayle maintains that, while atheism is sometimes assumed by profligates as a cloak, it is never the cause of iniquity, any more than pious beliefs are a guarantee of virtue. Our actions are not determined by our theories and doctrines. Bayle would have agreed with Macaulay that man does not regulate his life by his opinions. Instead of seeking to impose orthodoxy, we should without prejudice try to understand the facts of human nature and the actual springs of vice and virtue. Only thus can the validity of our conclusions be really tested. "Our victory should not be due to the fact that we have made it impossible for our opponent to state his case." [2]

From this general plea for tolerance and for the emancipation of ethics from servitude to theology, Bayle proceeds to the exposure of more particular confusions. The chief among them concerns the rôle of pleasure in the moral life. It is misleading to attack pleasure indiscriminately. The pleasures of the sensualist are not illusory, as some moralists profess to believe. Nor are they bad just because they are enjoyable. There is no essential taint in pleasure itself. The voluptuary's pleasures are real enough, and his happiness in enjoying them is happiness indeed; but he errs in not renouncing them in preference to worthier goods, in obedience to God's will expressed in sound reason.

Precisely this view is the pious one, Bayle urges. If only virtue yielded real enjoyment and if vice were never pleasurable, what moral worth would there be in our rejection of evil? Our choice would then be mechanical-brutal. God tests our fidelity and our judgment in having us choose between acts indubitably pleasant and acts that are worthier but not necessarily more pleasurable. Such a choice has real moral quality.

Virtue, therefore, demands right judgment in the choice between rival values. This is the moral importance of an unconstrained and

enlightened conscience, which Bayle champions. An act is not to be estimated morally in terms of its actual results but in terms of its intended results. Oedipus, unwitting slayer of his father, was guilty only of simple homicide; but had he killed a man whom he believed, though mistakenly, to be his father, then morally speaking, he would have been a parricide. This conviction, recalling Abelard's analysis of sin, is very dear to Bayle, and he repeatedly expounds and defends it.[3] What constitutes an act virtuous or vicious is the will behind it. An act is not one of charity unless it is charitably performed. But, Bayle warns us, we cannot say offhand that an act is good merely because it is conscientious or well-meant.

The moral quality of an act is determined by the will behind it; in the acts of our will we should exercise judgment; and we can exercise judgment. More fundamental and universal than the pleasantness or unpleasantness of an act, or than its sanction and prescription by custom or even by Divine law, is its inherent fineness or deformity. Just as a circle or a triangle has certain essential properties which can be recognized and which no will human or divine can alter, so in the very essence of things, and antecedently to any human preference or divine pronouncement, "there is in virtue a beauty, an intrinsic and natural uprightness, and in vice a deformity and a correspondingly intrinsic and natural offensiveness." [4] The perception of these intrinsic moral qualities of certain acts involves the corresponding moral obligation. By virtue of the laws of thought we are bound to accept certain syllogisms and reject others. Even so the very idea of justice, imperative in right reason, demands that we esteem and love what is estimable and lovable, that we be grateful to benefactors, honor our parents, keep our contracts, respect another's property-rights.

Thus at the basis of morality are certain eternal fundamental principles, which we may call the natural laws of morals. These are axiomatic. The acts they command are not good because commanded, but good in themselves, and it is because of this inherent goodness that Sovereign Reason sanctions and promulgates them. From these moral axioms, which are universal, we should distinguish other derived principles of positive law which vary with races and epochs. These positive laws, however, are not merely conventional. Once tested by their conformity to the "light of nature," expressed in the fundamental axioms of conduct, they in turn acquire the quality of criteria, just as in geometry a theorem once proved becomes the ground and test for further propositions.

But what is to be our ultimate assurance of this moral order and of the eternally valid principles in which it is manifest and upon which

all system of positive law in any age or country whatever must rest? Bayle does not ignore the misleading influence of self-interest or custom or of that regard for the esteem of others which so often leads us to prefer their good opinion of us to the approval of our own conscience. Bayle has his moments of firm confidence; thus he proposes a precept that almost anticipates Kant's famous maxim: "A man who would know distinctly the light of nature in regard to morals, should rise above his personal interest and the custom of his country, and should ask himself: Is such and such a thing just, and if it were a question of introducing it into a country where it is not customary, and where one could freely take it or leave it, would it appear, on cold examination, sufficiently just to merit adoption?" [5]

The ultimate standard, however, still appears beyond our grasp. Calling the moral order natural does not assure us of its distinctively moral worth. We should beware lest we confusedly identify the good life with a life 'according to nature.' Nature is various and is not always morally reliable. Even if we were to find certain actions and responses universal among men, and could be certain that they were primitive and not due to common nurture, we could not on that account pronounce them good. Kindliness is natural, but also vindictiveness, and greed and vanity and gross sensuality. Consider what children might become if they were merely fed and sheltered, without being educated, and see what unaided nature is capable of. In the face of this difficulty, what is to be our ultimate sanction for preferring 'natural' justice to 'natural' greed? A thing has its appropriate perfection, what it requires in order to be what it is. Bayle calls it the "metaphysical goodness" of things. But even sin may have that, and the devil himself, in so far as he is an 'honest-to-goodness devil.' What, then, guarantees the reliability of the alleged rational recognition of the inherent worth of justice and the inherent unworthiness of injustice?

So we see in Bayle a demand for rational certainty in morals, but also a felt inability to provide it. His convictions are unsettled by undermining scepticism, which was always a factor in his thought and steadily grew to dominance. Our confidence in the axiomatic character of a moral principle is prejudiced by custom. Reason itself appeals to sanctions which if not questionable may yet be questioned. How are we to be sure that we do not transgress the boundary-line between the axiomatic and the dogmatic?

Most disturbing here is our perplexity when we contemplate the actuality of evil. The more clearly we recognize the ultimate character of the moral order and of the perfection of God as expressed in it, the more embarrassing becomes the problem of evil. Bayle's critique of the

traditional theodicy, which made the fame of his *Dictionary* and unsettled pious assurance all over Europe, was a challenge not only to orthodox theology but also to rationalistic philosophy. The influence of the answer which it evoked from Leibniz, and the shift from placid optimism to doubt and disdain and denial which marks later eighteenth century thought, are important aspects of European moral culture which may not be discussed hastily. But as the present writer has considered them at some length in several chapters of his work, *The Nature of Evil,* perhaps passing notice of them may suffice here, in so far as concerns Bayle's own reaction.

Shall we, leaning on St. Augustine, praise God for respecting the moral freedom of man in not forcing his will, and blame man's free choice for bringing all evil into the world? But is freedom to choose good or evil really essential to perfection? Does God have this freedom, or the angelic host? In any case, man's will did choose evil, thus revealing the character which creationist theodicy cannot explain without implicating God. Did God create to his own greater glory a world which was to be tainted by sin, in order that thus his saving grace and loving kindness might be made manifest? But how can we think of an infinitely perfect deity as acting to his own greater glory? This and all other proffered solutions serve only to raise further perplexities. The fact is that the rational vindication of this world of error and pain and sin is an impossible task. All that God has allowed or decreed is presumably perfect; we may not deny this, but we cannot presume to understand or explain it. We simply do not know: our reliance in theodicy is bound to be on humble faith. Scepticism is thus a corrective of pathetic dogmatism and a condition of piety.

In Bayle's ethical fragments we observe rationalistic demands tempered and humbled by scepticism. Anxious to do justice to hedonism, he yet recognizes its insufficiency. No mere results, external or emotional, can determine the moral worth of an act. Good and evil imply and demand a standard and a law; the stability of the moral order demands axiomatic foundations. All this is in the direction of rationalism, but all is in the end unsettled by doubt. Bayle's own counsel of taking refuge in unquestioning faith, whether or not consistently sincere, proved at any rate unconvincing. His scepticism was in principle a challenge to rationalism no less than to dogmatic orthodoxy, and proved disturbing to both.

2. *The Symphony of Nature: Leibniz's Monadology*

Living in a century of astonishing expansion of research and specialized knowledge, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) had an

Aristotelian range of mastery. Mathematics, jurisprudence, historical research, theology, metaphysics, all were provinces in the empire of his mind. He was eclectic, but never a mere gatherer; he touched nothing that he did not transform. But his tactics were those of the diplomat. He was sinuous and adaptive; he would allow his words to convey unwarranted and even unintended meanings required by the practical strategy of his argument. His duality of doctrine was often due to his tolerance, the balancing of fair judgment; but not always can Leibniz be cleared of the charge of deliberate ambiguity and even duplicity. His logic was the logic of the advocate, serving a client, defending a needed thesis. He might advance a geometric proof that the Palatine Count of Neuburg should be elected King of Poland; he might entertain the reasonableness of transubstantiation while courting the favor of Catholic orthodoxy; he might, in the service of the Sovereign Client but all the same at the behest of a *Princesse Divine*, Sophie Charlotte, achieve a theodicy. In his lofty thought as well as in his everyday career, Leibniz sought noble designs and patrons noble. He who courted many masters had his honors, but was also neglected. In his philosophy a certain spirit of elasticity renders the system unstable and indefinite.

Despite all these reflections personal and systematic, there is no gainsaying Leibniz's radical and germinative ideas. His words, "the present is big with the future, the future might be read in the past," [6] are exemplified in his philosophy. Though he may use the language of the theological past, he also thinks the thought of the future, and the present progress of science and philosophy is setting in high relief his significance and stimulating power. The traditional apologist is revealed also as the pioneer and the radical.

The dominant ideas of Leibniz are activism, individualism, continuity, pre-established harmony, teleological order, optimism. The universe is not composed of particles or shapes or passive units. It is a system of active centers. So the rationalistic conception of soul as thought was nearer the true view of substance than the conception of body as dimension or extension. For soul is thinking, willing, active. In Descartes' initial axiom Leibniz would find new meaning. *Cogito ergo sum* should be read "I am in that I think: Thinking constitutes me." I am a reflective center of activity, and the more active I am, the more conscious I am of myself and the more of a soul I am. Souls with a low degree of consciousness approximate dull brutality, approximate brute matter. Here Leibniz sees a way out of the manifold problems of the mind-body dualism. Minds and bodies differ in their degree of activity: in dull matter is the minimum of that active power of which

self-conscious mind manifests the highest development. Interaction, occasional causes, the whole psychophysical problem may now be revised as discrete things are replaced by distinctive centers of activity.

These unique ongoing reals Leibniz had first called souls and later monads. The term monad was meant to emphasize the unity of these centers of activity; it had the additional advantage of being freer from the confusing connotation of mentalism. All the same, monadism is anti-materialistic. Matter is always composite; reality is active in unique foci of individuality. Each monad is a distinctive epitome of the universe, a world of activity in miniature. As activity characterizes all monads, so individuality constitutes the essence of each. They are not mere parts and they are not related as parts. The activity of each monad is self-expressive and not caused or conditioned by the activity of any other monad. In that sense we may say that each monad is freely itself. There is no assignable limit to the number of monads; as each is unique, so all distinguishable individuals form an infinitude of world-representatives. There are no gaps and there can be no bridges; active individuality and continuity characterize the world of monads. The assignable rôles in the drama of reality transcend any finite citation. If we consider that monads are active centers, the series of them which constitutes the universe must be conceived as an infinitely graduated scale of degrees of activity. The degrees on the scale would be as the points of a line. The graduation of them is a continuity, a hierarchy of unique individuals, from the lowest least active unconscious monad to the most perfectly active self-conscious monad.

How is the communion of the monads to be conceived? How are they to constitute a cosmos? If we emphasize the representative character of the monads, that each of them is as it were a unique version of the universe, then their harmony would be a natural corollary. This sort of cosmology is in principle and in final emphasis monistic. Though it may recognize the distinctiveness of the monads, it is bound to insist on their being in and of the ultimate One. This Spinozistic strain of thought is not wholly alien to Leibniz. But the naturalistic statement of it is contrary to his philosophical intentions.

Leibniz prefers a theistic account of the harmonious activity of the monads. "God produces different substances according to the different views which he has of the world, and by the intervention of God, the appropriate nature of each substance brings it about that what happens to one corresponds to what happens to all the others, without, however, their acting upon one another directly." [7] Leibniz's illustration of perfectly synchronized clocks is defective; it suggests a mechanical view of the harmony. In a better simile he compares the coöperation to the

harmonious agreement of several musical bands or choirs, playing independently yet all in perfect tune. In the perfect symphony of nature each chord is determined by, and likewise reveals, the Whole.

In the perfect symphony: the phrase would well describe Leibniz's aesthetic view of the universe: his emphasis on individuality, organization or creative composition, teleological or thematic order, integral harmony. Likewise in the interpretation and utterance of it, the ideal would be a 'continuity,' an infinitely graduated shading or nuance, which at best can be only approximated in notation, as shown, for instance, in the difference between the keyboard of a piano and the fingering of a violin. Behold the symphony: clearly, we say, this is the music of a master-genius! But why and how 'clearly'? The teleological argument in the traditional form is inconclusive for the purpose; Leibniz's version of it is likewise inadequate and indeed ambiguous. Is it the mere *fact* of the symphony that warrants our inference of a master-composer? Is it not rather the *sort* of harmony which we have to judge? Harmony, correspondence imply some cosmic order; that this harmony reveals a divine character is a further inference from the perfection or value of the order.

The individuality of the monads is as real as their harmony with each other. All monads express reality, each in its own way, but human beings are intelligent and know what they express. "A single spirit is worth a whole world." [8] From the lowest monad to the highest is a natural order which, as activity attains unto self-consciousness, becomes a moral order. Every monad acts in accordance with its unique nature; its activity is self-expressive. Of this the intelligent will is conscious, and this is its sense of responsibility. The more there is of intelligence in an act, the more evident to the agent is its responsible, self-determined character. Perfect intelligence would clearly identify the agent with his every act, every act being deliberately chosen as in harmony with the agent's distinctive ends or ideals: each man characterized and constituted by his own relation to the universe. In our dealing with each other, in so far as each will concerns other wills, this relation becomes a moral one. In our intelligent perception of each other, we are factors in each other's perfection.

The Socratic dictum abides: Virtue is knowledge. The natural striving of the will is towards appropriate realization. But human nature is complex, unstable, and easily diverted by strong impulses of the moment. Intelligence in conduct is adequate perception of one's career, and correspondingly right direction of the will. The graded perfection of nature is here clearly disclosed. Nature always proceeds along the most direct way, but the most direct way is not always straightaway.

"The stone . . . goes the most direct, but not always the best path towards the centre of the earth, not being able to see beforehand that it will meet rocks upon which it will break in pieces, whilst it would approach its end more directly if it had mind and means of turning aside from them. Thus it is that going straight towards present pleasure we sometimes fall over the precipice of misery." [9] Practical effectiveness in attainment requires intelligence in what we may call the strategy of perfection. The more clearly thought out our ideas are, the less likely are we to be lured by strong passing attractions, the more adequately we perceive the wider ramifications and more remote bearings of our proposed enterprises, and so the more nearly certain is our growth in stable power and perfection, reflecting practical wisdom and yielding felicity.

We naturally seek our own good, and as self-preservation has been called the first law of nature, so self-love in some sense is a basic motive in all action. But what self-love impels us to do will depend on what we come to recognize as our selves. Here, again, intelligence is all-important. The wise man sees in the lives of others the same normal motives which he perceives in his own life, and he does not lose sight of the moral interrelatedness of men. It is not self-neglect but a fairer view of himself which leads him to espouse generously the interests of others. So Leibniz defines philanthropy as "the charity of the wise man . . . charity in obedience to the dictates of wisdom." [10] He is destined to perfection; felicity is his normal fruition; he has a right to happiness. This same right he respects in others.

Leibniz's account of moral values is meant to be naturalistic, but his naturalism is explicitly and insistently teleological. Goodness and justice are not merely our human peculiarities, nor are they simply what does obtain in the order of nature; but in us and in God, in all nature, ideal principles of perfection manifest the fundamental purposiveness of nature and give it character and significance. This is the moral of that critique of Anaxagoras in the *Phaedo* to which Leibniz repeatedly returns. The chief reason why Socrates has not run away from prison, with Crito's help, but there awaits the hour of his death, is not to be found in a recital of his bones and sinews and the rest of his anatomy, but essentially in his loyal resolution not to flout the court-verdict of his native city. Plato is deeper than the atomists and meager naturalists: he perceives and reveals the Idea of the Good as the sovereign principle in the world. As we perceive the essential order and fitness of things, we may become identified with it. This active espousal of the ideal characterizes all genuine moral activity. It implies a dynamic conception of perfection as unceasing progress to infinitude. Even if we

think of the perfect life in terms of happiness, "our happiness will never consist (and it is right that it should not consist) in complete enjoyment, which would leave nothing more to be desired and would make our mind stupid; but it must consist in a perpetual progress to new pleasures and new perfections." [11] The very essence of progress is its self-propulsion; to be real it must be in process, active. Individual activity is enhanced through coöperation with others; ever higher systems possessing integrity of character emerge in society, in common effort and solidarity achieving the spirit and character of a higher civilization. Nor is this spiritual activity limited to mankind. Leibniz's philosophy is a vision of the whole universe as an ideal order of active perfection, the City of God or the Republic of Minds.

The career of persons in the world is governed by moral as well as by natural laws. While Leibniz would insist that true happiness is in the virtuous life itself and not an ulterior end or recompense for virtue, yet the moral fitness of things in the world, according to him, demands the ultimate vindication of righteousness and the effective defeat of vice. Without this assurance, spiritual activity would lack the confidence and the hope which morals and religion alike require. For this full retribution our present life proves insufficient, and this to Leibniz is a convincing argument for immortality.[12] Immortality is more than survival. Continuity of being follows from the very essence of the monad; each soul is a unique activity of the universe, and cannot be extinguished without stunting and impoverishing reality. But consider the souls as moral agents. Their citizenship in the republic of spirits, in the City of God, requires and assures the immortal consummation of their moral careers.

3. The Best of All Possible Worlds: Theodicy and Ethics

The guiding ideas of this moral philosophy, as they may be assembled from various works, fragments, and correspondence of Leibniz, represent some of the best ethical thought of the Enlightenment. But in his efforts to make himself acceptable to the theologians, and particularly in the excogitation of his theodicy, Leibniz is involved in ethical ambiguities compromising the reality of distinctively moral values.

The sceptical dialectic of Bayle's *Historical-Critical Dictionary* had been calculated to undermine the self-reliance of reason in theology. Bayle reopened presumably settled controversies. In his folios, long-disdained heretics were allowed once more to array their arguments, in double columns of seditious small-print flanked by annoying documentation. No authority, not even St. Augustine's, was secure from the

besieging doubt. Bayle's professed single-hearted devotion to truth and his deep concern for the treasures of religion which were displayed as crumbling under his attack made the prospect of orthodoxy appear the more precarious. His declared resolution to abandon reason rather than surrender the creeds and dogmas which reason could not sustain, was itself the conclusive humiliation. Whether it was the sincere reaffirmation of the primacy of uncritical faith, or whether it was deliberate and sinister irony, was always left sufficiently uncertain to disturb trusting piety and encourage aggressive unbelief.

Unless religion was to lose the support of reason and be forced to carry on without basis or sanction, this sceptical challenge had to be met. It was at the behest of the sorely-disturbed Sophie Charlotte of Prussia that Leibniz undertook the rational vindication of orthodoxy. God's blessed truths are not above reason nor contrary to sound reasoning. The formulation of this sound reasoning is the task of the *Theodicy* (1710), the only large philosophical treatise which Leibniz published to the world.

Leibniz's main problem here is the rational demonstration of the compossibility of God's attributes, face to face with the actuality of evil. "If God exists, whence evil? If he does not exist, whence good? The ancients attributed the cause of evil to matter, which they believed to be uncreated and independent of God; but we who derive all being from God, where shall we find the source of evil? The answer is, that it should be sought in the ideal Nature of the creature, in so far as this Nature is comprehended in the eternal truths which are in the understanding of God, independently of his will." [13] Leibniz's resistance to the Manichean lure of Bayle's articles is remarkable, in view of his monadism. A plurality of active individual forces, each expressing in its unique way the order and sequence of the universe, might well have been conceived as sufficiently various to account for the drag as well as for the urge in the world-process: good and evil alike, the whole gamut of values. But in such a pluralistic universe the status of God would have been decidedly ambiguous. Leibniz is bound to regard God as the creator of all that there is, yet the evil in the world must leave God's perfection unsullied. In God are infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and these attributes are in perfect harmony. God's power is creatively active as his wisdom directs and as his goodness demands. Thus God in his goodness wills the creation of all possible good; in his wisdom he comprehends what good is possible, and his power achieves that good. There is here no conceivable deficiency in the Divine nature. The good created must be the appropriate good, and the world the best possible. But the best of all possible worlds is still bound to fall

short of absolute perfection, which is the prerogative of Deity alone. God's perfect understanding eternally knows what even our reason can comprehend, that any finite world must contain some evil. Of all available worlds God's will has chosen the least imperfect. His wisdom, goodness and power are thus unsullied, and he is justified in his creation.

The clearer statement of this theodicy requires that we recognize what meaning is given to evil and likewise to good. According to Leibniz evil is threefold: metaphysical, physical, and moral. "Metaphysical evil consists in simple imperfection; physical evil is suffering; moral evil is sin." [14] How are these to be related to each other, and, without being unduly minimized, so explained as to cast no discredit on the Creator's perfection?

Regarding physical evil Leibniz is deliberately reassuring. Pain is not to be ignored; it compels attention; but it is in the main the exception, not the rule in our lives. There are more healthy homes than hospitals, as there are more homes than prisons. "When I consider the frailty of the human body, . . . I am not astonished that men are sometimes sick, but . . . I am astonished that they are sick so occasionally, that they are not always ill." [15] Pleasure is a sense of rising perfection, and so pain is inevitable in finite beings, and an utterly painless world would be unthinkable. Even as it is, our suffering is largely the result of our sins. Physical evil thus points to moral evil.

Leibniz's account of moral evil is ambiguous and very embarrassing to his theodicy. To regard sin as something positive, antagonistic to God, would have been a sort of Manichean wedge and a surrender to Bayle, who though protesting against dualism, appeared to see no other way out. To maintain consistently that sin is nothing positive but only the imperfection of finitude, would have made God's condemnation of it perplexing, and eternal damnation either unjust or itself only imperfection, a lower degree of good. Leibniz regards sin as blameworthy, with eternal rewards and punishments as verdicts of sovereign moral justice.

Undertaking the cause of infinite creative perfection in his theodicy, Leibniz is led to refer both physical and moral evil ultimately to metaphysical evil. That is to say, he must perforce regard misery and sin as phases of finitude, varieties of imperfection essential to created existence. But if 'evil' in the end is thus reduced to finitude, 'good' would consistently have to become a synonym for infinitude, metaphysical perfection, Reality capitalized. Leibniz has accomplished God's vindication in terms which preclude approval or condemnation, the distinctively moral note. If all our finite evil is only imperfection, how is the Infinite Perfection *good?* [16] Leibniz reasons in his *Monadology:*

"Where there are no bounds, that is to say in God, perfection is absolutely infinite. It follows also that created beings derive their perfections from the influence of God, but that their imperfections come from their own nature, which is incapable of being without limits. For it is in this that they differ from God." [17] Since not-being-God is essential to our being ourselves, our imperfection casts no discredit on our Creator. But if we thus have no reason to complain of God, how is God to have any complaint of us in the circumstances? In this placid pious actualism, is not the apologist, the 'advocate for God,' betraying the moral philosopher?

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROVERBS OF MISANTHROPY



The term misanthropy covers more than its literal meaning, hatred of mankind. But it does spring from a concentration of attention on the evil aspects of human character. In this habitually negative estimate of our life, we may note the kinship of misanthropy with irony and with satire, and also the differences between them. Irony reveals a keen sense of the ungenuineness of much alleged perfection, and would express proclaimed truths, beauties, and other excellences in such a way that they repudiate themselves. Satire and sarcasm upbraid and laugh to scorn, therein differing from humor which genially laughs with others while laughing at them. But misanthropy is more deeply corrosive; it taunts; it denounces; in deriding men, it portrays them as contemptible.

What the misanthrope reveals as hateful may not always move him to hate. He is not always a hater of mankind. He may be ruthlessly objective, as a surgeon in his lancing of man's moral tumors, or a callous reporter, or a reviler of man's disgrace, or yet tragically overwhelmed by the evils which he perceives and must portray. The humbugs and humiliations of men which leave him unmoved may move us to pity; what leaves him contemptuous in recital we may find tragically hateful. These and other kinships and differences along the scale of irony and dispraise and moral negation mark the distinction between Rabelais' unrestrained guffaws, the serene scepticism of Montaigne, Pascal's tragic irony, Lucian's and Juvenal's satire, the bitter sneers of Swift and the world-condemnation of Schopenhauer. These are all feeders of pessimism; yet in the darkness of some of them there are glints of light, irony strangely refuting itself. Pascal with his keen insight perceived this; in the very depths of man's misery are also the roots of his grandeur. Man's very wretchedness in perplexity reveals him as more than perplexed and wretched. Mankind is not devoid of real and final worth, at any rate so long as it includes scornful judges of itself, and tragic realization of what is judged and scorned.

The following consideration of a group of misanthropes in the seventeenth century, who portrayed the unlovely sides of human character, with some more genial spectators by way of relief, may serve to reveal more fully the moral outlook of that age.

1. La Rochefoucauld's Maxims

The century of Descartes, Pascal and Bayle is also the century of Richelieu and Mazarin, Anne of Austria and Louis XIV., of subdued feudal lords turned courtiers, of prevailing monarchy outwardly brilliant but cankered by intrigue and corruption, of the achievements of French classical genius, of romancing and devotion and sardonic wit, of literary and moral preciosity.

The career of François de la Rochefoucauld (1613-1680) reflects the characteristics of the age as in a mirror. He had one of the proudest names in France and was resolved to make it still prouder. His infatuation for the Duchesse de Chevreuse involved him in devotion to the Queen, Anne of Austria, and so in the plots against Cardinal Richelieu. After the death of Richelieu, the Queen disappointed the young prince who had risked his life for her. Anne of Austria rewarded him with her gratitude, but for any lesser favors he was advised to beg her chosen prime minister, Mazarin. So early was begun La Rochefoucauld's education in disillusion, and he was to be much further schooled in it. A new passion, for the Duchesse de Longueville, sister of the Duc d'Enghien, later Prince de Condé, entangled him in the Fronde, the parliamentary and armed resistance of the French aristocracy to the centralization of monarchical authority and in particular to the rising power of Cardinal Mazarin.

Throughout this career of romance and intrigue, La Rochefoucauld's amours and ambitions are inextricably interwoven. Love and hate drive him to stake the very fortune the promotion of which had perhaps incited initially his passions. His chateau of Verteuil is razed, his wife and children jeopardized, he faces utter disaster, ready to lay any sacrifice at the feet of his mistress, Mme. de Longueville. Yet he relies on her devotion to help secure for him her brother's support of his claims: to a recognition of his family at court as equal to that of the Rohans and the Tremouilles, that his wife may have the right to enter the court of the Louvre in a carriage!

Twenty years of amours and intrigues left La Rochefoucauld with another thirty years of sardonic recollection. Death that had removed Richelieu removed Mazarin also; yet after them rose Louis XIV. to single majesty and subdued the nobility more firmly than either of these cardinal-ministers had done. The Fronde was a thing of the past for France, just as the hot blood of youth for La Rochefoucauld. The aging aristocrat had been obliged to make his peace with Mazarin. Some restoration of his fortune came even though no return to power. Nature was more unyielding. His health was definitely undermined by

gout; his eyesight never quite recovered from the battle-shot which had almost killed him. Then his tongue and his pen earned him a dominance in the empire of wit and reflection which neither his person nor his sword had won in the world of action and of dignities.

In the salon of Mme. de Sablé, La Rochefoucauld's talent for pithy maxims found both stimulus and cultivation. His was not a mind of systematic reflection. His experiences had confirmed him in a view of human character which he could never have expounded in a treatise, but which he impressed upon the reader's mind in brilliant epigram. The ideals of the salon were original turn of thought, conciseness of expression, and perfect phrasing. In this society of proclaimed refinement, ever since Mme. de Rambouillet set the tone of it, the many winds of doctrine and cult blew freely. The cultivation of chivalric love found expression in a highly artificial amorous ceremonial which would have delighted Ariosto or Cervantes and the bourgeois versions of which Molière satirized in his comedies. Mysticism and a penchant for profundities engaged these ladies: a piety in which a mild asceticism was meant to disclose more impressively the subtlety and refinement of emotion. A mind of ironic penetration as well as of aristocratic complaisance, while performing the elaborate ritual of this polite and perfumed society, might likewise be moved to cynical reflection. The satire could not be crude, but as refined and subtle as the vanities and pretensions which it unmasked. The salon thus reflected itself in a fine mirror of irony.

La Rochefoucauld's maxims circulated in manuscript, were subjected to the most careful polishing both before publication and in successive editions. The basic note in these maxims and reflections is dispraise of human character, and their guiding principle, the reduction of all motives to egoism. The prevailing tone is one of cynical candor. The unmasking of the conventional moral hypocrisy artfully delights the reader. Molière had seen the bitter comedy of this age of pretense, and also the honest, too honest disdain of it. His *Misanthrope*, already familiar at court, was performed in 1666, the year after the first publication of La Rochefoucauld's *Maxims*.

At the head of his work, as a subtitle or a maxim of maxims, we read: "Our virtues are for the most part only our vices disguised." Beneath the lovely pretense is the reality, cunning in its selfishness. La Rochefoucauld is not rude in jerking the veil, but for all his refinement he is ruthless. The deep incentive of our thought, feelings, actions is always selfish. It is at the heart of injustice, cruelty, and depravity, but also in much apparent generosity, submission and self-denial. Liberality is most often only our vanity of bestowal, which reveals our superiority.

Humility contrariwise is a feint and a device to subdue others. Repentance is not so much regret for evils we have done as fear of evils we might suffer. Gratitude is a lively sense of favors yet to come: like a merchant's payment of his debts, to maintain his credit and secure yet larger loans. Our mind is self-preoccupied; we can never hear enough good of ourselves, and had rather speak evil of ourselves than not speak at all. It is this insistence on remaining in the center of the stage which makes us impatient of the vanity of others. Constancy and fidelity are often varieties of pride; the pursuit of knowledge, a desire to excel above others. Men are always contending for position: in love, he who recovers from his infatuation first recovers best. More irreconcilable than hate is envy.[1]

The lives of men are contests in pretense. There is scarcely a man who would be seen in all things just as he is; and the more we distrust each other, the greater is the effort of each to deceive the rest: to seem natural, well-established, virtuous. Hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue. We are so false that we deceive even ourselves; we think that we are virtuous and dutiful when we have been only too supine or timid to execute the evil that is in us. Men are born selfish, cruel, depraved; men are vicious as long as ever they can. Old men like to give good counsels, to console themselves for their inability to give any longer bad examples. Virtue is swallowed up in vice as the rivers are lost in the sea.[2]

Schopenhauer was to call his fellowmen scornfully *Zweifüsser*, bipeds; and there is a passage in La Rochefoucauld "Of the resemblance of man to animals," which is searing in its effect. "There are cats, always on the alert, malicious and treacherous, with sharp claws in a velvet paw; there are vipers with venomous tongue yet otherwise useful; there are spiders, flies, bedbugs and fleas, ever pestering and insufferable; there are toads, detestable and full of poison; there are owls that fear the light." In one sentence may be found unintended incitement to a later age of social revolt: "And how many animals there are, kept under subjection because they do not know their own power." [3]

2. *Epicurean Prudence: Pierre Gassendi*

Epicureanism had had its share of attention in the revival of ancient wisdom during the Renaissance, and Lorenzo Valla, as we have seen, expounded the doctrine of pleasure. The emphasis on mechanism which characterized seventeenth century science inspired renewed interest in ancient atomism. Democritean and Epicurean ideas found a more modern setting in the materialistic philosophy of Hobbes, but the systematic exposition and advocacy of them in the seventeenth century

was the work of Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655). This provost of Digne, mentioned in the histories of philosophy mainly for his controversy with Descartes over the ontological argument, reveals in his thought the continual strife between the physicist and the theologian, a strife which he endeavored to reconcile by compromises. The detailed operation of nature he describes in mechanical terms, but the entire cosmic plan compels him to affirm the rational strategy of God. There is a similar balancing and reservation in his treatment of Epicurean morals. The hand is the hand of Lucretius, but the voice is the voice of the doctor of theology.

The end of life, according to Gassendi, is Felicity. The pleasure which we experience in the attainment of anything makes that thing desirable in our judgment. What we pursue in life is reliable satisfaction. This aim of men has been condemned as corrupt by some moralists who have identified happiness with low gratification. But Gassendi insists that a good is no less a good for being pleasant, nor our lives the less virtuous because they are enjoyable. The fact is that happiness is of many kinds and grades, and human wisdom consists in sagaciously choosing the best. The best pleasure is that which is most completely in accord with our nature, not merely indulging some particular lust or appetite but gratifying human character to the full. But, in defining this position, we are clearly confronted with another objective. Christian Stoicism appears first to temper and then to transform Gassendi's initial Epicurean-hedonistic valuation. Though felicity be the announced end, it is high, worthy, noble felicity which we are now counselled to pursue. The decisive moral valuation must be in terms of whatever can supply the meaning of these predicates.

Gassendi in fact distinguishes three varieties of good: the upright, the useful, the pleasant.[4] The hedonist can establish his claims to the second of these in terms of the third, but the first becomes a source of perplexity to Gassendi's Epicureanism. Integrity, he declares, is worthy in itself: that is, even if it exacted the price of misery or destruction, it would be worth having. But does this mean that in cherishing uprightness we should disdain and avoid enjoyment? Nowise: a man does not lose his honor if he also preserves his happiness: his life is the better not the worse because his probity has been crowned with pleasure.

There is evident vacillation of ethical judgment here between the honorable and the desirable: a Stoic view of the former, Epicurean of the latter. Similar compromise may be pointed out in Gassendi's account of the cardinal virtues: prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice. The first of these expresses perhaps most characteristically the main excellence of character in Gassendi's view: a strategy in conduct which

judiciously selects the most advantageous course of action, yielding the most of enjoyment without sacrifice of honor and integrity of soul. This morally respectable shrewdness is disclosed also in his several rules of good behavior. We should always seek the good, that is, the most expedient and satisfactory policy. Our regard for ourselves should make us naturally attached first to those nearest us, and so in a graded measure to others. We may well assist others; it need not be onerous to ourselves; so our own love of life will find satisfaction in the life of our family, and in social intercourse and coöperation we ourselves should experience satisfaction and enjoyment.

3. A Voluptuary's Sagacity: Saint-Évremond

In Gassendi's ethics we seem to be urged to follow an upright life, but at the same time, we are to be concerned mainly with private advantage and enjoyment. A mind that accepted this mainly egoistic hedonism without pious reservations would subject it to radical revision. If felicity is the main, final good, then let each man seek it his own way. Saint-Évremond (1610-1703) learned from Gassendi how to raise the art of enjoyment to a philosophy of life, but the master's loftier note nowise modulated the disciple's voluptuous strain.

Sharing a misanthrope's view of human character, Saint-Évremond did not share the misanthrope's estimate and attitude. As a moralist he had the unprincipled astuteness of Machiavelli's *Prince*. Men being what they are, how is one's life to be ordered so as to yield the most enjoyment? Though he could have written some of Pascal's reflections, or La Rochefoucauld's, they would not have aroused in him the tragic resistance of the one or the bitter irony of the other. His wisdom was the wisdom and the art of the voluptuary. Of this art he made a lifelong profession. Even the vices and the absurdities of men do not outrage him; he has no time for indignation; laughing at the follies of men is one of his joys, and a greater joy, to laugh at them in public, within the limits of discretion.

In his mind the Epicurean doctrine came to signify scepticism about spiritual realities and concentration on the tangible and the sensual: both suiting his temperament. He was content to be ignorant about the finalities of faith; he was not an ardent or aggressive atheist; his writings on religion have the bland concession to traditional forms, with remarks of glinting satire; they reveal not so much unbelief as unconcern. His doubts about finalities only emphasized his concentration on what was ready at hand. That was always pleasure; a connoisseur could find it anywhere, and so need not despair. His indulgence of the love of raillery had risked and almost cost him the friendship of the great

Condé; his active disrespect for Mazarin had forced him to flee from France at the age of fifty. But he spent the remaining forty years of his life in most enjoyable exile, and the English buried him in Westminster Abbey.

It is not coarse sensuality that he advocates. The fullness of enjoyment demands refinement of taste, delicacy and due measure and self-possession: the very reverse of brutal dissipation. Saint-Évremond describes himself as "a voluptuary who has no less aversion to debauch than inclination to pleasure." [5] From Solomon he had learned Epicurean wisdom: There is a time for everything. Premature pleasure or pleasure unduly prolonged vitiate enjoyment. One should make pleasure-strategy the study of one's life. Egoism is man's prime incentive, and therefore we should never forget ourselves and in the very intensity of our passion miss its full satisfaction or make ourselves wretched. In meat or drink the man of good taste learns to enjoy what least harms him. By this Saint-Évremond nowise meant water and barley gruel and occasional cheese. He did intend to enjoy his gorgeous feasts, but also the intervals between them.

Enjoyment, though selfish at heart, is yet sociable. One must be able to get out of oneself, but only in order to forget his troubles and double his joys in the company of others. In social converse, in friendship, in love, or rather loves, Saint-Évremond counselled and practiced expert suavity seasoned with irony. Ability to control ardor of passion and to discourage jealousy and envy made it possible for him to maintain friendship even with his former mistresses. He would not stoop to dishonor or low trickery, for the same reason that made bad food or poor wines distasteful to him, but not because dishonor or trickery were wrong. What he resisted, in his counsel of wisdom, was the impeding of men's satisfaction by moral scruples. That precisely was ridiculous: gravity in moral matters. Weakness or resolution, as conditions of enjoyment, are important, but as alleged principles are all one in the end. So the old voluptuaries, Saint-Évremond and Ninon de l'Enclos, exchange in their letters their many delicious memories. At the age of eighty-six he gives her Epicurean wisdom; not that she needed it! "I regard one thing as essential, that is life, eight days of which are worth more than eight centuries of glory after death. . . . Live; life is good, when it is without pain." [6]

4. The Characters of La Bruyère

In the theater of seventeenth century life Jean de la Bruyère (1645-1696) did not have the choice seats of La Rochefoucauld, nor Saint-Évremond's stirring attendance. He missed the first acts of the drama

which they witnessed, yet he was an intent observer of the same stage. The Great Condé, at whose side Saint-Évremond had fought at Rocroy, and to whom La Rouchefoucauld had been attached during the Fronde owing to his infatuation for Condé's sister the Duchesse de Longueville, employed La Bruyère in 1684 as tutor to his grandson, the Duc de Bourbon. Thus during the last twelve years of his life, as preceptor in the first house of France after the king's, La Bruyère studied high social life at close range.

What distinguished him from La Rochefoucauld and Saint-Évremond was his point of view. La Bruyère was not an aristocrat, and he would not be one. The son of a middle-class family sufficiently prosperous to assure him of a good education and to secure for him a state office to which he never attended and which he sold after entering the Condé service, he was not allured by social altitudes and sought his distinction in the realm of mind. Nobility was short-lived: what had become of the high and mighty lords who patronized Homer? He saw a radical difference between the great of the earth, propertied, cultured, polished, superficial—and the people, lacking all but a sound heart and a soul. "If I had to choose between these two," he declared, "I should unhesitatingly prefer to be of the people, *je veux être peuple*." [7]

His *Characters* is a masterly work of social portraiture as well as a treasury of individual cameos. Here again the distinction between him and La Rochefoucauld is significant. La Rochefoucauld is interested in probing human action to its prime incentives; he studies these motives as they drive man to action; we may call him the physiologist of conduct. La Bruyère is rather the anatomist: he traces and portrays the organs of conduct, the individual figures in the social setting in which they parade and pretend and betray themselves. Both are keenly alive to the varieties of moral experience: La Rochefoucauld studying the action of the human comedy; La Bruyère, the actors. By publishing his first selection of the *Characters* as a supplement to his translation of Theophrastus, La Bruyère secured the advantage of appearing modestly in the retinue of an ancient master over whom he could thus the more evidently disclose his excellence. The random variety of his sketches suggested unpartisan candor and justice in portrayal. All the stronger was the effect of his judgment of human life which was cumulatively impressed on the reader rather than formulated in abstract doctrine.

In his book he shows himself a competent guide. He shows us the general view of social life; he takes us from region to region, with a genius for attending to significant detail, with a capital sense for climax; he allows us to reflect; he knows the value of pauses and of

sudden transitions; he ends on a note of compelling finality. As he means to probe veneers, he is not to be put off with paint and polish. The real worth of a man is within; it may go with wealth and power and outward culture, but is not dependent on these externals. Stoic concentration on inner soundness of character and Christian outreaching charity are to be La Bruyère's guiding principles. Three of his chapters, "On Women," "On the Heart," and "On Society and Conversation," were probably calculated to engage even his more light-minded readers by dealing with subjects in which men rarely acknowledge their interest or admit their incompetence. La Bruyère then enters upon his progressive delineation of the social types of his age. He reflects on opinion, on fashions, on various customs, on religion professed and thought out, on belief or unbelief in God.

There is courage in his portrayal, the more impressive because it is not flaunted, and moderation the more engaging because it appears as reticence and not as caution. Of the merely rich he could speak his full mind effectively, for the seventeenth century had not yet acquired our piety in the presence of great wealth. He perceives and depicts the drab vulgarity which often sticks out through all the fine trappings and moneyed gravity; he also sees the corrosive effect of greed in the hearts and minds of men. "There are unclean souls, moulded of mud and filth, infatuated with gain and interest as noble souls are with glory and virtue; capable of only one desire, to make money or not to lose it. . . . Such people are neither relatives, nor friends, nor citizens, nor Christians, nor maybe even men; they have money." When he unveiled the Court, the Great, when he turned his keen eyes on the King, the climax and apex of social life, either excess or deficiency in candor would have been hazardous. La Bruyère acquitted himself in his book, as he had done in the palaces of the Condés; by knowing and keeping his place he dictated to others a respect for his own dignity. His every utterance reveals a mind whose perception of a superior's worth is not poisoned by envy and whose upward look is not dazzled. The court is like a marble edifice: polished and hard. The tutor and *domestique* of Condé dared to publish to all France his account of the happiness of the Great who could "have in their services their equals . . . and sometimes even their betters." Greatness in this world is one thing, and discernment is another; but, he insists, virtue and the love of it is yet a third thing. Precisely in his chapter on the Sovereign he included his eloquent appeal to the "men of high station, ministers of state and royal favorites. . . . Be virtuous and humane; and if you ask me, 'What more do we need?' I will tell you: 'Humanity and virtue.'"[8]

In all this parade of the rich and the lords of the earth, where are the common people? Who regarded them in La Bruyère's France? It is keen irony that denies them a chapter in his book, yet La Bruyère's is one of the great books in which their plea for a chapter is heard and recorded. The peasant, the toiler is not portrayed as a clodpoll and a lout, nor yet sentimentally as a neglected worthy: he is not portrayed as an individual at all; it is the drudging multitude of him that repeatedly darkens La Bruyère's horizon. "One sees certain wild animals, male and female, scattered over the country, black, livid, and sunburnt, lashed to the soil which they dig and turn over with unyielding stubbornness. They have something like an articulate voice, and when they stand up they disclose a human face, and in fact they are men. At night they retire to their dens, where they live on black bread, water, and roots. They spare other men the need of sowing, tilling and harvesting in order to live, and so deserve not to be deprived of the bread which they have sown." What is packed into this paragraph is too clear and eloquent to need exposition. La Bruyère drew his conclusions, personal and universal. Where rich men, ordering rare delicacies, "had the audacity to swallow in a single morsel what would nourish a hundred families," he could not be reconciled to such extreme contrasts. Surely injustice cannot be ultimate in this world; it somehow must point to reason, and to God as prevailing. Here is a florid youth holding an abbey and ten other benefices that bring him hundred twenty thousand livres a year in gold coin. And there are hundred twenty families without fuel or food or cover. Surely such inequity "proves clearly that there must be a future state." Was La Bruyère thinking of immortality? Within a century after these words were published, the people of France were undertaking to make this future state a reality on earth.[9]

La Bruyère is a ruthless portrayer of unlovely realities, but he does not accept men's mismanagement of their lives as proof conclusive of a stupid universe. Men being such as he saw them all about him, depraved and miserable, he needed trust in God: which did not prevent him from registering his contempt for false devotion whenever he had the occasion. La Bruyère's portrait of the hypocrite Onuphre should be read together with Molière's *Tartuffe*. Though La Bruyère's mind was reluctant to deal with metaphysical ultimates and was forced to resort to the formulas of others, he did register his conviction of the final supremacy of justice, truth, and the other values whose moral sovereignty he had upheld in his portrayal of the manifold disregard of them by his generation. "What will become of all these fashions when time itself shall have disappeared? Virtue alone, now so little in fashion, will outlast time." [10]

5. A Jesuit's Art of Worldly Wisdom: Balthazar Gracian

In the field of maxims and aphorisms Spain demands major recognition. Were we studying folk-proverbs, the acuteness of Spanish wit would be apparent to us as soon as we had made the acquaintance of Sancho Panza. But also in the field of wisdom-literature, no matter how small our shelf, it would be bound to include *The Art of Worldly Wisdom (Oraculo Manual)* by Balthazar Gracian (1601-1658).

It is related that Gracian was a frequent guest at the table of Philip III., doubtless owing to his wordly wit rather than to his piety. He is a jeweller of wisdom: clean-cut points, polished facets, gleams of meaning interfused. His is a cold brilliance, suavity without sweetness, penetrating insight without depth of feeling. He has little faith in men, no charity, but much hope through prudence. His view of men is disdainful but neither indignant nor austere. Gracian means to live well with his fellowmen, and if it may be, to achieve a measure of mastery; and this can be accomplished, for men are pliable. All that one needs to learn is which way to bend. His book is a manual of motivation.

Like a cultivated Jesuit following his own maxim, Gracian in this work is worldly with the worldly. This is no discourse of the spirit of God as a motive power in men's lives. But in his thoroughly lay counsel, he yet allows an occasional hint of his own choice of piety, and his last counsel somewhat unexpectedly concludes: "In one word, be a Saint." A truer expression of his meaning is the maxim: "Do not be too much of a Dove." He teaches the wisdom of the serpent, the study of which Francis Bacon advocated. We are attracted to others by our own interest, and that is the way we can attach others to us. We should keep the full extent of our abilities unknown, arouse expectations, in good times retain a store of friends and dependents, for less fortunate days. In this contest of selfishness, we must be on our guard against malice and envy. We are not only hunters but also prey. Deceiving, we should keep a tight rein on our own credulity. "Find out each man's thumbscrew," Gracian advises. "You must know where to get at any one. . . . Knowing any man's mainspring of motive you have as it were the key to his will. Have resort to primary motors, which are not always the highest but more often the lowest part of his nature. . . ." [11]

To know when to discard, when to pretend assurance or anxiety, when to withdraw, and leave our luck while winning: in life as in cards these are the conditions of success. One must not oneself take payment in politeness, but "it is a great art in life to know how to sell wind." Courtesy is the politic witchery of great personages. But along with courtesy, "know how to show your teeth": how and when: know

when to resist and how to refuse. Gracian is a competent tutor in the art of patience and circumspection and in the tactics of lightning-like decision, and "the art of arts, of falling into and getting out of a rage." He instructs his reader how to crawl under a bar and how to vault over a barrier, but always he is teaching him the art of circumvention and final arrival. "A good end gilds everything, however unsatisfactory the means," which is a neat turn of the familiar Jesuit precept.[12]

Gracian has his loftier moments, when he counsels seemly self-respect: "a man of honour should never forget what he is because he sees what others are." But if a wise man cannot live as he would, let him live as he can. Truth and justice are fine things; but, while one should not pass for a hypocrite, such men are indispensable nowadays. "The Truth," he advocates, "but not the whole truth. . . . Not all truths can be spoken: some for our own sake, others for the sake of others." Thus we are left balancing between the profession ("All the truth that is fit to print") and the intention ("All the truth that it suits to print").[13]

Here was an accommodating and sinuous morality. It might drive a more upright conscience to despair, but not Gracian's. How can you be so earnest and stern about your principles? Men are various, and they change: "At twenty Man is a Peacock, at thirty a Lion, at forty a Camel, at fifty a Serpent, at sixty a Dog, at seventy an Ape, at eighty nothing at all." Use men as you find them. "One half of the world laughs at the other, and Fools are they all. . . . What one pursues another persecutes. He is an insufferable ass that would regulate everything according to his ideas." [14]

6. Mandeville's Grumbling Hive: the Fable of the Bees

Hobbes had outraged respectable British thought with his account of man as a creature of insatiate desires, and of moral and social order as resting on submission to absolute authority constituted by men for their own selfish security. His critics reaffirmed the eternal immutable nobility of virtue, above the turmoil of passion, or else claimed benevolent emotions as natively human. But these repudiations of Hobbes, whether or not allowing interest in happiness as a factor in moral motivation, confidently regarded it as the fruition of virtue. In *first* seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, men may be moved by purely rational respect for the right, or by generous emotion; but that, whether by Divine Providence or by the just bounty of Nature, happiness was to be added unto him, the typical British mind did not doubt. Various premises thus led to the conclusion that honesty is the best policy. Great is truth *and will prevail.*

It was a bold stroke which made the fame of the *Fable of the Bees*, by Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733). Exalting the morals of the respectable troop, he yet undermined its morale. Great is truth, but it does not prevail. In point of fact dishonesty seems to be the better policy. Society thrives on vice. This perverse turn to ethical discussion swelled the current of dispraise of man individual and social. Refutation of Hobbism now had to meet also the stinging irony of Mandeville. His *Grumbling Hive* roused Butler, Berkeley, Hutcheson, Adam Smith and many others to more cautious tactics in dealing with the egoistic swarm.

In the loftiness of his professed conception of genuine virtue, Mandeville would not yield to the most austere divine. With emphatic rigorism he regards utter freedom from selfishness and passions as prime requisites in the motivation of any act genuinely virtuous. Man's moral task is this, to overcome the depravity of his carnal selfish nature, to achieve rational control of his passions. All supposed virtue which does not come up to this requirement is only vanity and moral make-believe. While thus stern in his moral demands, he is also sneeringly dubious of man's moral capacities. Virtue is a very rare plant. Most alleged righteousness is spurious.

But not only is the rarity of virtue thus exhibited; in practice it is disclosed as a disadvantage to man, and vice is regarded as more in accord with man's interests. This is Mandeville's turn, shown in the subtitle of his book, "*Private Vices, Public Benefits.*" He does not mean that vice is always beneficial. When harmful to society, it is punished as crime. His point is that a great deal of our conduct which springs from selfish passion and is thus vicious leads actually to the greater prosperity and welfare of mankind. La Rochefoucauld had written that "vices enter in the composition of the virtues, as poisons in the compounding of remedies." [15] So Mandeville declares: luxury and wastefulness, the love of ostentation which social arrogance clothes with a vesture of nobility, turn the wheels of industry and make possible the employment of thousands, expansion of trade and general prosperity. Pride and envy rouse men to put forth the utmost of their powers; they are the conditions of individual and social greatness; and indeed it is by appealing to our pride that society secures from us conduct generally beneficial. So hunger and lust, cowardice and the fear of being called a coward, jealousy and discontent, pretense and deceit, in one way or another all prove beneficial to men. If you really try to reform mankind, you will reap only misery and stagnation:

Fools only strive
To make a great and honest hive. . . .
Fraud, luxury, and pride must live,
While we the benefits receive.[16]

We have here, then, three main theses. First, agreeing with Hobbes: man's conduct is overwhelmingly selfish-passionate. Second, agreeing with ascetic and rationalistic rigorism: such conduct is vicious. Third, Mandeville's own twist: such vicious conduct is apt to be socially beneficial. The three theses together point to ethical anarchy. In the light of the first and the third, the second demands restatement. Mandeville's rigorism is really a tactical gesture, to dismay the firm moralist; in effect he says: "*If* there is any such thing as virtue, it must be in utter freedom from selfish emotion, but look at the actual life of men and you may judge." The contemplation of this confusion amused Mandeville, scandalized the respectable, and made him a hero among libertines.

Mandeville's paradoxes depend for their effect on an evident initial ambiguity and on his perverse license in overemphasizing what suits his purpose. The ambiguity is between virtue and benefit. The rigoristic definition of virtue requires motivation. In resisting our selfish lusts, we may appeal to Divine Providence and our immortal destiny, or urge the rightful claim of reason to dominion over our passions, but in either case we have in our very definition of virtue adopted a certain view of man's true career, which we may not forthwith proceed to ignore. What we insist on regarding as our supreme excellence and perfection, our virtue, is bound to determine our judgment of our real interest or benefit. In this respect not Mandeville but the Gospel is logical: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Moreover, Mandeville's notorious exhibition of the conflict between virtue and welfare is due to arbitrary overemphasis. He considers an act vicious if it reveals any selfish or emotional ingredient, and counts the results beneficial if they include anything that is commonly called profit. Such tactics in dealing with the complex motivation and manifold far-reaching consequences of actions would, of course, yield the desired paradox. Despite its confusions, the effectiveness of Mandeville's *Fable* continued in the eighteenth century the critical reaction which Hobbes had aroused in the seventeenth. It led moralists to reaffirm the inherent worth of virtue and to disdain the alleged immoral benefits, or to reëxamine the moral value of acts in terms of resultant happiness. In both cases the account of man as moved by merely egoistic impulses was rejected as slanderous.

CHAPTER XIV

ETERNAL PRINCIPLES AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE



1. Locke's Confused Position in Ethics

While the second edition of his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was being printed, John Locke (1632-1704) was earnestly urged by his Dublin admirer Molyneux to apply his philosophical method and principles to a treatise of ethics. The project interested Locke for some time; he collected materials; but in the end the systematic enterprise found him irresolute. The author of the *Essay*, whose works on Education, on Government, on Tolerance, on the Reasonableness of Christianity indicate the various lines of influence which made him a potent factor in the shaping of eighteenth century thought, produced no treatise of ethics. For our understanding of Locke's ideas of morals we have to depend on occasional chapters and passages, and this may account in a measure for the confusion of many of his readers regarding his position in ethical theory.

We should remember that in Locke's theory of knowledge the source and the test of our ideas are empirical. Our most involved system of knowledge must be derived from elementary sense-impressions and reflections elaborated in the process of experience. Shall we not say likewise that our ideas of good and evil are due originally to simple reactions of pleasure and pain? This natural connection of empiricism and hedonism is evident to all students of British philosophy. Many of Locke's empiricist followers were hedonists. The conviction that Locke's empiricism naturally pointed to a hedonistic ethics has led some of his commentators to judge that Locke himself was a hedonist, to underscore certain passages in his works to the neglect of others clear and emphatic, and to set in high relief what Locke might well have advocated rather than what he actually emphasized.

Locke himself was accountable for this confusion of his readers. His insistent empiricism and his reluctant metaphysics pointed to probabilism and discouraged any hope of universal certitude. But Locke had likewise inflexible convictions and rationalistic certainties, religious and other, which he would not surrender and would make provision for them in his doctrine. Thus, in his rejection of innate ideas, Locke

denies that there are any moral principles which are universally shared as inherent possessions of the human mind. Moral customs and standards, on the contrary, manifest a bewildering variety. "The virtues whereby the Tououpinambos believed they merited paradise, were revenge, and eating abundance of their enemies." But Locke replies with some heat to Burnet's insinuation, "as if I held the distinction of virtue and vice was to be picked up by our eyes, or ears, or nostrils, showing so much ignorance, or so much malice, in the insinuation, that he desires no other answer but pity." He distinguishes sharply between our possession of innate ideas, that is, ideas imprinted on the mind prior to experience, and the intuitive certainty with which our minds may come to recognize universal laws. We do not begin with innate moral ideas, but in the course of our experience we may well end with indubitable principles of conduct.[1]

If we ask in general terms, What is good and evil? Locke's answer often appears hedonistic and recalls that of Hobbes. "Things are good or evil only in reference to pleasure or pain. That we call good, which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain in us; or else to procure or preserve us the possession of any other good or the absence of any other evil." [2] But if we rest satisfied with such hedonistic statement we should miss Locke's full meaning. He insists that, before 'good' and 'evil' can acquire moral significance, another factor is necessary. Though good and evil be "nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to us," yet "*Moral good and evil* . . . is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good or evil is drawn on us, from the will and power of the law-maker; which good and evil, pleasure or pain, attending our observance or breach of the law by the decree of the law-maker, is that we call reward or punishment." [3]

On the surface, but only on the surface, this still seems to be a restatement of Hobbes. For Hobbes the law is the arbitrary will of Leviathan, itself the artificial product of the social compact. For Locke the moral law is nowise arbitrary but ultimate. The thought of rewards and punishments may keep us in the right path, nor can we think of right and of obligation without a law-maker imposing them; but moral distinctions are involved in the very constitution of things. God is the supreme bearer and champion, not the creator of moral values. God's law is the universal utterance of the principles of worth in the world; yet that very worth of which God's will is the highest expression involves its own necessity which God himself, just because he is perfect, cannot transgress. "God himself *cannot* choose what is not good." [4] Cudworth himself could not have been more emphatic on the point.

Keeping the above ultimate provisions clearly in mind, we may say that morality for Locke concerns conformity to laws and standards of conduct. These are of three sorts: the divine law, the civil law, and the law of social prestige and pressure, which Locke first called the philosophical law and later the law of opinion and reputation. By the relation which men bear to the divine law, whether this be promulgated by revelation or by the light of nature, they judge their actions to be sins or duties. Obedience to or transgression of the civil law determines an act as innocent or criminal. This law is set by the commonwealth of each country, and the force to make it effective is ready at hand and touches the liberties, possessions, and the life itself of each citizen. The philosophical law of opinion or reputation qualifies acts as virtuous or vicious.

That statutes and conventions of various states and societies differ, Locke himself has, of course, clearly brought out. But though what is condemned in one country may be overlooked or even commended in another, yet everywhere virtue and praise, vice and blame go together. The civil law and the law of opinion or reputation aim at securing and advancing the general good. With more adequate experience and perfection of social understanding, these two laws approximate or tend to agree with the divine law. The ultimate sanction of morality is thus the religious. Our duties in this life engage not only our relations to the state and the society in which we live here and now, but our relations to God in this life and in the life to come, and our pious regard for the everlasting rewards and punishments which God has justly attached to obedience and transgression. This course of reasoning points towards a universal moral code on a theological basis. Locke contemplates its possibility in a well-known eloquent passage: "The idea of a supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding, rational creatures, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action as might place morality among the sciences capable of demonstration: wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestible as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong can be made out." [5]

That Leibniz should applaud Locke's doctrine of demonstrably certain moral truths is readily understood. That Locke himself did hold such a doctrine, indicates the extent to which rationalism entered and modified the mainly empiricist tenor of his thought. It is important, however, to keep in mind what kind of demonstrable certainty is available in ethics. According to Locke, our knowledge of substances is al-

ways inadequate; but our ideas of relations involve the mind's operation with material of its own making, which it possesses completely; these ideas do admit of demonstration. Such demonstrable certainty patently obtains in mathematics. That moral ideas have been regarded as incapable of demonstration, is, in Locke's judgment, owing to their complexity and their unfitness for sensible representation. But ethical demonstration does obtain, to be sure not of the validity of the sovereign principles of conduct, but of the logical implications of these principles when applied to individual cases.

Is this demonstrable certainty, then, due to the arbitrarily perfect definiteness which moral terms possess in human discourse? "Upon this ground," Locke holds, "I am bold to think that morality is capable of demonstration, as well as mathematics: since the precise real essence of the things moral words stand for may be perfectly known, and so the congruity or incongruity of the things themselves be certainly discovered; in which consists perfect knowledge." [6] Is not nominalism lurking here? The stock of our moral ideas may be regarded as an elaborate nomenclature whereby, as for instance in law, by subsuming our account and definition of a certain action under certain precedent decisions or acknowledged formal pronouncements, we form our judgment of acquittal or condemnation in the circumstances.

Two perplexities of the legal process, however, would seem to embroil morals also. In the first place, the particular act retains its individuality and does not admit of adequate disposal in a formal definition. This is a point which an empiricist could not well overlook. It is, for instance, the animus of Robert Browning's *Ring and the Book.* Unless we were to rest content with a formal casuistry, our moral judgment of a particular act would always come short of demonstrable certainty. But second and more important, what sort of certainty do moral rules and first principles have? Are we assured of their exigency, that the stipulated rewards and punishments will certainly follow obedience or transgression; or of their essential worth, that they are intrinsically entitled to our loyal acknowledgement? Even if the penology of the hereafter were certain beyond the shadow of a doubt, the question whether it is just and good, and in what sense, would still remain. How could it be answered in Lockean terms?

Moral experience here might perhaps supply the evidence, but scarcely the warrant for its authority. Humanity needed authentic directions, and thus Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, gave to men an authoritative moral code. Locke is compelled and content in the end to go to it for his ultimate sanction in morals. This final ethical reliance on the Gospels, in fact, motivates Locke's reluctance to under-

take a systematic ethical treatise. In principle, he may contemplate the possibility of an ethical system of principles reasoned out with mathematical certainty. But he doubts his own ability to execute the task, so he writes to Molyneux, and the more so, as "the Gospel contains so perfect a body of ethics that reason may be excused from that inquiry, since she may find man's duty clearer and easier in revelation than in herself." [7]

Now plainly, to affirm that the divine law is the ultimate principle and guide of morality and that the divine will, being perfect, cannot choose what is not good, is not quite the same as to affirm that the Lord Jesus Christ, in his divine mission on earth, has given the moral law full authoritative statement in the New Testament, so perfect as to make other systematic treatises of ethics superfluous. The former pair of affirmations issue from largely verbal analysis: the will defined as absolutely perfect would, to be sure, espouse the cause of the good. If we, however, pass from this abstract conclusiveness to the adoption of a specific utterance and code of moral finalities, the case is decidedly altered. Should we demand Locke's warrant for his estimate of the Gospels as ethically all-sufficient, we may be obliged to know them by their fruits, by appeal to our own moral experience. This would be good empiricism but would rule out the alleged demonstrable certainty. Or we may theologically appeal to supernatural fiat, which would be counter to Locke's intention, and would be a virtual surrender of the distinctive problem of ethics. Or again, we may have the validity of the New Testament ethics and the divine character of its sanction support each other mutually, in elaborate circular reasoning.

How convincing and how binding would this all-sufficient code be in Bagdad or Benares, to say nothing of the Tououpinambos? Even in Christendom Locke might have expected difficulties. As an advocate of tolerance he follows Grotius in limiting the binding authority of a law to those to whom it has been promulgated. The ancients are not to be judged for neglecting the law of Christ which had not been revealed to them. And how about the moderns who are not convinced of its divine warrant? The question of the basis and binding power of moral authority still remains on our hands. It is of interest in this connection to keep in mind that it was a discussion about the "principles of morality and revealed religion" that first started Locke on the inquiries regarding the sources and extent of human knowledge which resulted in his *Essay*.

Unless moral reasoning were to involve mere verbal analysis yielding propositions incontestable but also trifling, an ethical method was needed which did more than plaster dictatorially an authoritative moral

face to an empiricist torso of probabilities. Or else empiricism was to be carried out more thoroughly, to its ethical conclusions. In the theological utilitarianism which we have been examining, Locke himself, it is clear, means to emphasize the adjective. But the logic of his empiricist method points to an explicit utilitarianism, which perhaps may but which need not be theological.

2. *Clarke's Theological Rationalism*

In the eighteenth century Locke's thought replaced Hobbes' at the center of philosophical discussion. Respectable English opinion, which had been outraged by the doctrine of Leviathan, might find in Locke's *Essay* a welcome emphasis on the universal validity of moral principles under Divine Providence. But the more natural development of Locke's empiricism pointed to a different sort of ethics, as was to be abundantly disclosed in the course of later thought, British and French. The discrepancy in Locke's own system did not escape the more acute of his younger contemporaries.

Samuel Clarke (1675-1729), a theologically-minded moralist, naturally welcomed Locke's more pious conclusions in ethics, but he was convinced that they required a different basis. A doctrine of Divine Providence assuring the moral government of the world, could rest only on a rational demonstration of the eternal fitness of moral laws in the very nature of things. This demonstration he undertook to supply. His initial thesis in ethics is similar to Cudworth's, but his manner of argument reflects a different philosophical outlook. Clarke was the heir of a mathematical age, and in his own way he undertakes, as Spinoza in his *Ethics*, a geometrical analysis of human conduct. He would be the Newton of moral philosophy; he would realize Locke's objective:—to "place morality among the sciences capable of demonstration . . . from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestible as those in mathematics."

Clarke proposes to establish conclusively that moral obligation rests on essential and eternal relations in the very nature of things. In accordance with these the fitness or unfitness of actions is forever determined, not by any authority human or divine, but by the eternal truth and equity. Of this eternal truth and equity, however, God's will is the infinite expression and the assured final fulfillment. Thus he reasons in his work *Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion.* That God is infinitely superior to man, is as plain as that eternity is longer than a moment; that God should rule the universe rationally rather than capriciously, is absolutely necessary in the very nature of things; and it is manifestly fitter in itself that God should

always do what is best on the whole rather than that he should make us all continually miserable. Virtue and vice are as plainly opposite as light and darkness; the difference between them is "essential, necessary, immutable, and eternal." [8]

Religion and sound philosophy here support the untutored perception of men. Persons of even the meanest intellectual endowment can recognize the distinction between the straight path of righteousness and the devious ways of iniquity. Unrighteousness in action is as contradiction in theory: the same sound reason which rejects the latter as absurd condemns the former as unreasonable. Our thought and our conduct disclose with equal clarity the fundamental difference between fitness and unfitness in the nature of things. Though men may seek to excuse or may even callously disregard the evil which they do to others, yet they still see and approve the good. In spite of themselves, they cannot forbear to give recognition to noble virtue; and they would pursue it, were it not for the immediate advantage which, in their depravity, tempts them into evil. Even in their own intrigues and cabals they exact and rely on honor and fidelity. They spurn the just claims of others, but let one of them be out-reached by fraud or violence, and how he protests against the injustice!

This evident essential difference between good and evil is a difference of opposition. The recognition of it is a recognition of the unworthiness of evil and the worthiness of good to be chosen and espoused. This conviction of our natural reason finds its sublime expression in religion. Our rational conception of God's nature involves as an inevitable consequence the plain indication of our duty. Though God's goodness and justice immeasurably transcend ours, the difference is one of degree, not in kind and principle. To think of God's goodness as something radically unrelated to ours, is to misconceive the nature of good and evil: as if it were but a whim and peculiarity of human beings, and not involved in the very constitution of reality.

On the basic truths thus established to Clarke's full satisfaction, a structure of moral principles is to be erected which is to have rational consistency and stability. Our duties express the essential and necessary relations in which we are involved. "Render to all their dues" is a moral principle analogous to Newtonian gravitation. A fourfold rule of righteousness is thus deduced covering the entire field of moral relations and corresponding duties, and yielding Clarke's doctrine of the cardinal virtues.

Righteousness in respect to God is Piety: that we keep constantly in mind and heart the honor which is God's due, as our supreme author, preserver, and governor: the worship and adoration, the devotion to

his service, the praise of his glory, the promotion of his divine plan, the grateful acceptance of his bounty, the constant prayer for his guidance, the living trust in his infinite grace. We have only to consider the nature and attributes of God, of which our reason convinces us, and the imperative reasonableness of piety becomes evident to us.

The rule of righteousness in respect to our fellowmen is twofold and is expressed in the two virtues of Equity or Justice and Universal Love or Benevolence.

Clarke's treatment of Justice is a rationalistic elaboration of the Golden Rule. "Whatever I [rightly] judge reasonable or unreasonable for another to do for me; that, by the same judgment, I declare reasonable or unreasonable, that I in the like case should do for him." [9] The interpolation of "rightly" in the passage is required to express Clarke's full meaning. Putting ourselves in another's place does not mean that we are in justice bound to gratify unwarranted expectations which men's passions may lead them to regard as reasonable. A magistrate is not to consider what fear or self-love might stir him to desire, were he in the place of the criminal whom he is actually judging, but what sound reason and the public good would warrant him in expecting of the court, were he in the criminal's place. This same principle should govern men in other relations, as masters and servants, parents and children, governors and subjects, citizens and aliens. What justice demands is fair impartiality: judging and treating others by the same principles which we can reasonably entertain for ourselves.

The moral recognition of our solidarity with our fellowmen which is manifest in Justice finds its full expression in Universal Love or Benevolence. If the good is the fit and reasonable, the greatest good is the most fit to be done, and if our life is to be godlike, our duty points surely to our active concern for the common welfare. Our fullest life requires sociality, and whether in the circle of the family or the town or nation or all mankind, "the foundation, preservation, and perfection of . . . universal friendship or society, is mutual love and benevolence." [10]

The rule of righteousness with respect to ourselves is Sobriety: "That every man preserve his own being, as long as he is able; and take care to keep himself at all time in such temper and disposition, as may best fit and enable him to perform his duty in all other instances." [11] Temperance, moderation, industry, and contentment are four conditions of self-preservation through self-control and active pursuit of one's calling in life. Wilful escape from our task, in suicide, is thus craven desertion of our duty.

One objection to this rationalistic ethics intrudes itself at this point.

If moral distinctions are so clear and unalterable, why should there be such great differences in custom and practice? But, it may be answered, though black and white fuse to produce various shades of gray which are not easily distinguishable, does it therefore follow that black is white or that we do not distinguish the two? Clarke's rationalistic confidence is not disturbed. Notwithstanding partial disagreements, the basic certainties of mankind express the essential fitness and reasonableness of moral laws. "Nothing but the extremest stupidity of mind, corruption of manners, or perverseness of spirit, can possibly make any man entertain the least doubt concerning them." [12] This harsh characterization of the Hobbist view he undertakes to make good by an extensive vigorous assault on the ethics of the *Leviathan*, that right derives from positive compact, and moral obligation is submission to recognized irresistible power. Not even a Divine Leviathan could provide a basis of moral obligation if the only measure of his right were his acknowledged omnipotence. Suppose a being of diabolical character,—malicious, cruel, iniquitous,—were yet possessed of infinite power and used it to corrupt, ruin, and desolate the whole world, would the promulgations of such an infernal omnipotence be then the edicts of equity and the charter of our moral duties?

So we are forced to recognize that moral obligation cannot be derived from the dictates of any sovereign human or divine. If there be no such thing as good or evil antecedent to all formulated laws, then there is no ground for the real validity of any law. We must realize fully that good is not good, or justice justice, simply because God approves and demands it. Only then can we be assured, in our true conception of God's nature, that his perfect will is bound to espouse all good and justice.

3. God's Will: the Necessary Support Though Not the Basis of Virtue

Clarke is first of all concerned to give moral principles a quasi-mathematical demonstration. They are next shown to require the alliance of theology, both in our knowledge of them and in their effective mastery in our lives.

Clarke distinguishes two points here: the moral philosopher is as unflinching in upholding the first as the theologian is insistent on advancing the second. The essential validity of moral laws and the ground of our moral obligation are inherent in the very nature of things and do not depend upon the dictation of man or of God. But the actual effectiveness of moral laws in our lives requires that we keep in mind God's eternal championship of moral principles. "Great is truth, and will prevail." Clarke maintains as a general principle that "laws . . . do

not make virtue to be virtue or vice to be vice; but only enforce or discourage the practice of such things." [13] In the case of moral laws, as has been seen, their essential reasonableness makes it certain that God's perfect will eternally espouses them. The fulfillment or the transgression of them is thus bound to be attended with God's favor or disfavor, and with a corresponding scheme of rewards and punishments; for God will surely vindicate the cause which he has espoused.

God's scheme of rewards and punishments thus nowise detracts from the inherent worth of virtue to be chosen, but it does indicate the divine plan for its consummation in the lives of men. What religion reveals, nature also discloses in our everyday experience: the close and regular connection between cause and effect, between an act and its consequences. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Uprightness, which is guarded by God's peculiar favor, is in itself the safest and least dangerous course of conduct. In rationally recognizing good and evil as the essentially fit and unfit, we also recognize it as God's will that we pursue good and eschew evil. Sin and immorality are thus open rebellion against God's perfect will: stubborn opposition to the eternal reason of things and to the will of our supreme author, preserver, and benefactor.

While our experience gives plain evidence of this divine scheme of rewards and punishments, yet it discloses only the beginning of it. Virtue is neither universally nor fully justified and honored in the event, neither is vice duly rebuked here and now. Even more: vice too often flourishes, while virtue is smitten and trampled under foot. Were God's vindication of the moral law limited to this life, we might recognize it as at best only begun, but certainly must confess that it is very far from being achieved. It is the assurance of immortality which allows for the complete fulfillment of God's justice with men. Thus, while our recognition of God's government strengthens our loyalty to moral laws, our moral perception of what is demanded for the full vindication of virtue confirms us in our Christian hope of immortality. Morals and Christian piety strengthen each other. This manner of reasoning was developed and accentuated by Bishop Butler.

Though morality has its true foundations in the very constitution of things, yet it is seen to require for its consummation the strengthening truths of Christianity. We may thus understand why the pagan moralists, despite their many noble teachings, proved finally unequal to the task of reforming mankind. Not only was moral elevation in pagan antiquity very rare, but even those few moral sages failed to perceive some essential aspects of the good life and some indispensable motives in men's pursuit of virtue. Their unassisted wisdom was often unclear

and inconclusive, and most important of all, their words lacked the authority of divine warrant to translate theoretical conclusions into operative principles of conduct. What was plainly required, to recover men out of their evil estate, was a revelation with its indubitable assurance of divine providence and correspondingly effective promises and warnings. This revelation was God's gift to men in Christ.

In this ethics we should distinguish, but not separate, the moral philosopher and the pulpit moralist. He is bound to analyze and demonstrate the nature of goodness; he is equally concerned to realize in thought and in practice all that man requires for active devotion to the good life. This duality of interest leads him into a situation where he requires considerable balancing to maintain his rationalistic theory. Even without any rewards or punishments, virtue would be inherently worthy of being chosen. But virtue is not in practice self-sufficient. Other things being equal, men would choose good and eschew evil. But other things are not equal. Men's rational outlook is clouded and confused by passion; the lure of the senses, the spur of apparent immediate advantage, ardor and greed: all lead men astray. Though virtue deserves man's single devotion, no matter what the outcome, yet "men never will generally, and indeed 'tis not very reasonably to be expected that they should, part with all the comforts of life, and even life itself; without expectation of any future recompense." [14]

Clarke's criticism of the Stoic doctrine of virtue for its own sake is of interest in this connection. In principle he would second the Stoic exaltation of virtue, but he dissents from the Stoic's professed disdain of consequences, as showing an inadequate appreciation of human nature and its motives. Virtue is the chief good, but "virtue . . . in its proper seat, and with all its full effects and consequences unhindered." [15] Even then, as it is, in the present state of things, virtue appears to men not as the prize itself but as the way to obtain it. The Stoic doctrine of the perfect moral motive may be more consistent with Clarke's initial rationalistic ethics. Clarke the practical Christian moralist would not condemn, would rather commend, even imperfect motives which lead the soul in the path of virtue. Let men seek righteousness, even if it be in order that all these things may be added unto them. But, if regard for consequences is thus admitted by Clarke in the moral motive, can it be wholly ruled out in his account of the nature of moral good?

In the ethics of Samuel Clarke we may note a vigorous reaction, in the elevated rationalistic manner of Cudworth, against the Hobbist denial of the inherent character of moral good and evil and the reduction of moral obligation to effective compulsion. But in the develop-

ment of this position Clarke's *Discourses* do not serve as connecting links between Cudworth's Eternal and Immutable Morality and Kant's Ethics of the Categorical Imperative. Rather does Clarke disclose a balancing between rational respect for the pure dignity and worth of virtue and what one may be permitted to call the piously astute regard for the fruits and emoluments of righteousness: a balancing and a blend of motives peculiarly characteristic of eighteenth century Anglican divines. Between pure dutiful devotion to virtue for its own sake and the calculating survey of consequences and eventual happiness, Clarke would maintain a middle ground, reasonable, pious, sagacious. But rewards and punishments loom large in the practical conclusions of his ethics, with theological hedonism as a prudent alternative in prospect.

CHAPTER XV

CONSCIENCE AND MORAL LAW



1. Man's Constitution and the Authority of Conscience: Bishop Butler

Few British thinkers have been judged as variously as Joseph Butler (1692-1752). In ethics and in apologetics he has been thought a rock impregnable and likewise a precarious bulwark. His moral theory in particular, on which several generations of English students were nourished, has been criticized as unsystematic and inconclusive. In seeking a fair estimate of his contribution to ethical thought we should keep in mind the immediate purpose of his writings, for it determined his method of procedure. Both the *Sermons upon Human Nature* and the *Analogy of Religion,* to which the *Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue* is an Appendix, are designed to counteract immoral nonchalance and insolence due to airy dismissal of religious and moral authority as fictitious, and to the view that each man was naturally moved by egoistic desires. He is not satisfied with championing the claims of benevolence to overbalance selfishness in a harmonious moderation of the emotions. He sees human nature as a system, and would point to a principle of order. These are his central ideas: the shallowness of the Hobbist cynical portrayal of man, the normal self-expression of human nature as a system, with benevolence and reasonable self-love as integral elements, the view of our life as probation under Divine Providence, and the morally imperative principle in all conduct, the authority of conscience.

His analysis reveals subtle observation and clears up some stubborn confusions. Thus, for instance, Hobbes' egoistic theory had interpreted even sympathy as essentially self-regarding: in our keen sense of another's calamity we are actually imagining ourselves in his place: hence the emotion. In exposing this confusion Butler does not fall into the opposite error of ignoring the element of self-regard which enters in compassion for others. It is an element: "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bunyan." But it is only a part. The worry that we are liable to the other's calamity, the grateful sense that we are still free from it, are after all not the heart of compassion, but rather this: the

real sorrow and concern for another's misery. So again in the case of resentment and forgiveness of injuries. Butler distinguishes between sudden anger, which may be mere instinct of resistance to violence, observed in infants and even in animals, and resentment, which is roused not by actual or threatened harm to us or to others, but by the sense of *wrong* or *injustice.*

A searching analysis of motivation is Butler's critique of psychological hedonism. It should be noted that he is no despiser of happiness. "When he sits down in a cool hour," he grants, "without any prejudice to the cause of virtue and religion, that our ideas of happiness and misery are of all ideas the nearest and most important to us." But does this mean that happiness is the immediate object of desire and that the pursuit of it is a selfish pursuit? Butler notes the hedonistic paradox: unless a person seeks something else than enjoyment, he finds nothing to enjoy. Actually it is not pleasure that we desire, but we experience it when we get the object of our desire. Furthermore, the passion which yields pleasure in being gratified is clearly a self's passion, but need not be a selfish passion. The pleasure of satisfied benevolence is as evident fact as the indulgence of egoism. If one studies one's happiness only, whether yielded by selfish or by benevolent experience, one is bound to recognize that passions and affections have their natural stint and limits. Excess defeats fruition, and satisfaction is in moderateness. The problem of happiness and the problem of virtue both impose the need of self-understanding: study of the constitution of our nature, the order that it reveals, the duties that it exacts, the satisfaction that it yields.

To understand the essential nature of anything, we must perceive its systemic principle which governs the relation of its parts to each other. No matter how exact a notion we may have of the various parts of a watch, we know neither them nor it until we know how they are related to each other in the manner of a watch. So with the inward frame of man: observation of particular impulses and passions is not enough; we require knowledge of the constitution of man. This becomes Butler's chief inquiry.

There is in us a natural demand for self-preservation and self-gratification; but also a natural principle of benevolence. Butler declares that these two, self-love and benevolence, "are so perfectly coincident, that the greatest satisfactions to ourselves depend upon our having benevolence in a due degree; and that self-love is one chief security of our right behaviour towards society." Without regard to others, all sense of honor or infamy, ambition or covetousness, disgrace, emula-

tion vanish; our recognition of our social nature, however, does not commit us to unqualified altruism.

We have now reached a principle which Butler rates above mere particular passions or affections. We have selfish and also benevolent affections and motives, both natural yet neither expressive of our moral nature. Our nature as moral beings is essentially manifested in this principle of reflection by which we not merely yield or resist but pass judgment on what we do. We may call it moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason. Butler styles it Conscience. It is the sovereign behest of our nature or constitution, demanding the subordination of particular impulses or passions no matter how intense. The passions have power; conscience alone has authority: "had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern human life." Unless we recognize such a supreme authoritative principle, the principle of our human constitution, no reason could be advanced why a man *should* act in one way rather than in another. The very basis for moral judgment would then be lacking. The 'natural' action in each situation, without this principle of authority, would simply be the one proceeding from the strongest incentive. This we could observe and perhaps explain, but nowise intelligently approve or disapprove the act, be it even the act of a parricide.

The meaning of moral condemnation, when we say that an act violates the constitution of human nature, is that in it the supreme principle has been neglected and subordinated to particular impulses or lower principles: even as in a civil disorder random power is allowed to prevail over established order and authority. "Thus, when it is said by ancient writers, that tortures and death are not so contrary to human nature as injustice; by this to be sure is not meant, that the aversion to the former in mankind is less strong and prevalent than their aversion to the latter: but that the former is only contrary to our nature considered in a partial view, and which takes in only the lowest part of it, that which we have in common with the brutes; whereas the latter is contrary to our nature, considered in a higher sense, as a system and constitution contrary to the whole economy of man." [1]

Conscience is clearly twofold in character. On the one hand it is a reflective principle expressing and disclosing to us our essential constitution. The voice of conscience is the voice of our total nature, not as a sum of impulses but as a system: it is the utterance of *character* in our being. Conscience is thus morally integral consciousness. But, in the second place, it is also imperative: while particular passions have strength, it alone has authority. The first of these views of conscience

is in the nature of a report and definition of it; the second is a claim for it. Why should we respect this claim to authority? Butler's answer to such a challenge would seem to be again twofold. The very fact that conscience represents our total nature, the constitution of our being, appears to him to accord it rightful supremacy. But he also appeals to Divine warrant as upholding the authority of conscience. God has so ordered our constitution and our life that excessive selfishness defeats its end; under the authority of conscience, cool self-love agrees with benevolence in promoting man's highest interests and realizing his true welfare. "There is a kind of moral government implied in God's natural government: virtue and vice are naturally rewarded and punished as beneficial and mischievous to society; and rewarded and punished as virtue and vice." This distribution of rewards and punishments in our life is indicated sufficiently to leave no doubt as to the reality of Divine Providence. But it does not exhibit the complete operation of justice. It therefore points assuredly to its completion in a life hereafter. So "duty and interest are perfectly coincident; for the most part in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future, and the whole. . . . Thus they who have been so wise in their generation as to regard only their own supposed self-interest, at the expense and to the injury of others, shall at last find, that he who has given up all the advantages of the present world, rather than violate his conscience and the relations of life, has infinitely better provided for himself, and secured his own interest and happiness." [2]

Butler's argument for the authority of conscience has been criticized as running in a circle: virtuous acts are acts approved by conscience, while conscience is the moral faculty admonishing to virtue. But this scarcely expresses the full measure of Butler's thought. Virtuous conduct is conduct expressing the domination of particular affections by the sense and principle of our total nature and constitution. Conscience demands our recognition of the rightful supremacy of this highest principle: not merely our sense of its dominion, but our acknowledgement of its authority. Conscience is thus our moral criterion.

A further difficulty confronts us here. Has Butler indicated the nature and characteristics of moral value, or only pointed to our moral judge and referee? What characterizes acts which virtue approves, acts in accord with our total nature and constitution? To this question Butler does not give an explicit and unambiguous reply. Assuredly he describes the virtuous life as alone truly blessed and happy; but as we have seen, he is not a hedonist. He criticizes those who would measure virtue and vice in terms of pleasure-pain, "than which mistake, none

can be conceived as more terrible." [3] Far more in harmony with his thought is a description of human conduct as a fruition of our nature, involving the increasingly perfected coöperation of the two principles of reasonable self-love and benevolence. It is of this developing, perfecting constitution of our nature that conscience is the standard-bearer.

Butler's moral standard, like Kant's, is rationality; but his rationality is not that of formal laws. It is the reasonableness of character conceived as a living active constitution. This is perhaps what gives his ethics lasting significance. He would not direct morality along any one narrow groove, or describe virtue in terms of any one human faculty. In the light of conscience and under its direction all our faculties are duly emphasized and brought to their full realization. Just what characterizes in detail this process of reasonable development is not stated clearly and precisely by Butler. But if he is not explicit in reporting the content of moral conduct, certainly he leaves no doubt in indicating its direction. To formulate the guiding principle of moral activity was precisely his aim. Perhaps the name he applied to it, conscience, had in his mind too theological a connotation, but it does allow of a non-theological statement. In any case it implies the self-conscious judgment of our character. The norms of virtue are its norms; an analysis of its concrete utterance points to a conception of the moral career as consisting in some form of self-realization. Butler's theory was a promise that was to be fulfilled more adequately in the moral philosophy of Thomas Hill Green.

2. *Wollaston's Alliance of Truth, Reason, and Happiness*

The emphatic immediate success of *The Religion of Nature Delineated*, by William Wollaston (1659-1724) may call for comment. First printed privately in 1722 and published in 1724, the year of the author's death, it reached six editions in fifteen years, selling some ten thousand copies. Neither the author's style nor the polyglot erudition, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, with which he ballasted his text was calculated to sweep him into general favor. Those who, like Queen Caroline, wished to have the ancient footnotes Englished could scarcely have been captivated by the main argument, in which all virtue was reduced to recognition of true propositions. Nor were they likely to find in Wollaston's volume the most engaging treatment of happiness or the most impressive espousal of Divine Providence. But with evident sincerity Wollaston advocated that blend of respect for rational principle and regard for happiness which seemed to appeal particularly to re-

spectable British opinion, both lay and clerical, during the eighteenth century.

Every morally good or evil act is for Wollaston the practical affirmation or negation of a principle. A virtuous act is active recognition of a truth, vice the voluntary infraction of it; breaking one's promise contradicts one's own solemn proposition; the evil-doer lives a lie. "Thirty years' profound meditation had convinced Wollaston that the reason why a man should abstain from breaking his wife's head was, that it was a way of denying that she was his wife." [4] Contradictions vary: robbing a man of an estate worth a thousand pounds is a more serious matter than making off with his book costing one pound. It is as though the thief stole a thousand books, as though a thousand times he contradicted the true proposition affirming the man's rightful claim to his own book. Yet even Wollaston's excess of formalism does not keep him from noting what kinds of truths, if practically recognized or denied, involve virtue and vice. This further development of his doctrine yields a more adequate view of human conduct, but Wollaston does not seem to realize that it calls for a revision of his initial definition of virtue. He seeks to explain 'truth' as consistency with our rational nature, the condition of real satisfaction, and virtue as ideally coincident with happiness.

Wollaston considers happiness "as abetting the cause of truth; and as being so nearly allied to it, that they cannot well be parted." Pleasure and pain are relative to the percipient's capacity or delicacy or maturity. Multiplying the degrees of intensity by the moments of duration, adding up the pleasure-products thus attained, and subtracting the respective amounts of pain, we may in any situation arrive at "ultimate happiness . . . the sum of happiness, or true pleasure, at the foot of the account." [5] Susceptibility to pleasure and pain is a condition of moral activity, and the pursuit of happiness, in proportion to our capacity to experience it, is a moral duty. This capacity is enhanced by reason, and the road to happiness needs the guiding light of truth. Truth points to happiness; truth itself is discovered by reason; and right reason cannot successfully be opposed.

"So, at last, natural religion is grounded upon this triple and strict alliance or union of truth, happiness, and reason; all in the same interest, and conspiring by the same methods, to advance and perfect human nature: and its truest definition is, the pursuit of happiness by the practice of reason and truth." [6] The survey of the various 'truths'—concerning the Deity, concerning mankind in general, or particular societies of men or governments, or families and relations, or concerning a man's private life—does not seem to have presented any special

difficulty to the learned and comfortable recluse. From his house in Charterhouse Square which he did not leave a single night for thirty years, he surveys the large scene of human life, and his account of it reflects the assured affluence of his advanced age, but also the memory of early hardships and neglect, and a generous and sympathetic estimate of toiling and troubled humanity. His main contention he never surrenders, and reaffirms it in a variety of refrains. He who lives virtuously, by the practice of reason in conformity to truth, must be ultimately happy: if not completely in this life, then in the hereafter.

3. Price's Reliance on Moral Law and Duty

If our judgment of right were essentially an agreeable emotion which a certain act aroused in us, then right would not really *be* right, and our judgment would not be a judgment of the act itself. Unless acts *are* right or wrong, then they are bound to be indifferent. But if so, then God's perfect wisdom, truly perceiving this moral indifference of acts, could neither approve nor disapprove of any act. In that case what could we mean by the moral perfection or the goodness of God? So reasoned Richard Price (1723-1791) in his *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals* and insisted that morality and religion alike require the recognition of the ultimate character of moral value and obligation. Any judgment of moral preference or any affirmation of moral difference demands for its validity and indeed for its significance the recognition of right and wrong as inherent objective qualities of acts. The ideas of right and wrong are not reducible to other ideas. Our judging faculty, the understanding, is itself the spring of these original perceptions. 'Right' and 'wrong' indicate what we understand acts to be, not merely our feelings about them.

In recognizing the rightness or fitness of an act we discern it directly as morally obligatory. This obligatory character of all rectitude is prior to any positive law, human or divine. The right *is* what we ought to do. Furthermore, our reason cannot entertain the view of a world in which rectitude, the fulfillment of duty, ends in final misery and ruin for the agent. The right, what we ought to do, is worthy of prevailing. Here Price explicitly follows Butler in conceiving of the Divine purpose for us as "not simply happiness, but happiness enjoyed with virtue." [7] We should be clear, however; it is the essential rectitude of an act that makes it meritorious and the agent deserving of happiness: not the resultant happiness which constitutes the act right and good.

Price agrees with Butler that benevolence and reasonable self-love

are both principles of action which we are bound to recognize, but they do not exhaust virtue. Neither of them expresses the essential rectitude of veracity or fidelity or justice, and our obligation to espouse them. Price's own characteristic view of right as imperative is manifest in his classification of virtues under the several heads of duty: our duties to God, to ourselves, to others. Of particular interest here is his almost Kantian respect for the essential moral dignity of man. We may not, in callous hedonistic reckoning, ruin certain men so as to do greater good to others. He insistently asks: "What overbalance of happiness would be great enough to justify the absolute misery of one innocent being?" [8]

Our liberty and intelligence make us capable of virtue; it is our intention which realizes it in conduct. Price's final moral judgment of an act is in formal terms: does it express the will's devotion to rectitude? A man does, morally speaking, what he intends to do. Thus considered, an agent may do something objectively wrong and still be entitled to commendation. Accordingly the keener our sense of duty in any act, the more clearly virtuous it is. A mother's self-sacrifice for her child would have the greater moral value the less it springs from natural instinctive fondness and the more it expresses reflection on the reasonableness and fitness of maternal care. Where duty conflicts with desire and still triumphs, moral vigor is heightened. Strong temptations may only mean weak resistance, and are a wretched excuse for vice. Virtuous character is in proportion to reliable dominance of dutiful reason, and the most vicious man is he whose regard for virtue and duty is most weakened by enslavement to evil habits. This gradation of the moral realm implies rise and fall in it. Morality involves a demand for self-improvement; true goodness is a growing thing, and precludes smug complacency. "A person who thinks himself good enough, may be sure that he is not good at all." This very character of virtue reveals our spiritual range as boundless. "We have then infinite scope for improvement, and an everlasting progress before us." In this our moral career we are not left to our own devices. The inherent worth of rectitude as the only ultimate principle of action engages God himself on the side of right. Divine Providence assures men of the happiness to which their acts justly entitle them. We may not be convinced that we have incontrovertible evidence of this prospect of eternal life and happy immortality. But, as Price reasons in Pascalian terms, even if we think it most unlikely, the stakes are so infinitely preponderant on the side of Divine Providence that it is overwhelmingly worth our while to live our life as if we were assured of it.[9]

Price's work is thus repeatedly disclosed as a connecting link between English ethical rationalism and the moral philosophy of Kant. The ethics of the categorical imperative could well have cited Price's eloquent statement of the absolute unconditional obligation of the moral law: "Rectitude then, or virtue is a law. And it is the first and supreme law, to which all other laws owe their force, on which they depend, and in virtue of which alone they oblige. It is an universal law. The whole creation is ruled by it: under it men and all rational beings subsist. It is the source and guide of all the actions of the Deity himself, and on it his throne and government are founded. It is an unalterable and indispensable law. The repeal, suspension or even relaxation of it, once for a moment, in any part of the universe, cannot be conceived without a contradiction." If as we shall see, Kant's view is inconclusive regarding the objectivity of moral values, Price's account is perplexed by his resistance to the sentimental school which makes him distrustful of all subjectivism. Moral value conceived as rectitude is not merely available for moral perception: it is clearly a quality *of* moral character, and moral judgment is actively constitutive as well as passively reflective. Price's inability to take this more integral view of morality confuses his account of virtue: its formal and its objective sides; its only principle, rectitude, and its only end, happiness; its certainty, undemonstrable and intuitive, and its warrant, natural-divine; its demand for distinterested devotion to objective right, and its recognition of reason's claim to deserved happiness.

4. Reid's Common Sense Principles in Morals

We have been examining a number of doctrines in which British thought had sought to assure itself of certain, demonstrable principles in morality. Contemporary with Price's rationalistic analysis of rectitude is the ethical system of Thomas Reid (1710-1796), in which moral principles are regarded as convictions of our plain common sense. This type of common sense intuitionism in ethics expresses even today the assurance of many reflective but not very searching or critical minds, and it is therefore of interest to consider Reid's vigorous statement of it.

Reid's ethical doctrine is forecast in the *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, in the chapter entitled "Whether Morality be Capable of Demonstration." Reid had committed himself to the intuitionism of conscience. Locke claimed that moral propositions are demonstrable because they are abstractions admitting of perfect definition and clear statement of congruity or incongruity of concepts. But morality, in Reid's view, is not exhausted in the drawing of inferences from defini-

tions. Morality concerns the affirmations of duty; it depends upon our God-given faculty to perceive certain acts as right and therefore as obligatory. Of these pronouncements and principles of duty, some are "self-evident to every man whose understanding and moral faculty are ripe," and others are "deduced by reasoning from those that are self-evident. If the first be not discovered without reasoning, the last never can be so by any reasoning." Of the necessity of this intuitive starting point Reid has a common sense assurance: "a man of integrity . . . sees his duty without reasoning, as he sees the highway." [10] But, while conscience determines the end which we ought to pursue, we need prudence to indicate the means to that end, and prudence proceeds on likely evidence and probability.

The further development of this ethics is presented in Reid's *Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind*, published in 1788, the year which saw Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*. Reid classifies the various principles of action or incentives in human conduct as mechanical, animal, and rational. The first, mechanical principles, instincts and habits, produce their effect without will or intention on our part. The animal principles "require intention and will in their operation, but not judgment." [11] Of these animal principles, some of which man shares with the brutes, Reid distinguishes appetites, desires, and affections. Appetites,—hunger, thirst, and lust,—have in themselves neither virtue nor vice, which arise rather in our government of them. Of the desires, he cites in particular three, desire of power, of esteem, and of knowledge. These may not be social, but they imply a social existence. The affections are explicitly social emotions, being either benevolent or malevolent. Malevolent affections are vexatious, disquieting and even deforming. Mutual kind affections, prompting to reciprocal benefit, are the chief source of human enjoyment and comfort in life. These arise in the various relations between human beings: parental-filial love, gratitude to benefactors, compassion towards the distressed, esteem of the wise and good, friendship, love and conjugal devotion, and communal affection or public spirit.

In distinction from the mechanical and the animal principles of action, and from the passions, dispositions and opinions allied to the latter, Reid considers the rational or directive principles. Without reason they are inconceivable, but once conceived, they are directly recognized as leading and governing principles to which all appetites, desires, affections, and passions ought to be subordinate. Two such rational principles, harmonious and coöperating but distinguishable, are considered by Reid: regard for one's good on the whole, and the

sense of duty. These clearly correspond to Butler's reasonable self-love and conscience. Together directing our actions, they make our life a reasonable enterprise. We naturally desire whatever makes us more happy or more perfect; with the growth of understanding, extending our view both forward and backward, we come to entertain the idea of that which, not only now and here but in all connections and ramifications, yields more good than ill, the "good upon the whole." This idea, as attained, becomes a governing principle.

To the prevailing of this rational principle in our life, the chief obstacles are our unreasonable emotions and passions: impetuous, unconsidered, and over-partial. The appropriate pursuit of the greatest good requires true perception, and thus, as it involves the opposition, so does it demand the subordination of the passions to reason. Reasonable regard for good upon the whole requires respect for the second rational principle, the notion of duty, rectitude or moral obligation. This is a nobler principle, giving a clearer and a more certain rule of conduct than a regard merely for interest would yield. The notion of rectitude cannot be reduced to terms of interest or happiness. It is the distinctively moral principle; without it we would not be moral agents. This principle is not only a rational recognition of rectitude but also a practical or active obligation of the will to do what we recognize as right. It does not admit of a demand for justification beyond its own sovereign authority. Here Reid approximates Kant's categorical imperative with its unconditional obligation: "Ask the man of honour why he thinks himself obliged to pay a debt of honour? The very question shocks him." [12]

Actions in loyal obedience to duty arouse in us a sense of worth and merit. Our moral approbation of a person expresses itself in our esteem and good will for him, which are not the same as personal liking or affection, for they can be evoked by an utter stranger on his moral merits. Him whom we respect morally we disinterestedly cherish: and contrariwise with the vicious whom we condemn. "There is no judgment of the heart of man more clear, or more irresistible, than this." [13]

Thus the attainment of virtue and moral perfection demands, on the one hand, the careful study of experience to survey and chart the path of action leading to the greatest good upon the whole; but on the other hand and more decisively, it requires that moral sense of rectitude by which, on our perceiving the right, we also own ourselves in duty bound to pursue it. Man's moral enterprise is thus the investment in the field of experience of a capital stock of immediately certain gov-

erning principles of conduct. Some of these principles concern virtue in general.[14] Thus we may not doubt that our acts admit of being judged as praiseworthy or blameworthy; that only voluntary acts admit of such praise or blame, and also that what is done from unavoidable necessity, though agreeable or disagreeable, cannot be the object of a moral judgment; that failure to do the right is blameable as well as overt wrongdoing; that our duty includes the careful study of what our duty is, and the deliberate fortifying of ourselves against temptations. All these are generally indubitable. Reid draws up a list of more particular principles. Thus (1) we ought to prefer a greater good, though more distant, to a lesser; and the lesser evil to a greater. (2) "As far as the intention of nature appears in the constitution of man, we ought to comply with that intention, and to act agreeably to it." (3) No man is born for himself only, and we should therefore be socially-minded and benevolent. (4) Right and wrong must in mutual fairness be the same to all in the same circumstances. (5) To all who believe in God worshipful submission to God is self-evident.

The common sense obviousness of these maxims and precepts may perhaps be granted; but are they really moral axioms that can yield deductively a system of concrete principles of human conduct? Against the dangerous sophistry that men are to act as pleases them, we are now told that there is no virtue in us without the belief that what we do is right. Thus virtue is reduced to rectitude. This emphasis on duty is of undoubted importance in moral analysis, but, while our loyalty to rectitude is always right, is our perception of it always reliable? Reid insists on our need of educating our conscience. That we should be loyal to our conscience, and should educate it, we grant; but we may still be uncertain as to what does distinguish the judgments of an enlightened conscience. That this more particular wisdom requires the study of experience, Reid would admit, but he is so intent on espousing his common sense principles that he does not seem to realize to what an extent, in his interpretation or use of them, he actually relies on his own personal preferences and convictions.

The tendency to regard as incontestable what we may happen to believe is surely not peculiar to Thomas Reid; but it was a fault to which his common sense philosophy was especially liable, and in some of his followers it led to even greater excesses. What had not been duly analyzed or proved could always be asseverated as a first principle of common sense. Ethical discussion thus might gain plausibility and popular appeal at the price of clarity, critical thoroughness and adequate sanction. Moral criticism might here be replaced by edifying rhetoric or even by mere harangue. But it would be unjust to Reid

or to his better successors to overlook the significance of their resistance to the sceptical bias of empiricism. Frankly and stubbornly cleaving to homely saving verities, which skillful argument could shake but could not dislodge in unspoilt minds, this philosophy was likely to appeal to plain believing folk and also to people unsettled by manifold negations and seeking solid ground. So in young America and in post-revolutionary France the philosophy and especially the ethics of Common Sense was to gain great prestige, but after serving its day, to yield to more critical methods and a more exacting logic.

CHAPTER XVI

MORAL SENSE OPTIMISM



1. Shaftesbury's Philanthropic Harmony

Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), the son of a physical and mental invalid, was the grandson of the first Earl, that outstanding foe of irresponsible autocracy and champion of parliamentary rule, who partly on that account was one of the most abused statesmen in the seventeenth century. Political and social liberalism, religious and intellectual freedom, were traditional Shaftesbury tenets. Under the tutelage of John Locke, the chosen sage of the Shaftesbury family, the youth's liberal leanings became deliberate principles of thought and action. Combined with this active humanitarian spirit and dictating its form of expression, was an aristocratic temperament, nourished from early childhood on the classics and pursuing Platonic and Stoic ideals of harmony and natural religion. Shaftesbury was a resolute optimist on principle, notwithstanding the ugly evils with which he contended in public and which he also privately sought to relieve. Beyond the immediate view of experienced fact which he learned from the empiricism of John Locke, he saw and sought to realize a cosmic ideal harmony of principles. In this larger setting his master's ethical ideas appeared either meagre or perverse. He spurned them and sought his spirit's guidance elsewhere.

It was natural that Shaftesbury should challenge Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher of political and social absolutism. Unlike the rationalists, however, he was not content to advocate exalted principles against selfish passions. He was convinced that a sound philosophy of life could not disdain and dismiss the emotions. But he refused to grant the Hobbist portrayal of emotion as invariably and basically selfish. This attitude determines Shaftesbury's critical and systematic procedure. Benevolent emotions are not artificial and pretended. They are as natural as the selfish, that is to say, as firmly grounded in our nature and its capacities and needs. We shall see that Shaftesbury did not rest on this position but advanced beyond it to maintain the greater naturalness of benevolence. He was concerned initially to repudiate Hobbes' alleged antithesis between normal selfishness and pretentious but ineffectual altruism.

The conflict is largely illusory because in sooth both types of sentiment are natural and spontaneous and because the mutuality of man's interests permits man's orderly indulgence of both. Hobbes' *homo homini lupus,* men are wolves to each other, as an intended disparagement of man, is absurd "when one considers that wolves are to wolves very kind and loving creatures." The fact is that animal life itself serves to repudiate Hobbes' professed portrayal of man's natural state. "If eating and drinking be natural, herding is so too. If any appetite or sense be natural, the sense of fellowship is the same." Our nature actually combines self-regarding and sociable impulses and corresponding needs and sentiments, and a truly happy life involves the harmonious satisfaction of both.[1]

All this Shaftesbury sought to establish by the direct appeal to experience on the level of the feelings. This analysis of the emotions he not only recognized as others had done before, but also made it a central point in his system. If the same irregularity of desire or passionate excess which leads a man to harm others makes him also harm himself, while the same emotional moderation in a man which is beneficial to others proves also an advantage to himself, then goodness need not clash with desire: virtue and interest may be found at last to agree. No feeling of mine, if moderate or duly tempered, can injure others or myself. It is the over-indulgence of passion that renders it vicious and may indeed defeat its own satisfaction.

Should we press the logic of this argument by asking whether any emotion whatever is good if moderate, the real intention of Shaftesbury's doctrine would be evidenced in the disclosure that certain emotions are, in any measure, factors of disorder and therefore bad. The harmony that yields virtue and happiness is not a mere tempering of passions, but a harmony of graded feelings. This is shown more clearly in Shaftesbury's examination of the passions or affections. He finds them to be of three kinds: natural, leading to the good of society; private or selfish, leading only to one's own good; and affections leading to no one's good, harmful to oneself and to others, which he calls unnatural. There is a double priority which he claims for the social or benevolent affections by calling them natural: above the unnatural affections, of course, but also above the selfish, which, while not unnatural, are yet not natural in the full sense. For the full nature of man is disclosed not in his merely individual preoccupation but in his active membership in systems social and cosmic.

The detailed treatment of the affections leads Shaftesbury to the establishment of three conclusions: "1. 'That to have the natural, kindly, or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good

of the public, is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment'; and 'that to want them, is certain misery and ill.' 2. 'That to have the private or self affections too strong, or beyond their degree of subordinacy to the kindly and natural, is also miserable.' 3. And 'that to have the unnatural affections (*viz.*, such as are neither founded on the interest of the kind or public, nor of the private person or creature himself) is to be miserable in the highest degree.' "[2] So we are led to recognize that the higher satisfactions of the mind are either themselves social in character or else grow by being shared and socialized, and that bodily pleasures likewise afford their enjoyment socially or in fellowship. Our selfish affections, on the other hand, need constant curbing; else the resentment of injury may become vindictiveness; the desire for honor, overweening ambition; and the love of ease and comfort, sloth. Yielding to the unnatural affections in any measure is sure to prove ruinous to the soul, laying waste the field of individual satisfaction and generous fellowship in which human life attains its worth. But social affections are open to criticism only when their excessiveness actually defeats their benevolent aim.

Shaftesbury's emphasis on just measure and harmony of the affections, controlling selfishness, inclining towards benevolence, and finding its perfection in deliberate and expansive philanthropy, leaves important issues unsettled. How do we come thus clearly to perceive this just measure and proportionment? And what is this good which we may thus harmoniously pursue and attain?

The first of these two questions concerns the nature and the origin of moral judgment. Shaftesbury maintains that this judgment is one of direct perception, a response analogous to sight and taste. We perceive right and wrong, good and evil, better and not so good, as directly as we perceive red and green, bitter and sweet. This moral sense may vary in subtlety and refinement; it may be dulled or cultivated by our manner of life; but if it is uncorrupted, its direct response, in approval or disapproval or preference, is always in agreement with the conclusion which right reason would reach in the circumstances. Our final and more complete reliance is on maturity of experience, on good rational judgment in dealing with the facts of human life.

To the second question Shaftesbury gives no clear answer. What is the good, in the pursuit of which men may actively coöperate without real conflict of interests, and the reliable and abundant attainment of which points to fellowship and philanthropy? Shaftesbury has shown that the happy life demands moderation and right measure in our affections, that emotional excess and disorder leads to misery. Are we to conclude that the good of life is happiness? Many passages in his

Characteristics are hedonistic. In the *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit* the due establishment of the natural affections is advocated as sure to procure us a certain and solid happiness. In *The Moralists* he undertakes the moral defense of the universe from the charge that in it virtue suffers ultimate defeat in misery: "Man may be virtuous, and by being so, is happy." Philosophy itself is defined as the study of happiness. But Shaftesbury recognizes that the moralist must go beyond the mere experience of pleasure, to judge it. "The real question is, 'whether we are rightly pleased, and choose as we should do?' " [3]

Shall we then say that while various affections yield a variety of pleasures, moral judgment of them all points to the satisfaction of our benevolent nature as itself the goal of life, that philanthropy, the height of goodness, is itself the highest good? "A generous affection, an exercise of friendship uninterrupted, a constant kindness and benignity of disposition, a constant complacency, constant security, tranquility, equanimity: are not these ever and at all times good?" [4] But in his laudation of philanthropy Shaftesbury exhibits it as the full attainment of harmony in our emotions. What he most values in life and what he sets before man as a goal appears to be, not simply pleasure, nor yet the philanthropic spirit itself, but rather the harmonious perfection of our nature. This harmony of character yields lasting satisfaction in a life of orderly affections, characterized by an expansive philanthropy.

In his appeal to harmony Shaftesbury follows a Platonic lead, and Platonic likewise is his view of the kinship of moral and aesthetic perfection. The deliberate pursuit and attainment of goodness reveals refinement and nobility of taste, and a vicious life exposes the low vulgarity of a man. The same aristocratic discrimination and the same delicacy of taste govern moral and aesthetic judgment. A life of rightly ordered affections has a quality of beauty analogous to a great work of art. The moral saint is a master artist in conduct. In both, beauty is the result and the evidence of a true balanced view and judgment. The fields of experience in which we realize the ideal perfections of our nature vary, and correspondingly various are the appropriate forms of expression; but underlying the differences is kinship and ultimate identity. "What is beautiful is harmonious and proportionable; what is harmonious and proportionable is true; and what is at once both beautiful and true is, of consequence, agreeable and good." [5]

2. *The Rhapsody of the Cosmos*

In realizing the moral-aesthetic perfection of harmony and proportion, man reveals true insight into the essence of nature, for the sovereign principle of nature is the principle of universal harmony. This

thought of the symmetry and symphony of nature inspires Shaftesbury to a rhapsodic strain.

The revelation, eloquent and often ecstatic, of the balance, compensation, and fittingness in nature, is Shaftesbury's favorite theme: demonstrating nature as reasonable, nourishing optimistic assurance. The subtler and the more intricate the harmonies, the more enchanting they are to his aesthetic and moral perception: "Wheels within wheels. . . . Nothing is so delightful as to incorporate." [6] Logic, art, morals, all teach the philosophic wisdom of the appeal from the part to the whole. Ugly and evil details need not repel or stagger us. We may even see them as accenting by contrast the universal harmony, or else in a larger context themselves being factors of perfection. Shaftesbury's thought inclined toward complacency, and this later became a philosophic and literary fashion and inspired an orgy of optimism, producing a counterblast of cosmic execration before the close of the century.

This moral-aesthetic doctrine has religious implications. By the steps of beauty and philanthropy Shaftesbury mounts to the Temple of Universal Harmony. But he is openly suspicious of theological ethics, rejects the idea that moral convictions or conduct spring from speculative opinions, and resists vigorously any doctrine of morality conceived as dictated by obedience to law or sovereign authority, be that the ruthless might of Leviathan or Locke's more insidious triple instrumentality of legal, social, and religious sanctions, be it hope of rewards or fear of punishments in this life or in the hereafter. Where ample experience and a duly tempered emotional life have made a man cherish and practice philanthropy, the harmony in his own life serves to reveal to him the larger Divine Harmony with which he is in concord, and a piety of virtue develops which is the heart of natural religion. Shaftesbury's words here recall Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius: "Remember . . . in what a Presence thou actest. . . . Thus contemplating Him, how is it possible thou shouldst either act or think anything mean, abject, or servile?" [7] But where the ennobling consciousness of God has not been reached in the course of moral-spiritual elevation, the mere speculative idea of Deity or of Heaven and Hell, though it may compel subservience, can not evoke moral loyalty and high devotion. And it is this practical atheism which is the greater impiety.

In dealing with this theme, Shaftesbury eloquently upholds the cause of secular ethics, and the more effectively because his critique of theological methods does not reveal dull religious responsiveness but on the contrary the liveliest spirituality. Thus Shaftesbury's moral-aesthetic cult of Divine Harmonious Nature served the purposes of a religion in many unorthodox minds requiring an outlet for devotional impulses.

And just on that account the rhapsodic religiosity in which his ethics found its fruition appeared the more insidious and dangerous to theological-conformist minds. In the characteristic eighteenth century cleavage and contest between aggressive orthodoxy and free-thinking wholesale dismissal of all mythologies, Shaftesbury's Universal Harmony was a middle ground, a refuge but also a target of opposite extreme attacks. As a more mature spiritual outlook led European minds to another plane of reaffirmation and criticism, Shaftesbury lost his conspicuous position on the line of march.

Shaftesbury's career in the course of modern thought registers an initial stir, rapid and very widely spreading influence for almost a century after his death, and then as rapid neglect and oblivion. During the entire nineteenth century scarcely any edition appeared of his works. And yet in the eighteenth century Montesquieu classed Shaftesbury with Plato, Montaigne, and Malebranche as the four great poets, by which he meant the four great moral teachers, of humanity.

The rhapsody of the Universal Harmony inspired didactic optimism in prose and in verse, much of it unrestrained and inviting rebuttal. In Bolingbroke's perverted version, since the harmony is universal, how can there be any discord whatever? To find any evil anywhere is to blaspheme omnipotent and infinitely perfect Deity. We cannot judge God's world by our standards: God's justice and goodness are indubitable and infinite, but they need not be as ours. Rejection of anthropomorphism here leads to the undermining of moral principles as we understand them. Shaftesbury's declaration, Harmony is harmony by nature, though our ears be too dull to perceive it, assumes in Bolingbroke's version a sinister meaning. In the laudation of the Universal Whole, finite moral antitheses are dulled, and optimism becomes moral callousness. In Pope's poetic theodicy, Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke blend and alternate, smooth epigrams veiling the rough logic and tangled ideas.

Shaftesbury needed only the strain of overstatement to yield readily to the rude twist of satire. Parallel quotations may exhibit this clearly and likewise indicate the double shift in ideas. Shaftesbury writes: "Much is alleged . . . to show why Nature errs, and how she came thus impotent and erring from an unerring hand. But I deny that she errs; and when she seems most ignorant or perverse in her productions, I assert her even then as wise and provident as in her goodliest works. . . . From such various and disagreeing principles a universal concord is established." [8] From scores of well-known lines in Pope's *Essay on Man* we may select perhaps the most summary and familiar:

All nature is but art unknown to thee,
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good;
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

But Voltaire damns this divine complacency by an ironical revision in citation: "Here is an odd general good, composed of gallstones, gout, and all sorts of crimes, sufferings, death and damnation." Shaftesbury had written: "The numerous insects are reduced by the superior kinds of birds and beasts, and these again are checked by man, who in his turn submits to other natures, and resigns his form a sacrifice in common to the rest of things." Voltaire continues the benign theme: "Flies are born to be devoured by spiders, which are in turn devoured by swallows, and swallows by shrikes, and shrikes by eagles, and eagles are born to be killed by men, who in turn live to kill each other and to be consumed by worms, or by devils at least in a thousand cases to one." [9]

Exposed to such rude counterblasts, the doctrine of the cosmic harmony might bring dismay to the soul. Are we to give up the hope of final judgment either moral or religious? There is unintended irony in Pope's lines:

Presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man.

Voltaire's counsel is one of grim resignation: "Let us cultivate our garden." But if too docile cosmic optimism might lull our alert resistance to evil and relax moral effort, this call to civilizing endeavor in a callous or perverse universe has a dispiriting undertone. This contrast of attitudes serves to bring to the foreground the problems of the metaphysics of morals: the postulates and the more ultimate implications of moral judgment and moral activity. Within ten years after Voltaire's death appeared Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason.*

3. Hutcheson's Doctrine of Moral Sense and Benevolence

Shaftesbury, in his resistance to the egoistic school, had affirmed the naturalness of benevolence and had sought virtue in a harmony of selfish and altruistic emotions emphasizing the latter. This harmony of predominant benevolence can be justified rationally, but we recognize and approve of it by direct moral perception. These two doctrines of

Shaftesbury, benevolence and moral sense, were accentuated by Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) against Hobbists and intellectualists. Hutcheson's thought developed through several stages, but we find him consistently sharing his main ideas with Shaftesbury: altruism pointing to universalistic hedonism but not reducible to it; the natural attractiveness of the good life, immediately evident to the moral sense but sustained by reason; an aesthetic view of virtue as the beautiful life. From the clean-cut decision which distinguished the earlier statements of his ethics, Hutcheson proceeded to revision and modulation, reacting constructively to Butler and rounding off his system by adopting ideas from Shaftesbury's expansive Stoicism and also directly from the Roman Stoics.

To the generally accepted five senses, Hutcheson added others, repeatedly supplementing his own list in his treatises. We may note the sense of reflection or self-consciousness, the public sense of social consciousness, the internal sense of beauty, the sense of honor, the sense of the ridiculous, and most important of all in conduct, the moral sense. It is this last which directly distinguishes good from bad, and is correspondingly pleased or displeased, approves or condemns. In the Preface to his first work, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Hutcheson refers to the moral sense doctrine as "his principal design . . . to shew, 'That human nature was not left quite indifferent in the affair of virtue, to form to itself observations concerning the advantage or disadvantage of actions, and accordingly to regulate its conduct.' " The immediate response of approval and admiration which a fine noble act arouses in us is peculiarly disinterested. It cannot be reduced to our perception of it as advantageous to us. The act which we admire may not affect our interests in any way, or may even be materially harmful to us. The Dutch war of independence established Holland as a free prosperous state, to the commercial disadvantage of England: yet what Englishman would admire the Spanish tyrant rather than the brave Dutch? The portrayal of noble characters in history and poetry moves us as deeply as the perception of nobility in our own dealing with others.

Shaftesbury had sought to point out the harmony of benevolence and self-love; Hutcheson emphasizes benevolence as the essence of moral good. It is truly disinterested though it may not run counter to self-interest. An act prompted by self-love lacks moral value; but where the interests of others are not involved, one may equitably treat oneself with the same benevolence which one accords to others. By this management of terminology, Hutcheson would provide for the more personal virtues: temperance, prudence, self-respect. In these virtues

we may be confirmed by remembering that neglect of them is likely to interfere with our more effective promotion of the general welfare. Where others are affected, our benevolence must be wholehearted. We may actually reap advantage from someone's benevolent deed, but we do not admire it because of the advantage. What delights the moral sense, is genuinely benevolent concern for the promotion of the general happiness.

Hutcheson is clearly balancing himself between a moral sense theory which estimates the goodness of an act in terms of the benevolent sentiment prompting it, and a theory which evaluates actions in terms of their consequences, as increasing or diminishing the sum of happiness. In his *System of Moral Philosophy* he makes use of the distinction between 'formal' and 'material' goodness. A benevolent motive constitutes an action formally good; it is materially good if it promotes the common welfare.

In moral deliberation and choice, how are we to judge the relative moral value of acts? There are different degrees of benevolence, also different capacities for producing happiness. Hutcheson undertakes to find a universal canon for computing the goodness of any action. Here he is led to introduce mathematical calculations in ethics, as he had already done in aesthetics. He sets out with the axiom that the moral importance of any action is a compound ratio of benevolence and ability. We approve acts prompted by benevolence in proportion to the full ability of the agent, be that ability great or small. So the Gospel praised the widow's mite. Where a person acts to the utmost of his power for the public good, or, in Hutcheson's formula, when M (moment of good) equals A (agent's ability), we have perfection of virtue.[10]

It is to be noted that in his calculations Hutcheson is more concerned with the goodness of actions or the degree of benevolence which prompts them than with the amount of happiness which they yield. When the benevolence of two agents is equal and other circumstances alike, the amount of produced happiness varies with the agent's ability. The full benevolent use of one's ability, however, upon which perfection of virtue would depend, involves the study of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and the consequent choice between various courses of action. Benevolence is a universal principle; like gravitation, it extends to all men; but, like gravitation again, it increases as distance diminishes, and is stronger in proportion to closeness of kinship and other natural relations. Accordingly Hutcheson distinguishes several degrees of benevolence: that existing between parents and children and other close relations, that expressed in gratitude, and

that which gives rise to honor, shame, and compassion. Corresponding to the recognition of benevolence is a sense of moral obligation or recognition of rights. These rights may be perfect or imperfect, depending upon this, whether universal violation of them would or would not involve universal misery.

Thus modulating an increasingly flexible statement, Hutcheson would combine in his doctrine a sentimental faculty of moral judgment, an altruistic motive as the mark of virtue, and a hedonistic description of the objective of good acts. Our moral sense approves benevolence, which aims at the fullest promotion of the general happiness. The amount of happiness is regarded as admitting of definite statement, and the moral sense and benevolence as underived and immediate.

Hutcheson insists that the capacity to enjoy the contemplation of a good act is not to be confused with innate ideas. We have a moral sense which always approves of what we do consider benevolent or morally excellent, but we do not have innate ideas of what is benevolent or excellent. By this distinction Hutcheson would also account for the difference in moral judgments among men, made particularly familiar to us by John Locke. Men may not agree in their estimate of happiness or the best ways to secure it; they differ in the channels in which they direct their benevolence: some choosing a religious sect, others, a political party, still others some clique or cabal. Fanatic notions of God's will or laws may lead men, in misguided religious zeal, to override their own moral convictions. This last point should not mislead us. While Hutcheson follows Shaftesbury in his reluctance to base ethics on theology, his own temperament demands a final concord of virtue and piety. Our moral experience points to the boundless wisdom, power, and benevolence of God.

Hutcheson's doctrine reveals his great indebtedness to Shaftesbury and also his personal character as his biographers have made it known to us. What in another writer would have been sentimentality or even pretense, was in Hutcheson genuine and natural conviction. His own nature flowed spontaneously in generous impulse and active benevolence. In his youth he sought to win for his brother a larger share of his grandfather's affection and confidence, of which he was the favorite recipient; and somewhat later his main concern was not to avail himself of the provisions of a will which left him the preferred heir. Throughout his career, in Dublin and at the University of Glasgow, his dealings with others were motivated by broad and warm philanthropy. The one noted defect in his character was a quickness of temper, roused most often by other men's flagrant disregard of justice

or humanity. Any project which promised social improvement or any promotion of the public good enlisted readily his active support. Sentimental hedonistic altruism was Hutcheson's natural self-expression in doctrine. His exposition of it in his classes was motivated less by the intellectual demand for adequate analysis and demonstration than by the practical or even religious zeal to arouse the finer sentiments of his students.

This practical concern for virtue makes Hutcheson ready to modify his doctrine so as to disarm objections and make it more appealing. But in this continual revision in response to his critics and his friends and favorite authors, Hutcheson came to alter some of his main ideas, yet without explicitly abandoning their old form. His sentimental doctrine aroused the intellectualists to vigorous criticism; his more mature exaltation of benevolence was, if not altered, yet modified by Butler's *Sermons*. In the later forms of his moral philosophy we note a steady Stoic influence. His practical philanthropy, leading him to relate ethics to economics, started a train of ideas which were to find their larger development in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*,[11] with its doctrine of *laissez faire*.

CHAPTER XVII

THE EARLY BRITISH UTILITARIANS



1. George Berkeley

George Berkeley (1685-1753) is famous in the history of philosophy for the idealistic inferences which he drew from Locke's empiricism. According to Locke, our knowledge is derived from experience. Indeed, Berkeley continued, the real world is really the world of minds and their ideas. The so-called laws of nature are uniform ways in which ideas are combined in our minds. The uniformity of experience is itself proof conclusive that our minds share in the infinite experience of God. Berkeley believed that this doctrine of experience cut the ground from all materialism and infidelity. The motivation of his works is controversial-reformatory and is so advertised on his title-pages. *The Principles of Human Knowledge* would inquire into "the grounds of scepticism, atheism and irreligion." *The Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* are written "in opposition to sceptics and atheists." The doctrines which Berkeley combatted he considered not only wrong but also bad: to point out their evil effect, in individual and in social life, was one of his purposes as an author. Aghast at the easy-going depravity which the South Sea affair revealed, he wrote *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain.* Disheartened about the Old World, he gave up the richest deanery in Ireland to promote a missionary utopia across the Atlantic. When disappointed in this plan, and returning to Ireland he was made Bishop of Cloyne, he undertook the inner and outer reform of his country. In *The Querist* he raised some nine hundred questions regarding the decay and the possible upbuilding of Ireland, and repeatedly in discourses and exhortations he appealed to Protestants and Catholics alike in the spirit of high patriotism. And while his later thought soared to Neoplatonic heights, it did not neglect the daily needs of common folk. His *Siris* pursued the vision of "the Love which moves the sun and the other stars," but it started with the homely inquiry into the curative virtues of tar-water, to relieve the ills and blights of the poor Irish peasantry.

Where so much missionary and reformatory zeal and such resolute warriorship against the powers of evil are manifest, one might expect

that speculation itself would take an ethical turn. Berkeley's early plans seem to have included a systematic work on ethics. But a manuscript which he is supposed to have written on the subject during his Italian travels was lost. For his ethical ideas we have to depend on certain passages in his published works, but some of these are important statements of a pious utilitarianism.

In dealing with Berkeley's early reflections on ethics, we should always keep in mind Locke's influence. Young Berkeley speculates whether Locke's hope of an ethical science as demonstrable as mathematics may not be realized by general agreement in the definition of moral concepts, allowing of valid inference by faithful use of symbols. But it is a different sort of ethical attack which we find in the sermons on *Passive Obedience* and in the *Alciphron*. Berkeley reached the conclusion that a moral truth, if it is to "go down with most," must convince and appeal, must be vindicated against scruples and established opinion. It is this more directly effective championship of morals which he undertakes.

Respectable writers had argued against Hobbes that benevolence is as native to man as selfishness, that virtue is natural and akin to beauty and harmony, and that we have a capacity to perceive right and wrong, a moral sense. These doctrines were to have great vogue, but they also met with opposition, and from different quarters. So when Shaftesbury portrayed virtue in terms of men's native benevolence, the men of the world and the coffee-house cynics of the type of Mandeville sneered and pronounced such virtue to be a lofty pretense. Man was a creature of greeds and passions, they said; it was by appealing to these that society prospered: "private vices public benefits." But Shaftesbury was opposed also by those whose moral respectability Mandeville had outraged. For the optimism of Shaftesbury and his insensitivity to the darker hues of human character virtually dismissed sin from the moral vocabulary. This was unchristian complacency. What need was there of a Saviour where man so naturally took to the benevolent ways of perfection? Christian ethics, Berkeley was convinced, was bound to combat both Mandeville and Shaftesbury. Virtue must be extolled, but also human nature must be seen for what it is, without rosy illusions. With God's grace man can attain genuine devotion to virtue, and in the end it alone will bless him, but to sustain it in his heart and mind, more than a placid aesthetic sense of the beauty of goodness is required.

Despite their opposition to Hobbes, the theologians shared his first premise, for they found it in Scripture. Man is moved by self-interest. It is the sinner's blindness which leads him to seek his profit and pleas-

ure in wickedness. Moral insight consists in perceiving the advantage of virtue, if seemingly not always in this life, yet assuredly in the hereafter. Our fortune depends in the end on God alone, so we are well advised to obey his will above all. But what is God's will? Infinitely perfect and good, God can only will the good of his creatures; and because in him there can be no favoritism, God must will "the general well-being of all men, of all nations, of all ages." [1] So our loyalty to God's will demands our promotion of this Divine plan of the common welfare and happiness.

But how can we in each case ascertain the general advantage and act accordingly, thus fulfilling God's will? What we require and what alone can assure the pursuit of virtue is thus perfectly clear: a code of divine legislation, certain universal moral rules. These God has given us; obedience to them does promote the general well-being of men, but our practice should be to obey them even when they do not seem to conduce to the general interest. We do well to obey loyally, and this loyalty is our duty. Berkeley insists that we are to seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, being firmly assured that all these things will be added unto us. The thought of ultimately unrewarded virtue would reflect on the justice of Divine Providence. He criticizes those who "while they speak of virtue as the most amiable thing in the world . . . at the same time that they extol her beauty, they take care to lessen her portion." [2] Like Butler, so Berkeley to the end of his days found that the conviction of rewards and punishments in the hereafter strengthens morally the loyal devotion to the general good in obedience to the will of God.

2. *Gay's Dissertation*

Archbishop William King's *Essay on the Origin of Evil*, published originally in Latin in 1702, seven years before Shaftesbury's *Moralists* and eight before Leibniz's *Theodicy*, anticipated some of the main ideas of these two classics of eighteenth century optimism, of which Pope's *Essay on Man* was to become the most popular version. The confident appeal to the Universal Harmony evoked wide response:

> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good.—

This world is the least imperfect conceivable; it is the stage on which God's regard for the well-being of all creatures is disclosed and his plan for human happiness realized. Blessed are they who put their trust in Him! Whether this optimism thus proceeded to a confidently pious

statement, or whether it sought a deliberately secular and rationalistic version, it reflected the conviction that perfection and happiness were normal results of virtuous conduct.

Resting on such confident theodicy, and keeping in mind God's provisions for man's happiness, one might come to view hedonism in a more respectable setting. By another path we should then be reaching Berkeley's pious assurance. Significant in this connection is the Dissertation "Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue and Morality," prefixed to Edmund Law's English translation of Archbishop King's *Essay*, first published in 1731 and reaching five editions in the course of fifty years. The author of the Dissertation, the Rev. John Gay, Fellow of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, showed in his work a talent for concise and effective exposition. The substance of the ethical doctrines spread over the thick volumes of Abraham Tucker, David Hartley, and William Paley is to be found as in a nutshell in John Gay's compressed writing.

Observing the general agreement of moralists regarding the sort of actions deserving of moral approval, and their disagreement as to the reasons that induce or warrant approval or disapproval, Gay devotes his attention to the two problems concerning virtue: its criterion, and the motive by which men are led to pursue it. According to Gay, "Virtue is the conformity to a rule of life, directing the actions of all rational creatures with respect to each other's happiness; to which conformity every one in all cases is obliged: and every one that does so conform, is or ought to be approved of, esteemed and loved for so doing." [3]

If this is virtue, what is its criterion, and first, what do we mean by our being bound or obliged to pursue virtue? Gay understands obligation to mean "the necessity of doing or omitting any action in order to be happy." [4] This obligation may be considered four ways: from the perception of the *natural* consequences of actions; from the esteem or the opposite which our actions arouse in others and regard for which is in us a social or *virtuous* obligation; from the authority of the *civil* magistrate; and fourthly, from the authority of God, or *religious* obligation. Of these four kinds of obligation, the last alone is complete, since God only can in all cases make me happy or miserable. What, now, is God's will of me in my relations to my fellowmen? It is evident from God's own infinite eternal happiness and from his manifest goodness that, in creating man, he aims at human happiness; therefore in my actions I am bound to fulfil this Divine will. Hence my concern in conduct must be for the happiness of mankind, and my

inquiry, how this happiness is to be promoted. The real moral criterion is thus the hedonistic-humanitarian.

Our moral judgment of acts thus concerns their observed or expected consequences. We incline to approve or disapprove what we regard as tending to produce pleasure or pain. In our relations with other persons we find our happiness to depend on them and on theirs. Thus I approve my neighbor's act which promotes my happiness, and also his desire to promote it, and I in turn desire the happiness of those who have done me good. My neighbor likewise approves corresponding affections and desires in me. Each of us thus finds the other meritorious, each one approving in the other what promotes his own happiness and all approving generally what tends to the increase of happiness. To be sure, the hedonistic motive may not be the particular one immediately present. Men often approve moral character and virtuous acts without regard or even in opposition to their concern for happiness. In explaining this difficulty in his doctrine Gay refuses recourse to intuitionism, moral sense or so-called public affections. His appeal is to the association of ideas. Money is initially pursued as a means to happiness. But by association of ideas we annex pleasure to the pursuit of money, and so in the course of time a man may concentrate his desire for money to the point of miserly disregard for the very pleasure which money is normally meant to procure. In a similar way we can explain men's devotion to knowledge or to fame. Imitation of the desires and views of others contributes to the same result; and it produces in time the various social dispositions or virtues and vices. But the original and basic motivation is hedonistic.

3. Hartley's Observations on Man

The doctrine of association of ideas, deriving from Locke, and as we have just noted, used by Gay, is developed systematically and applied to ethics by David Hartley (1705-1757). Hartley derived sensations from cerebro-neural vibrations. Repeated sensations leave faint images of themselves, corresponding to diminutive vibrations. The repeated experience of several sensations together will cause the experience of one of them to give rise to the vibrations or faint image of the other. Hartley set much store by this psycho-physical framework of his doctrine of association of ideas; but its rejection by some of his followers, as Priestley, did not seriously affect his contribution to psychology and ethics. It is with this contribution that we are here concerned. His essential thesis is that simple ideas and pleasures are converted by the principle of association into experiences of increasing

complexity. His examination of this conversion, as will appear, discloses hedonistic alchemy and confirms his optimism and his piety.

As elementary sensations give rise to ideas of imagination, so from the elementary sense-pleasures or pains are generated pleasures or pains of imagination. These two together generate pleasures or pains of ambition; sensation, imagination and ambition, in turn, generate self-interest; and these four, sympathy; and these five, "theopathy"; and all six together, the moral sense. Each passion may thus be regarded as a complex fruition of more primitive passions, and initially of the elementary sensations. Psychological genealogy is here used to indicate ethical progress and destiny. The more primitive, Hartley reasons, is less perfect than the more mature. The pleasures of sense, of imagination, of honor should not be made our primary pursuit; these lower pleasures find their consummation and should find their direction in the higher precepts of benevolence, piety, and the moral sense.

In the maturing of human character Hartley notes a progressive gain in assured happiness and an approach to loving piety. With regard to the first, his hedonistic optimism is amazingly bold. Our life, in which pains and pleasures are mixed, tends towards a state of unalloyed happiness: first, by the principle of association, and second, by the moral sense and insight which this principle develops. God, in Hartley's judgment, is either infinitely benevolent or infinitely malevolent. The latter alternative being ruled out, the former assures us, if not of unmixed, yet of predominant happiness. While our pleasures may be tarnished with some pains, they on the whole overbalance the pains. Now it is the tendency of association, Hartley informs us, "to convert a composite state of pleasure and pain, in which one of the ingredients is inferior to the other, into a pure state consisting of the predominating element, and equal in intensity to the difference between the two original factors." [5] In the prepollence of happiness over misery, we should expect pleasure to swallow up the pain and yield pure bliss. The fly in the ointment is absorbed without corrupting the fragrance. On this and other grounds Hartley is convinced that in a total view "all individuals are actually and always infinitely happy," [6] a conclusion which has been called "optimism run mad." [7]

This lesson in bliss suggests one in duty and piety. At each stage of our life, happiness is assured in the rise from lower to higher affections. As our feelings of pleasure are related intimately to the objects arousing them, these objects come to arouse disinterested pleasures, and in rising to higher and higher emotions we find our joy and devotion to interests of progressively wider and nobler range. The pursuit of happiness thus proceeds to consummation not by the path of sensual

selfishness but by the moral sense, itself fruition of the other affections and finding its perfection in loving piety. Moral progress is from a state in which sensual attachments are perhaps disturbed by our fear of God, but not transfigured by our love of God, to a state in which love has ascended over fear in our piety and quite eclipsed our worldliness. This blessed conclusion Hartley frames in a formula. Let *W* be our love of this world, *F* our fear of God, and *L* our love of God. Then *W*:*F* : : *F*:*L*, and $W = F^2/L$. In the grossly sensual man *L* is scarcely discernible, and worldliness is paramount; in the life of the saint, *W* is extinguished as *F* is swallowed up by *L*.[8] Man who begins by seeking to sate his lusts may culminate in blissful self-surrendering devotion to God, in whom we live and move and have our being.

The many ambiguities of this doctrine cannot escape notice. The distinction between higher and lower pleasures has not been vindicated ethically. It has not been made clear whether the saint's progress is the progress of genuine altruistic or disinterested devotion and piety, or not rather the progress of a connoisseur in the promotion of his own greatest happiness. While Hartley occasionally speaks the language of duty, he has not indicated clearly its appropriateness in a hedonistic discourse. The universal tendency towards moral self-ennoblement is neither authenticated empirically, in view of obvious statistical objections, nor is it explained so as to yield a stably established theory of the moral standard. For all the emphasis on socialized emotions, we are not given any clear and sufficient indication of the growth of the social self or of the culture of character through shared experience. While in tracing the pursuit of happiness Hartley would follow the path of factual investigation, his ultimate trust is in Divine Providence which directs our course upward. Empiricist and theological procedure thus seem to alternate. These deficiencies in Hartley's account of man do not nullify the incontestable significance of his elaborate analysis of the principle of association in the field of emotions, but they serve to explain the inconclusiveness and ambiguity of his ethics.

4. Tucker's Light of Nature

Against Gay's thirty concise pages are the seven volumes of *The Light of Nature Pursued* by Abraham Tucker (1705-1774). In surveying this harvest of a whole lifetime of boundless leisurely labor, one is left undecided whether Tucker stored his sheaves as reaped or whether he threshed his crop and then, unwilling to rake out his straw, packed and preserved it all together, grain and chaff. Certainly no instance comes to mind of greater distension and effusion in philosophical literature. After the death of his wife Tucker made two copies of his

entire correspondence with her, gave one copy to his father-in-law, and read the other frequently to his daughters. He had a vision of her, and also of 'lank-jawed' Locke and 'flatnose' Socrates and of much else besides, while in the 'vehicular state' enfolded in a throbbing bladder which could snail-like shoot out arms or legs as needed, all marvelous and very convenient. After endless converse and much sipping of ambrosia and skating upon rays of light, he finally overtook this 'terraqueous globe' and, through 'nimble mazes ligneous and sulphureous' and 'black streams of fuliginous vapour,' he reëntered his more customary head, and—reamed off two hundred and eighteen pages of it, 'not omitting the minutest circumstance,' and on the first occasion read the entire chapter to an obliging friend.[9]

It does require an obliging reader to turn the pages of Tucker's seven volumes, but if obliging and patient, the reader is not unrewarded, for this endless gossip is not always tedious. Unable to choose between six examples to illustrate his point, he may keep them all, but we may well forgive him, since the six, and the hundreds besides, may include some of the happiest illustrations in eighteenth century philosophical writing. Genial goodwill and shrewd common sense combine to make him amiable and prudent. Critical attack, impatience of pedantry, and good-humored irony season his everlasting rehearsals of doctrine. In his ethics, like a good merchant, he counts his pennies while he ventures his pounds. Man does well to grasp the pleasure of the moment, but he does better to stake his fortune on the eternity of joys which God has in store for them that cherish their fellowmen and promote the general happiness.

Tucker dismisses the moral sense doctrine as already disproved in principle by Locke's refutation of innate ideas. The supposed judgments of the moral sense are to be explained as the result of the association of ideas. Special interest or attention may cause some ideas to stand out, and, while their initial warrant was supplied by the experiences with which they were associated, we may come to retain a supposedly immediate or intuitive conviction of them even after we have ceased to keep in mind what caused their original hold on us.

Thus confident that, while a conviction may be felt as immediate, it had its initial warrant in experience, Tucker is equally assured that, though we may entertain the idea of self-evident and intrinsic rectitude, all real right depends on consequences. The right is as the right line, the shortest between two points, the most direct to the good at which we aim. This good is pleasure, by which Tucker does not mean the opposite of work or duty, but, borrowing his term from Locke, satisfaction. Satisfaction we may pursue in a variety of ways, and the

immediate motives may vary: pleasure, use, honor, necessity. But the basic incentive and aim is ever with us, and the decisive question is, not what sort of satisfaction, but how much. Tucker would stake his whole fortune on the pleasure-pain enterprise, and his piety, as will presently appear, is a hedonistic trust in God. How to get the utmost of happiness, becomes the problem of the art of living, which is philosophy, the politics of the soul. This art requires hedonistic astuteness, the prudential virtue. So Tucker regards Prudence as the chief virtue, comprehending the other three, fortitude, temperance, and justice. These three relate to the discipline of the soul or the removal of obstacles in our nature which impede the exercise of prudence, practical wisdom.

Two questions now confront us: How is the selfish pursuit of satisfaction connected and harmonized with the active promotion of the general happiness? And second, If benevolent conduct is in its basic incentive and final justification prudential, how are we to explain and to justify the supreme self-sacrifice which actually evokes supreme praise?

For the solution of the first problem, Tucker relies on his favorite principle of 'translation' or association of ideas, which had already enabled him to explain and dispose of the moral sense. Feelings are contagious; we catch our affections from our fellows. As children aping their elders, or as pupils imitating the ways and manners of their masters, so we come to find ourselves in others, are satisfied in being esteemed by them, and so come to seek their well-being, which in turn earns their complaisance. We come to expect from ourselves what we value in others and what they value in us, general agreeableness and active benevolence.

Even if we overlooked the unresolved difficulties in this account of the genesis of sympathy and benevolence, the crucial examples of self-sacrifice unto death confront us, and Tucker is too candid to neglect the issue which they raise. Tucker admits his quandary. In terms of the pursuit of happiness Regulus cannot be sustained in his preference to die for his country and so terminate all his satisfaction which presumably is the aim and fruit of his love of his country or of any other virtue. But clearly this cannot be the last word, and the sage of Betchworth Castle promises his reader a better refrain in the sequel. A great many other stories have to be told in the meantime, and the reader is kept waiting for over eleven hundred pages, but finally the promise is redeemed. As Butler, in his vindication of Divine Providence, found in the very incompleteness of moral retribution in this life the assurance of immortality, so Tucker finds in the life hereafter a providential

scope of satisfaction that could justify martyrdom for virtue as a wise hedonistic venture.

For this conclusion Tucker leans on religious faith, but it is to be a reasoned faith. Certainly infinite God cannot do anything by halves: he is either infinitely good or infinitely bad. For Tucker as for Hartley, the latter alternative is idle, so we must start with the assured assumption of God's infinite goodness. Our perplexity over the evils in this life and especially over undeserved suffering must then be due to our lack of comprehension, to insufficient perspective. In eternity Divine goodness is certainly bound to vindicate the virtuous. Regulus will surely be justified in the sequel. "All the good a man does stands placed to his account, to be repaid him in full value when it will be most useful to him: so that whoever works for another, works for himself; and by working for numbers, earns more than he could possibly do by working for himself alone." [10] Thus Tucker justifies present self-denial for the sake of future greater enjoyment. What he believes about Regulus he trusts also for himself. He has poured out his life into his seven volumes, for the good of mankind. But, he says in the closing sentence of his work, "I shall conclude with a wish well becoming a selfish person, which is, that this in any manner may prove wholesome bread, which I cast upon the waters, for I do not fear to find it again after many days."

5. *Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy*

In the Preface to his *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* William Paley (1743-1805) bestows lavish praise on Abraham Tucker, in whose work he says he has found more original thinking and observation than in all others put together. He counts it his merit to have presented "in more compact and tangible masses" the wisdom diffused in Tucker's seven volumes. This is only candid on Paley's part; but, while he thus could and did almost carve his book out of Tucker, the kernel or else the design of it had already been supplied for him in Gay's *Dissertation.* There can be no question of originality in Paley: expanding Gay and compressing Tucker, he wrote a successful textbook of ethics: eighteen editions in twenty-five years.

The incentive to action which Paley recognizes is pleasure. "Whatever is expedient, is right. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation to it." May one, then, rob a miser to give his money to the poor? Paley answers all such objections by saying that "these actions, after all, are not useful, and for that reason, and that alone, are not right." We are kept in the straight path of duty, respectful of the interests of others by essentially prudential

considerations. We recognize that in God's sight we are all meant to promote the general happiness of mankind. But we are moved to promote this divine project by considering what God has in store for those who do and for those who oppose his will. Between common prudence and moral duty the difference is one in range of calculation: "In the one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world; in the other case, we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come." Assured on grounds of religion that after this life there will be some distribution of rewards and punishments, Paley regards the province of morality to be concerned with the great question, "What actions will be rewarded, and what will be punished?" The thought of heaven and hell is thus the dynamic impelling us to obey the will of the Lord. All this Paley has couched in the neat formula: "Virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness."

To be sure, we are not always consciously worried about going to hell. The best servant almost unconsciously does his master's will; so Paley relies on the formation of good habits to help us meet the difficulty of weighing the general pleasure or pain likely to result from particular deeds. Furthermore the common experience of mankind, as expressed in general rules, or codes of action, is of help to us in supporting and supplementing our own experience. So the motive of individual long-range expediency is, if not genuinely socialized, yet at any rate rendered socially conforming and coöperative. The entire structure of social and political institutions rests on utility: whether general utility, not framed by any special form of government, as in the case of so-called 'natural rights,' or utility specially connected with some particular social-political régime.

In Paley's theological utilitarianism pious virtue would justify itself over the counter. But, whatever may have been believed or professed by the clergy, the growing generality of thinking men were increasingly unmoved by doctrines of hell-fire and paradise. To a more critical generation, this calculating doctrine came to appear not only unconvincing but also unworthy and pernicious. The British conscience came to appreciate the sentiment of Shelley, that he would rather be damned with Plato and Sophocles than go to Heaven with Paley and Malthus. Thus Paley's version of theological utilitarianism, the most outspoken, was also the last one calling for mention.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ETHICS OF SYMPATHY

1. *Hume's Radical Empiricism. The Genesis of Social-Mindedness*

David Hume (1711-1776) described his *Treatise of Human Nature* as "an attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects." This view of Hume's enterprise reveals his ambition and aim, his broad conception of morals, and his definite choice of philosophical method. May we perhaps say that Hume, like Samuel Clarke, aspired to be the Newton of the mind? Hume regarded the Newtonian method as consistent empiricism: resistance to dogmatic theory, confidence in experimental enquiry, a fair recognition of ignorance. The outstanding merits of this method in physical science aroused his zeal to use it in the study of human nature.

Two principles of Hume's procedure should be noted. In the first place, all supernatural or metaphysical sanctions in morals are ruled out, any reference to a Divine law imposed on man. We may speak of good and evil, virtue and vice, but not of sin and righteousness. Morality is to be studied in the everyday course of human nature, virtue and vice being different but alike natural. This principle distinguishes Hume from all theological moralists and from all Platonists or other metaphysicians in ethics. In his treatment of morals he meant to remain throughout a consistent empiricist.

It is in this steady resistance that Hume shows his second principle of ethical procedure. He does not delay to raise the question "whether it be possible, from reason alone, to distinguish betwixt moral good and evil, or whether there must concur some other principles to enable us to make that distinction." [1] Reason ascertains resemblances, contrarieties, degrees in quality, proportions in quantity and number; but the discovery of these would not yield a moral judgment. The perception of a relation is itself not praise or blame, and moreover the same essential relation may obtain in other circumstances where a moral judgment may be entirely ruled out. We abhor Nero's murder of his mother Agrippina. Now state rationally the relation involved in matricide, and then consider the case of an oak or elm sapling which gradually overtops and destroys the parent tree. Is that also abhorrent? Or

consider ingratitude; what is the relation exhibited in ingratitude which constitutes it evil? Is it the contrariety of returning indifference or even evil for good? But if I were to return good for evil, the relation of contrariety would remain, yet my conduct would be highly laudable.

The main point of Hume is that good and evil, virtue and vice, quite escape you so long as you are bent on considering objects or relations. It is not by reason or by reasons that we proceed from matter of fact to morality, from analysis to approval, from 'is' to 'ought.' "When you pronounce any action of character to be vicious, you mean nothing, but that from the constitution of your nature you have a feeling or sentiment of blame from the contemplation of it." [2]

Virtue, then, is "whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation," and vice the opposite. Having thus "easily ascertained . . . the distinct boundaries and offices of *reason* and of *taste*," [3] Hume is confronted with two problems: to identify more definitely the feeling or sentiment of moral approval or disapproval; and to note the characteristic features of actions or situations which arouse the moral sentiment. It is in dealing with these problems, involving him in the characteristic issues of eighteenth century ethics, that his own distinctive position is outlined.

A moralist who urges the claims of taste, of feeling and moral sentiment, and takes his stand in the main with the moral sense philosophers, may be expected to indicate more precisely his relation to Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. But he must first of all meet the Hobbist challenge that there is no such native internal taste or sentiment, that all so-called moral reactions are derivative and artificial. He must refute likewise the claims of the egoistic school generally that all motivation is ultimately selfish.

In the *Treatise* Hume may seem to be making concessions to the Hobbist. He confesses himself forced to allow that the sense of justice and injustice arises artificially, though necessarily, from education and human conventions. He does point out that selfishness has received exaggerated emphasis in some systems, yet admits it to be the most considerable faculty in the natural temper of man. The progress of Hume's thought, nevertheless, is towards more emphatic negation of egoistic ethics. Mandeville's sophisms repel him, and his more mature critique of Hobbism is decidedly radical. While never descending to personal abuse of his opponents, he cannot refrain from expressing his scorn for their principle "that all benevolence is mere hypocrisy, friendship a cheat, public spirit a farce, fidelity a snare." [4]

Self-interest is a factor, but not to the exclusion of all else in motivation. We are moved to praise actions performed in very distant ages

and remote countries, which obviously cannot engage our self-interest; we are deeply moved by recitals of generosity or infamy of imagined characters in novels and dramas; a bitter enemy may by a noble deed exact from us a tribute of admiration. Far from being a mere pretense in men, the natural feeling of kindness may be observed even in animals. Sexual love engenders a good-will distinct from any desire for self-gratification. Parental tenderness and self-forgetful devotion, genuine gratitude, friendly benevolence: only partisan distortion of the facts of life can ignore the reality of these. Nowise denying the strength of self-engrossment, a true philosophy must give due recognition to humanity and friendship, else it is more like a satire than a true account of human nature. What is the first origin of these humane sentiments, why we have them, Hume the empiricist is reluctant to probe too deeply. He is content to recognize them as genuine principles in our nature. The further inquiry of ultimate explanation he leaves to the metaphysicians.

So much for Hume's reply to Hobbes. Referring again to the two problems which confronted Hume, we may now consider his closer delineation of the moral sentiment, and, if not his statement of its ultimate origin, at least his psychological account of its development and social cultivation; and also his survey of the characteristic features and consequences of actions which engage this moral sentiment and fellow-feeling.

2. *Justice and Benevolence*

The peculiar articulation of Hume's doctrine of sympathy is well shown in his treatment of justice. What accounts for our approval of just acts, for our recognition of the claim to justice? What motive have I to be just? This motive must be natural, general, and strong enough to counteract the incitement of immediate gain and advantage. The operation of this motive, making the virtue of justice possible, requires a social order, both the conditions and the felt need of it. Were nature lavish in providing for all our needs without trial or hazard on our part, there would be no conflict of interests and no occasion for justice. Again, in the crisis of war or in cases of great emergency or natural disaster, when the available means of sustenance are utterly inadequate to the pressing general need, individual claims are set aside without any protest. The individual's loyal subordination to claims of justice implies an order of social relations, private enterprise and property and recognized advantages of social security, dependence on others and coöperation. The respect for mine and thine, stability of contracts and fidelity to obligations: these are the results

of gradual tradition, conventional like language and the use of money.

Our natural demand for the secure enjoyment of our possessions makes us support the stability of the social order. Shall we say that the motive here is only enlightened selfishness? Were Hume to answer this question by a simple affirmative, he would be going the way of Hobbes. And Hobbes would have good reasons for his answer, were it not for the fact that we not only submit to the demands of justice but also praise justice as a virtue; so we not only keep our promises but also approve loyal respect for one's word. The sense of personal involvement and interest may continue to govern many particular transactions, but men gradually come to recognize the essential advantages of justice to the public good. The general concerns of society engage the support of individuals; men come to identify themselves with the principle of justice to all. Injustice anywhere disturbs us: this uneasiness makes us disapprove of an unjust act, whether it hurts us personally or not. The approval of justice which sympathy engenders is cultivated and confirmed by social influence. Emulation, our desire for the approval of others, our concern for our good name strengthen adherence and then loyalty to socially-minded conduct. So not only by a more broadly socialized view of individual conduct, but also by very contagious social influence, by sympathy and comparison, men come to feel concern for the public interest; they become socially-minded and praise socially-minded acts.

Our active concern for the general welfare receives greater emphasis in Hume's later thought. In the *Treatise* he sets up justice as the principal social virtue, alongside of which he briefly discusses some others. But in his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* the balance inclines definitely towards benevolence. In the earlier work, Hume had been conceding to Hobbes the derivation of justice from self-interest; in the later, while his derivation is not rejected, generous feeling receives greater notice, and in the conception of virtue the humane note assumes dominance over the just. Sympathy is now conceived not so much as the process whereby self-regarding emotion and practice develop into altruistic, but more simply or rather more vaguely comes to designate genuine kindliness and benevolence.

3. Hume's Relation to Utilitarianism

As has been noted, Hume refuses to admit any rationalistic statement of the good or virtue. In his account of benevolence and of sympathy in relation to justice, he would trace, if not the first origin and the genesis of the moral sentiment, at least its natural basis in the sociality of man and some of the characteristics of its normal procedure. But,

while it may be that "to have the sense of virtue is nothing but to *feel* a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character," is not Hume misleading when he adds, "we go no farther; nor do we enquire into the cause of the satisfaction"? [5] For clearly the process of this satisfaction does engage his interest, and likewise the occasion, if not the cause, of the satisfaction. The question normally arises: An act may be good in that it is approved by the moral sense: well, but what does characterize acts which earn this approval? Though Hume might have been reluctant to consider the question thus stated, he does as a matter of fact have a great deal to say by way of an answer.

If we observe the qualities of acts or traits of character which we approve in a man, we find them to be of four sorts. They may be qualities useful to the person himself or to others, or else qualities agreeable to himself or to others. Diligence and quick penetration in an individual rouse our admiration, as his integrity, justice and humanity command our respect. His courtesy, suavity, gentility, which make him socially agreeable, we value as well as the more intimate cheerfulness and serenity agreeable to the man himself. In our approval of men we thus seem to be alike interested and disinterested. Without entering into "that vulgar dispute concerning the degrees of benevolence or self-love, which prevail in human nature," Hume is content to recognize that there is "some particle of the dove kneaded into our frame, along with the elements of the wolf and serpent." As a matter of empirical fact we do approve whatever may be useful or agreeable to ourselves or to others. The good or valuable thus seems, if not to reduce, at any rate to disclose itself as the useful or the enjoyable.

Do we thus proceed, after all, to a utilitarian statement of moral values? If "the chief spring or actuating principle of the human mind is pleasure or pain" [6] and we value either what yields or what indirectly leads to pleasure, are the moral sentiment and sympathy or benevolence intended merely to signify our capacity to appreciate the pleasant and the useful disinterestedly, in the experience of others as well as in our own? Pleasure, utility, happiness would then constitute moral value, and those would be right who describe Hume's ethics as "the classic statement of English Utilitarianism . . . in its unmistakable form." [7] This estimate, however, does appear to run counter to Hume's expectation of himself as a moralist. The hedonist, egoistic or universalistic, defines the life worth living in terms of pleasure. It is good in that it yields happiness. But Hume explicitly ruled out any reduction of the moral judgment to a rational analysis or to any other statement of objective qualities. The useful and the agreeable attract and please us, but it is

the approval of these by the moral sentiment which constitutes them good. Hume's growing anxiety to distinguish his view from Hutcheson's doctrine of the moral sense as a special faculty, his empiricist treatment of our morally judging capacity, should not mislead us as to his stand on the basic issue. His ethics is and remains an ethics of sentiment. But there are utilitarian tendencies in Hume, and the passages in his writings which admit of utilitarian interpretation are not to be dismissed as mere digressions.

This matter may perhaps be cleared somewhat if we consider the utilitarian interpretation of Hume as expressed with characteristic sharpness by Leslie Stephen: "Utility is the moral force of gravitation. Qualities are admired as useful or agreeable." [8] How are we to understand the "as" in this passage? Can Hume be interpreted to mean that a quality is admirable (that is, good) because it is useful and pleasant; or that our recognition of a quality as useful or agreeable necessarily requires that we also recognize it as admirable and good; or that a quality being useful and agreeable causes it to be admired; or else that the qualities which we do approve and admire may in fact be observed to be useful and agreeable? Hume's empiricist unwillingness to go beyond or behind the last two of these four alternatives, and his evident hesitation about the third, seem to explain alike his interest in the utilitarian doctrine and his inability to adopt it as by itself an adequate statement of the basis of moral value. We may say that, while Hume does offer a hedonistic description of that which we approve as good, yet for him moral approval is due to a sentiment whose origin and genesis we may try to probe, but whose verdict is in any case the final warrant of moral value.

Another problem may be noted here. We may inquire in just what sense is the approval which the moral sentiment bestows on whatever is useful or agreeable to oneself or to others a warrant of moral value? What would justify me in preferring my approval to yours; what would justify you in urging me that I ought, am morally bound, to reject my approval in favor of yours? Just because the approval in question does not depend for its sanction or worth upon any reasons that can be cited, so it cannot admit of being constrained. Shall we then say that morality is a matter of individual sentiment or taste about which there can be no dispute, each man simply judging for himself? Hume would answer that, while a sentiment cannot be constrained or altered on demand, it may yet be wrong, 'in bad taste,' if it happens to be opposed to the invariable or general sentiment or judgment of most people, especially of the most cultivated. But as individuals vary or develop in their sentiments, so do societies. If we apply the test just

proposed in our estimate of societies and cultures, shall we accord the preference to the type of sentiment and approval which the large majority of our ancestors, near and remote, have favored? Individual and social evaluation on this plan would surely lead to some startling conclusions, and also to some perplexities in dealing with the problems of progress and degradation. In the absence of any objective universal moral standard, are we to avoid Sophistic anarchy and moral scepticism by seeking refuge in some general consensus of public opinion? But is it not a fact that moral no less than intellectual advance and reform have and must have their pioneer? The failure, on Hume's basis, to deal adequately with this outstanding fact of moral experience, with the heroic in conduct and also with the objective and imperative character of the moral judgment, indicates a deficiency in Hume's conception of the nature of morality which corresponds to a similar perplexity in his theoretical philosophy. It is the essential incapacity of mere empiricism to yield defensible principles or universally valid judgments. In moral as well as in theoretical philosophy, Hume, as he rouses the mind from dogmatic slumber, by the very inconclusiveness of his own method prepares the way but also imposes the demand for a Kant.

4. Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments

In the early philosophical development of Adam Smith (1723-1790), his teacher Francis Hutcheson was a directive factor. He turned Smith's outlook from Calvinist theology to philosophical humanitarianism and confirmed him in liberal convictions. But while Adam Smith lauded Hutcheson's ethics as, of all altruistic theories, "undoubtedly, beyond all comparison, the most acute, the most distinct, the most philosophical, and . . . the soberest and most judicious," he could not remain satisfied with the intuitionism of the moral sense doctrine nor with Hutcheson's neglect of the self-regarding virtues. Adam Smith's friend, whom he also recognized as his greatest contemporary, David Hume, had described moral experience in terms of pleasurable sympathetic emotion. But while the acts we approve are those useful or agreeable to ourselves or to others, the characteristic feeling which motivates the approval is not merely a recognition of pleasantness or utility. We may like but we do not necessarily approve of all that is agreeable or useful. Surely, "it seems impossible . . . that we should have no other reason for praising a man than that for which we commend a chest of drawers." Thus, while Adam Smith would go beyond Hutcheson's affirmation of the moral sense, to analyze and explain it, he is not convinced by Hume's account of the motivation of moral approval, and he finds virtue to be more complex and its range wider than either his "never-to-be-for-

gotten" master or his "ingenious and agreeable" friend had thought.[9]

Seeking his way in ethical theory, Adam Smith would survey the field of available doctrines by raising the two questions which he regarded as fundamental in morals: Wherein does virtue consist; and, secondly, By what power or faculty in the mind is it approved by us?

Virtue must be ascribed either to the proper control and direction of the emotions, or else to the prevailing of some one kind of emotion. Now emotions or affections are basically either selfish or benevolent, and accordingly, if virtue is to be described in terms of the predominance of some one kind of emotion, we get ethical theories which exalt self-seeking or else altruistic feelings, aiming respectively at one's own satisfaction or at the happiness of others. But, if virtue is to be ascribed to the proper control and direction of all passions and desires, it would depend upon the objects which we pursue and the degree of vehemence with which we pursue them. There are, then, three available theories of the nature of virtue, conceiving of it respectively as prudence, benevolence, and propriety. Theological ethics, which places virtue in obedience to God's will, may be counted as a variety of the ethics of prudence or of propriety. Distinguished from all these are the "licentious systems," like Mandeville's, which seem to dismiss the real distinction between vice and virtue and laugh down the supposedly exalted feelings and professions of men.

Concerning the principle of approbation, of the nature and source of moral judgment, again three theories may be distinguished: "According to some, we approve and disapprove both of our own actions and of those of others, from self-love only, or from some view of their tendency to our own happiness or disadvantage; according to others, reason, the same faculty by which we distinguish between truth and falsehood, enables us to distinguish between what is fit and unfit, both in actions and affections; according to others, this distinction is altogether the effect of immediate sentiment and feeling, and arises from the satisfaction or disgust with which the view of certain actions or affections inspires us. Self-love, reason, and sentiment, therefore, are the three different sources which have been assigned for the principle of approbation." [10]

In his theory Adam Smith is with the advocates of sentiment, but undertakes to derive the moral sentiments from sympathy in a way that again brings out the importance of propriety and of what might be called emotional good taste: not merely compassion, not imitation of another's feelings, but rather the approval of a sentiment which is shared because recognized as appropriate.

Sympathy or fellow-feeling with the emotions of others is an imme-

diate and primal fact of human experience, but its operation admits of observation and analysis. It is not so much the view of the emotion itself which arouses sympathy as the view of the situation in which it is excited. It is not the actual feeling of another we share, but, observing his situation, we imagine ourselves in it; we judge his feelings by what ours would be in like circumstances. Thus we may blush for the rudeness of another who does not blush: not sharing his feeling of shame, but rather disapproving of his lack of it: ashamed for him. The boor may be unaware of his coarseness, the orphan infant of his bereavement, the madman of his wretched state. To approve of a person means to declare to ourselves that, were we in his place, we should want to feel as he does; to disapprove of him, means similarly to declare to ourselves the excess or deficiency or otherwise the inappropriateness of his emotion.

This sense of propriety may express itself in actual shared feeling. We should and indeed we do feel with others; if we are actively sensible of the reasonableness of someone's disappointment or vexation or grief, we find ourselves feeling with him. But our approval may not express itself in actual feeling: where another emotion happens to dominate us at the moment, we may content ourselves with the calm perception of the propriety of the other's feelings. A bereaved person may not share in the gaiety of a strange company or in the frolic of children unaware of his grief. Were he not in his present depressed mood, he would laugh with the rest; as it is, though he may not laugh, yet he recognizes the jest or the frolic as laughable and does not disapprove. Quite different would be his reaction if the gaiety had impressed him as deliberate disregard of his grief. *He* would never have shown similar indifference, and accordingly *their* callousness arouses his disapproval.

This fellow-feeling is doubly agreeable. You are pleased to find my jest amusing, and so am I, thus to find response in you. It is as the harmony of two strings vibrating together. The opposite is disagreeable discord. Mutual sympathy is thus a source of pleasure, and in our dealings with each other we seek to meet and overcome the obstacles to it. Now in this relation of ourselves to others, where a certain disparity of feeling is always bound to obtain, a double tension is involved and, corresponding to it, a duality of eventual virtues. On the one hand, we may try to enter more sympathetically into the feelings of others, to imagine ourselves more thoroughly in another's place and see eye to eye with him. On the other hand, we actually or in thought expect and demand that he manage or modify his emotions to harmonize them

with what ours would be in his place. The former endeavor approved in ourselves expresses itself in "the soft, the gentle, the amiable virtues, the virtues of candid condescension and indulgent humanity"; in the latter demand we contemplate "the great, the awful, and respectable virtues, the virtues of self-denial, of self-government." [11]

From his study of the sense of propriety Adam Smith now turns to consider the merit or the demerit of actions. We sympathize with another's emotions when we judge them suitable to the situation or cause which arouses them. Our judgment of merit and demerit depends upon the end which the emotion in question proposes or the effect which it tends to produce. Is it beneficial or hurtful? Is the agent a proper object of gratitude and deserving a reward, or the proper object of resentment and so punishable? But it is not the mere fact that your action is beneficial which makes us approve of it as meritorious. We take account of your motive; gratitude is the moral response to intended benefits. Contrariwise, though we may experience or observe the hurt, yet we do not morally resent it if we recognize it as unintentional. The sense of merit and demerit thus appears to be a sentiment compounded of two emotions: a direct sympathy with or antipathy to the sentiment of the agent, and our indirect sympathy with the gratitude or resentment of those who are benefited or hurt by his actions.

Moral resentment or indignation is our natural defense against injury. It is the dynamic in our sense of justice and likewise its safeguard. While we approve and reward beneficence, we may not exact it; but justice may be enforced. In the race of life, we may put ourselves in the place of any competitor, and to each in turn we readily accord full freedom to play his best and do his utmost to outstrip his rivals. But if anyone should jostle or violate fair play, our indulgence is at an end. We cannot share his own unscrupulous preference for his own success at whatever cost to others. If he raise his head against the social order, we sympathize with society and indignantly demand his punishment. We may advocate justice and undertake to vindicate it as necessary to the stability of social life; but the spring of our sense of justice is in the indignation which intended injury arouses.

The operation of sympathy has been examined so far in our judgments of the emotions and actions of others. If we now consider our approval or disapproval of our own feelings and conduct, we find the principle to be the same, and its manner of operation only apparently different. To pass judgment on myself I must regard myself as if I were another. Before Robert Burns sang of the Louse:

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!

Adam Smith affirmed man's manifestation of such a faculty in every moral judgment of himself. And this is what in fact takes place. "I divide myself, as it were, into two persons; . . . I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of." This self-judgment is more searching than the judgment of another, and its verdict is more decisive. Another man, sympathetically putting himself in my place, may approve of me, judging my emotions suitable and proper. I enjoy and seek this sympathy and the love and praise which follow. But my enjoyment of the love and praise may be marred by the knowledge which I alone may possess, that they are not quite deserved; since those bestowing them have not really entered into my inmost feeling. The approval of others is always in a certain measure unwarranted. The one who sees and understands all is "the man within . . . the demigod within the breast." If this perfectly informed and impartial spectator praises us, then our act is not only praised but praiseworthy. The approval of others may be unmerited and their disapproval undeserved; all-important is our own self-judgment, the verdict of conscience. So "man naturally desires, not only to be loved but to be lovely; . . . he naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful." [12]

The desire for praiseworthiness, the horror of blameworthiness, may thus become dominant emotions in our moral experience; and it is our own sympathy with ourselves, the sustaining approval of our own conscience, which alone can satisfy us in the end. Conscience has its own rewards and penalties whereby it maintains its control over our lives. When a violent passion may lure us to spurn the admonitions of the impartial spectator, we are punished with remorse; contrariwise, though the world may not know or appreciate, our conviction of a clear conscience is our bedrock of inner peace. Unmerited praise is accounted hollow satisfaction, and the desire for it, or even the acceptance of it, is due to contemptible vanity. Undeserved condemnation is hard to bear, but even more intolerable is the guilty sense of blameworthiness. The horror of it may weigh on a man for years until finally, overcoming the dread of public blame and even of the direst penalty, cause him openly to confess himself a despicable criminal.

But our conscience may be misguided, partisan and fanatical. To guard us against self-deceit, while conscientiously trying to see our way clear, we should remember that others like us have sought the way; we should keep in sight the beaten paths of common human

experience. These are the general rules of conduct, the summed up results and precepts of long trial. In our cool hour we see ourselves as bound not to ignore these rules, which may prove saving restraints to us in the flaming moments of passion. Though we are not satisfied with ourselves unless our conscience approves of our acts and sentiments, yet we urge the impartial spectator in our breast to be guided by the general rules of established morality, to make sure before taking a stand. The respect for these general rules of morality is, according to Adam Smith, our sense of duty. In our growing respect for them we may even come to regard them as more than the broad conclusions of human experience; they appear to us as the laws of God. Men may be deceived by infamous pretensions, or may blindly and unjustly oppress defenseless virtue; but God's verdict is always perfectly just. And it is the final one. This last point is emphasized by Adam Smith. Religion with its prospect of immortality "can alone strike terror into triumphant vice, affords the only effectual consolation to disgraced and insulted innocence." [13]

5. *Smith's Account of the Cardinal Virtues*

If we consider the actions which we judge with approbation, we find that they promote either the agent's own happiness or that of others. Adam Smith accordingly distinguishes the Virtues of prudence and beneficence. Of these we may perhaps say that prudence is a respectable, and beneficence an admirable and ennobling virtue. The lower prudence, concerned merely with the care of one's health, fortune, and reputation, arouses but cold esteem; while beneficence, whether to those whom Nature has specially entrusted to our care and attention, the society or nation to which we owe allegiance, or all mankind, evokes grateful love and admiration. The moral worth of prudence is affected by the emotions which direct it. In alliance with other virtues, it may lead to high moral achievement. But neither prudence nor beneficence or justice are to be attained by the mere knowledge of the rules. Not only to know virtue but also to act virtuously requires self-command, mastery over the passions: over the driving passions of fear and anger, and over the seductive passions of love of ease, of pleasure of applause. Thus self-command leads to the high qualities of courage (fortitude, manhood, strength of mind) and temperance (decency, modesty, moderation). These qualities of character enable us to do our duty.

Though Adam Smith regards prudence as a virtue inferior to beneficence, yet he recognizes its place in the moral life. His ethics is not, like that of his master Hutcheson, explicitly altruistic. This point

should be kept clearly in mind, else a misinterpretation of the rôle of sympathy and an exaggerated emphasis on the praise of beneficence in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* would involve us in grave perplexities when we turn to Adam Smith's more famous work on *The Wealth of Nations*. The 'Adam Smith problem' has arisen from an alleged conflict of basic principles in these two treatises: the ethical theory seemingly exalting sympathy and beneficence, the economic doctrine recognizing throughout the normal operation of self-interest. Accordingly a shelf of books has been written to resolve this grievous conflict. Many of the earlier critical works on Adam Smith, taking note of his sojourn in France during some of the years following the publication of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and prior to the appearance of *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) explained the apparent radical difference in social philosophy between them as due to the influence of French economists. Most of this sort of reasoning has gone by the board since Edwin Cannan's publication of Adam Smith's university *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms*, showing him as maintaining in his early Glasgow days substantially the same economic views which we find developed at greater length later in *The Wealth of Nations*. French economists and social philosophers helped Adam Smith to expand and substantiate the views which he held; but he did not owe to them his main principles.

Adam Smith's ethics is not a mere variant of Hutcheson's: neither in his analysis of sympathy nor in his account of virtue does he neglect the self-regarding emotions. But he does not regard benevolence as merely reflected or astute selfishness, and sympathy as only imaginatively projected self-regard. Man judges others by himself and himself by others. Though prudence is inferior to beneficence, yet it is for Adam Smith a real virtue, and when properly combined with other virtues may constitute the noblest of characters. A merely prudent man may not have a lively sense of his obligations to others and to the social order. The stern pressure of the law may keep him within bounds; his acts may thus be within the requirements of justice without springing from an actively just spirit. Or he may be aware of obligations which he cannot in good conscience neglect, and thus may in point of fact promote the welfare of others. Or yet he may be in motive and action beneficent. Between the non-violation of justice and the active espousal of beneficence is the gamut of gradually maturing socialized-moral personality.

Different situations and social relations stimulate variously the moral development of the individual. In certain circumstances courage is aroused; in others, temperance wavers; in some relations, the appeal to

beneficence, in others the call for prudence comes to the fore. So sometimes man may prudently rely on the beneficent good will and indulgence of others, and again he may find it more reliable to make sure that it is worth their while to promote his interests. *The Wealth of Nations* is concerned with the entire lives of men and their dealings with each other, in so far as these concern the rise or decline of prosperity. In this field of the human enterprise, self-interest prevails over other motives, and the appeal must be to it. But this need not mean that economics runs counter to ethics; it may only mean that the moral range of human relations and motives transcends the economic. In trade men reckon on and with each other, but their first thought is of profit and loss, and this thought governs their subsequent thought of others. "Man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favor, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. . . . It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages." [14]

6. *The Doctrine of Laissez Faire*

The motive in the economic enterprise is the promotion of self-interest in competition with others. But the competitors are not necessarily hostile; there is a mutuality, an almost-partnership in the rivalry. Good trading is advantageous to both parties. Though moved by self-interest and appealing to the similar interest of others, men yet serve each other. It is service and advantage that they exchange. It is bad business to take too much advantage of others; a fair exchange is the best policy in the end; one who intends to continue in trade cannot afford to cheat. While a merchant may wish for special privilege, he is bound to admit that in the long run his own interests would be best served by the assurance of non-interference with competition, which on the whole would most likely give a fair chance to all traders. Free competition might ruin some; but "to take care of this is the business of the parties concerned, and it may safely be trusted to their discretion." The universal desire of men to better their condition is the reliable dynamic. "Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of the society, which he has in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally, or

rather necessarily leads him to prefer that employment which is most advantageous to the society." [15]

The program of *laissez faire* is thus justified: it pilots trade in the channel of reliable advantage, and in any case it gives the public the best traffic. The required mutuality of benefit is a safeguard against rapacious selfishness. Enlightened economics, instructing the individual to recognize this mutuality, points towards the more positively social development of human nature and to the higher moral virtues. It is a stupid trader that would impoverish his customers. It is a misguided manufacturer that would neglect the health and welfare of his workmen. Not only in commerce but also in industry Adam Smith would lead men from the blind pursuit of immediate profit to that more enlightened prudence which respects justice and fair play and does not forget the inevitable mutuality of any lasting advantage. As he opposes monopolies and advocates free trade, so he urges at least common regard for the workmen's needs. "No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable. It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed and lodged." [16] As Adam Smith thus appeals to the masters to heed the dictates of reason and humanity, so he champions a broadminded policy of live and let live in international relations. As a Britisher he would like to see France and other European nations prosperous. The prosperity of France, beneficial to herself, is advantageous to every nation with which she trades.

So industry, commerce, domestic and foreign, while impelled by self-interest, yet disclose the larger social order in the respect for which alone each individual can live his own life to the full. The economic system, like the legal, concerns relations between men which are not calculated to bring out the fullest social-moral nature of man into play or give expression to man's noblest virtues. But even in these fields of common prudence and strict justice men must reckon with that mutuality and community of interests and satisfactions, the fuller experience of which, by the operation of sympathy, leads to the perception of propriety and merit and the attainment of the higher virtues of social beneficence.

The complacent strain in this account of human conduct is partly a reflection of the optimism of the Enlightenment, partly dictated by theological considerations. God's benevolent omnipotence and all-wisdom assures us of the greatest possible quantity of happiness. And Adam Smith seems certain that mankind is predominantly happy. Though he

notes wretchedness in this world, and would explain it, yet he counts it exceptional and avoidable. To be happy, man does not require much, and contentment is within our reach and is actually attained by most of us: "What can be added to the happiness of the man who is in health, who is out of debt, and has a clear conscience?" [17] Men are not perfect, but in their own way, without undue interference in trade or in the more intimate personal relations, they slowly yet surely attain a social order of mutual advantage, of propriety and active beneficence. Even in his advocacy of reforms Adam Smith is characterized by respectable placidity and patient indulgence.

CHAPTER XIX

THE FRENCH ENLIGHTENMENT



1. *Voltaire*

The strong reaction of Voltaire (1694-1778) against dogmatic rationalism and his advocacy of experimental science inclined him towards occasional materialistic utterance, but his real position is one of distrust of all ultimates. Trace all thinking back to its empirical sources; recognize the bodily-physiological basis of all sensation: the problem of the essential nature of unthinking and thinking beings still remains on our hands, insoluble. We perceive, think, will, act; but how all this takes place or can take place passes comprehension.

Thus ignorant of our own nature or of the nature of any thing, what can we know about ultimate cosmic order? Voltaire follows Locke in affirming an intelligent supreme Being at the heart and helm of things, but he resists any confident or detailed doctrine of Divine Providence. The ways of God's grace and justice are past finding out. If we with naïve anthropomorphism attribute to Deity our ideas of justice and benevolence, the experiences of human life confute our presumption; and, if we undertake to include the disturbing facts in a reasonable view of Divine Providence, our theodicy proves unequal to the strain. Voltaire's own initially optimistic teleology was undermined and wrecked; his thought proceeded towards disturbed confusion, which burst into protest in his poem on the Lisbon earthquake. Voltaire listed all the proposed justifications of this and similar calamities, and found them all unavailing. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "I am like a doctor, I know nothing." Anguished perplexity turned him violently against all suave theodicy. The doctrine of this best of possible worlds was subjected to irony and ridicule, most blighting in *Candide, or Optimism*. "If this is the best of possible worlds, what must the others be like?"

In the face of so much stupid evil and undeserved suffering, what are we to do? Candide's answer is the answer of Voltaire, and it reveals the practically positive and constructive side of his thought. "Let us cultivate our garden!" Scepticism in theory does not upset Voltaire's steady assurance in practice. Reluctant in metaphysics, he is firm in ethics. He doubts the goodness of nature, but never wavers about the

nature of goodness. Distrustful of our powers or our prospects, he is positive about our task as human beings. This task, which is likewise our only real opportunity, is God-given and universal; it is the basis of social order and is itself socially-minded activity.

As John Morley reminds us, "Voltaire's intelligence was practical rather than speculative." [1] The real province of our thought is not theory but conduct. And for this practical end we are well equipped. All mankind shares certain fundamental demands and scruples, which constitute the sound heart of morality. Diverse experience and reflection lead men's natural piety to formulate clashing theologies. But, while ritual and creed may differ, the basic moral demand and intention abide. "Dervish, fakir, bonze and talapoin, all declare everywhere: 'Be just and beneficent.' " [2]

These two, justice and beneficence, are the pillars of Voltaire's morality. If justice and injustice are what we respect and abhor, beneficence is what we cherish. Our own native desire for happiness attaches us to everyone who promotes the general welfare. But we should go quite astray were we to conclude that our moral approval of active benevolence in others springs from our own native selfishness. It is not mere greed that urges us to value and admire certain acts, nor are the principles which we respect mere formulas of selfish convenience. Man feels himself one with others because in nature and in fact he is one; in this life of distress he feels the need of others; he recognizes that others have a just claim on him; he honors and cherishes any act of beneficence.

Native though the sense of justice and regard for beneficence are in man's soul, tyranny, priestly bigotry and superstition have distorted justice and dulled benevolence in human society. Voltaire does not proceed from this reflection to general condemnation of civilization and a plea for a return to primitive innocence, after the manner of Rousseau. On the contrary, he reaffirms his confidence in enlightenment; he combats despotism, dogmatism, intolerance. Calas, Sirven, Lally, all victims of ecclesiastic and judicial iniquity, find in him a stalwart champion; his house becomes a refuge for the oppressed; by argument, satire and ridicule he would dislodge and destroy the evil powers on earth. His motto is a war-cry of human emancipation: "*Crush the infamous!*"

It were idle to ignore the stains on this warrior's banner: colossal vanity, mendacity, insatiate greed for money and for distinction, obscenity, servile cringing and unscrupulous vindictiveness, all can be charged against him. Nor may we excuse him by saying he was applying in his own way the precept of his Jesuit teachers, for not always

were his low means justified by a high aim. Yet the increasingly dominant purpose of his life was high and noble: the emancipation of men from the shackles of ignorance, intolerance, injustice and ruinous hatred; the abolition of tyranny, ecclesiastic persecution, and war; the winning of the necessary liberties of men, of body and mind and soul, of property and work, speech and belief and conscience. More than anyone else in his time he struck hard blows at the citadels of fanaticism and iniquity, and abundantly earned the title to which a lesser man, Heinrich Heine, was in a later generation to aspire: "a soldier of humanity."

2. *Vauvenargues' Compassionate Stoicism*

In the lewd frivolity and moral decay which characterized French society during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the life and character of Luc de Vauvenargues (1715-1747) exemplify depth of conviction, high ideals and a keen sense of duty, Stoic dignity and fortitude, and the compassion of a noble soul maimed but not crushed by frustration and suffering. Years of futile efforts to find an opportunity for distinguished service to his country, pinched and nagging conditions of daily life, lack of recognition, and then a deluge of illnesses which undermined and swept him away prematurely,—his face disfigured and his constitution blighted by smallpox, his legs gangrened, the result of freezing in a harrowing winter's campaign in Bohemia, his eyesight and his lungs giving way:—all this served to bring out only the more tragically his unyielding and uncomplaining serenity. What distinguishes Vauvenargues is the union of gravity, candor and compassion in his judgment of men. In one of his sketches he described his own attitude towards men: "a humane man who, nowise pretending to be better than other men, is astonished and distressed to find them still more foolish or feeble than himself; who knows their malice but endures it; who can keep on liking a thankless friend or a faithless mistress; who finally finds it less hard to put up with evil doings than to fear or hate his fellowmen or to disturb the world with his unjust and futile severity." [3]

This judgment, straightforward and compassionate, is an account of human nature which aims at being intimate rather than ultimate. His moral reflections are inferences from direct observations; he is an empiricist in ethics. One issue of cosmological import engaged his attention: the problem of freedom of will. His conclusion is explicitly deterministic: our conduct is necessitated throughout. But this universal necessity does not unsettle the reality of moral value. Health and disease, wisdom and folly are good and bad respectively, whether they

be necessary or spontaneous; and God's perfection is not affected by its inevitable necessity.

Moral valuation is thus undisturbed by determinism. Ethical inquiry is rather concerned with the questions, what capacities of moral worth does man possess, and in what aspects of his nature is this worth revealed? In his answer to these questions, Vauvenargues is not content to judge men by their outward behavior. A man's actions and performance are often a misleading expression of his real intentions and might lead to undeserved praise or blame. The consequences of our deeds are not in our power, and the inducement or the impediment to a course of action may often be, as we say, accidents of fortune, or more accurately, determined by factors beyond our control. The baseness or the nobility of men is within; it is in man's sentiment, his heart, the most intimate core of him.

The portrayal of the character and conduct of men, while it frequently exposes the inner corruption of so many outwardly brilliant and even beneficent careers, reveals more often the inner nobility and purity of heart in lives undistinguished, frustrated and futile, or even pursued by an evil fate, blundering and detrimental. The tragedy of this disharmony between feeling and performance Vauvenargues had experienced keenly in his own life. The emphasis on sentiment in his ethics is an expression of his account and estimate of men. Compassionate insight into the heart is dictated by the sense of justice: to do full justice to men, look beneath the surface; the more you understand the heart, the less heartless will be your judgment.

In further opposition to some of his predecessors, especially to La Rochefoucauld, who had sought to explain all human conduct as motivated by selfishness, Vauvenargues distinguishes between egoism, self-seeking and self-centered, and that natural love of self which by expansion of interest and outlook may lead to one's active self-identification with the social welfare. This intentionally generous view of human character admitted of various further development. A more romantic and morally unstable spirit, but a greater genius, Rousseau, in the generation following Vauvenargues, gave a richer and more moving expression to the morals of sentiment and sentimentality alike. A century after Vauvenargues, Dostoyevsky with the insight of Christian charity disclosed the redeeming gleams in the hearts of men brutalized by misery and crime. In Vauvenargues' thought, the emphasis on sentiment was meant to be humane and compassionate but not self-apologetic: in this as in some other respects he differed from Rousseau.[4] He would not be too severe in his judgment of others, nor yield to dull resignation because of his own outwardly undistinguished

career; but all the more searchingly he would probe his feelings to make sure that he was not satisfied with mere externals, that he was really just and generous and pure in heart. In Vauvenargues' moral reflections as in his career, Stoic dignity and fortitude, touched with Christian charity, express nobly and tragically the moral ideals of humanitarianism.

3. Spreading Philosophical Radicalism

Voltaire's career discloses most effectively the incentives, the direction and the aims of that aggressive radicalism which in eighteenth century France assumed the name of 'philosophy.' One dominant factor in particular is exhibited in this movement: the decisive English influence. When Voltaire was removed from the Bastille to England, he came to perceive clearly not only what he was opposing, socially and politically, but also with what he was opposing it. The sharp contrast of English and French conditions incited resistance to the old régime in France, because the English example showed that the hated system could be overthrown and replaced by a better one.

The philosophical radicals believed in the transforming power of ideas, and the first stage of the revolution is a rethinking all along the line, in which again English influence is decisive. Indeed, eighteenth century 'philosophy' has been described as England's gift to France. Overemphasis on this point would, of course, yield a distorted view of the French Enlightenment, which was not merely exotic; but the clear recognition of it serves to bring into bolder relief some of the characteristic features of the movement.

Cartesian rationalism had been adapted and adopted to serve the purposes of theology. The imposing groundwork of alleged eternal truths supported rigid structures of religious and social-political dogmatism. Behind the ramparts of solemn professions, ignoble passions ran riot: bigoted, ruthless, lewd. A Guillaume Dubois might rise to power by pandering to the vices of the great; himself might be rotted with vice, yet was a legate of majesty royal and divine: prime minister, academician, archbishop, cardinal. It were absurd to blame Cartesianism for such a whited sepulchre, but evidently those who undertook to 'crush Infamy' were bound first of all to destroy the citadel of indubitable first principles. The points in dispute could not be prejudged from the start by those in power, once it was established that the intellect had no vested rights in innate truths but earned its conclusions bit by bit in the business of experience. The issue between rationalism and empiricism thus became the issue between reaction and reform. By the grace of John Locke, all principles and privileges had

been laid on the anvil, or almost all, and a new malleable world was in the making.

Locke's very distrust and reluctance in ultimate matters, his deliberately tentative and unfinished philosophy, allowed of various developments in more boldly speculative minds. The preoccupation with experience as the source of all our knowledge led to a Berkeleyan emphasis on mind and its ideas as alone real. The hesitation to proceed beyond the immediately given aroused a Humian distrust of all alleged objective necessary order beyond the flux of experience. The reduction of the complex structure of ideas to the simple sense-impressions accentuated the physiological character of mind and tended towards a materialistic conclusion. All three of these Lockean corollaries received elaboration in French thought, but particularly the last two. More properly, the empiricism of the French Enlightenment proceeded from sceptical resistance to all ultimates, particularly spiritual, towards and then definitely to an increasingly confirmed materialism and atheism. Locke had mentioned tentatively that the distinction between mind and matter may not be final, that God may have endowed some matter with the capacity to think. His French disciples turned the pious conjecture into atheistic doctrine: at a certain level and complexity of bodily organization, thinking takes place, as material a process as digestion, requiring no reference to any mental substance or soul, human or divine.

In terms of ethical restatement, this movement of thought rejects theological dictation and resists all formal rigidity of principle, sceptically reviews the multiplicity of customs and manners and renounces all finality, distrusts explicitly spiritual values and emphasizes the everydayness of morality, its physiological groundwork and social genesis. It is impressed by the driving power of desire in human conduct. In its estimate of the pursuit of happiness, it may subordinate sensual to 'higher' satisfactions, selfish craving to benevolent concern for common justice; but again it considers the frank espousal of sensuality and of self-interest. It trusts in the power of a changed environment, régime, institutions and education, to remake human nature. It is empiricist, radical, revolutionary.

In the study of expanding experience as the moulding of human nature, Montesquieu (1689-1755) emphasized the importance of environment. Men and societies were to be examined in relation to their natural setting. Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws* and Voltaire's *Essay on Customs,* both published about the middle of the eighteenth century, set the tone of its social-historical interpretation. Though proceeding in deductive Cartesian manner, and failing to utilize the full advantages

of a frankly empiricist treatment, the *Spirit of Laws* stimulated direct study of social experience in its environment. His monumental array of data became effective evidence in the writings of others.

Montesquieu's high social position won for his work respectful attention to which undistinguished radicals could not aspire; but it also tempered the tone of his criticism and determined the limits of protest. This is a suave reasonable magistrate. His sense of essential justice is keen, and it is outraged by the manifold iniquity of judicial principles and procedure. He is no visionary; what he advocates has been realized before, in classical antiquity; what he combats can be and has been controlled or even overcome, especially in England. But Montesquieu's is the humanitarianism of a man who is and means to remain an aristocrat: generous, but proud and reserved. He sees human life take social roots deep in a certain environment, and though he would tend the tree and even prune it if need be, yet he would dig at or around the roots very cautiously. Like Jean Bodin before him, he is an advocate of slow gradual reform. The deep sense of solidarity with a long social tradition is to his mind one of the main elements of virtue.

Montesquieu's conception of civic-social virtue allows of expansion beyond state boundaries, civic morality growing into universally social-human. The Stoic discipline of soul and Stoic serene devotion to duty roused his admiration. Stoic likewise, but Christian also, is his view of a moral brotherhood of all men claiming the loyalty of each. He would subordinate his own interest to the interests of his family, and these in turn to the welfare of his country, but above family and country he would consider the higher claims of Europe and of mankind: a generous conviction which is shared by others of that age, and of which Goethe gave the classical expression: "Above all nations is Humanity."

Of particular importance are the specific social reforms which Montesquieu championed, which cause him to rank among the leaders of modern humanitarianism. His philanthropy insisted on certain inalienable human rights which antiquity had for the most part ignored and which, despite the clear recognition of them by the spirit of Christianity, had not been respected in Christendom: the rights of any man whatever to his own person and to his dignity and liberty as a man. Montesquieu assailed slavery and was a leading pioneer in the gradual abolition of it in western civilization. He stigmatized the inhuman treatment of criminals and advocated radical prison reform. He combatted religious persecution and intolerance, and in this civilizing work he had the active alliance of Voltaire. To Montesquieu our modern world owes a great debt alike for his clear and sober exposure

of social iniquities and for his active promotion of what in his day were radical measures of social betterment.[5]

The new ideas of a better and juster world were in the air, bandied about by wit and idler in salon and café, rehearsed by unfrocked ecclesiastics, by demagogue and ne'er-do-well, pondered and cautiously shared by men in high position who could not espouse them openly. The critics of the old order did not all come from without. Malesherbes, generous, fair-minded, was in control of the press, and while officially charged with the suppression of seditious writing, actually treated the Encyclopedists with sympathetic if cautious surveillance. Obliged to issue an order for a search and confiscation of Diderot's papers, he warned him in advance to send his manuscripts to his, Malesherbes', office for safekeeping from prying eyes.

Jean le Rond D'Alembert (1717-1783), learned secretary of the French Academy and a mathematician of eminence, understood thoroughly the meaning of logical proof and did not confuse valid argument with rhetoric either orthodox or radical. He was generally sceptical about ultimate principles, but insisted on the necessity of practical convictions in everyday life, on moral and social order. This necessity need not be inflexible. In dealing with individual rights and duties and with the principles of social order and reform, D'Alembert distinguished between an ideal equity in the distribution of goods and tasks and the minimum requirement of plain justice. So, for example, the division of the total wealth of France equally among all citizens might give each more than is required for bare subsistence: the more imperative, therefore, is the relative necessity of not allowing dismal poverty to continue in a country that has more than enough for all. "Luxury is a crime against humanity, if a single member of society is in dire need and is known to suffer." [6]

Moral worth thus involves a generous devotion to the common good, a capacity for self-sacrifice, active loyalty to justice, religious and social tolerance, resistance to despotism, a sense of responsibility to posterity. These virtues validate themselves in moral experience; they are the conditions of decent happiness; we can appeal to them, and the clear recognition of them may be imparted to the young. D'Alembert advocated a system of secular moral instruction for a coming society that would separate church from state, yet would wisely refuse to dismiss morals along with theology. This moral catechism should teach youth their duties to others, but also the true conception of their opportunities and obligations in life: what they owe morally to themselves. D'Alembert insisted on a consciousness of social responsibility together with a sense of moral self-respect. Young people should be

taught the right degree of regard for the opinion and esteem of others, which is somewhere between the callousness of the scoundrel and the too keen compunction which sometimes embitters the life of virtue.

4. Diderot

Somewhere in his *Salons*, Denis Diderot (1713-1784) said he preferred an artist's sketch to the finished canvas: the pure verve and lightning flash of genius rather than the consistent labored execution of detail. And his own works were portfolios of sketches. Brilliant, suggestive, revealing, inciting, Diderot yet lacked the stability and the thoroughness requisite for abiding construction. To the stimulating quality of his mind was added a generous readiness to start and to do the thinking of others for them. Perhaps his reluctantly systematic mind found comfort when a Helvétius or a Rousseau came to grief telling the whole of a supposed truth, a half of which, in Diderot's conversation, had seemed so convincing. We should not press him for consistency; he would not follow his own suggestions. He described his head as a weathercock. He chose for himself the world-steeple of Paris, where he could catch all the winds of doctrine. But we should not mistake his instability for indolence. His energy was prodigious, tireless, and indomitable; he saw the *Encyclopedia* through, with all its drudgery and vexations, after the systematic and reasonable D'Alembert had given it up. Precisely a work like the *Encyclopedia* suited the ever-swarming beehive that was Diderot's mind.

These qualities of Diderot's thought make him particularly valuable to the historian of ethics as well as to the historian of morals. His ideas and his career are chronicles of the manifold unsettling of the old order and the equally various forecast of the new world that was to be.

He rejects sharply all traditional theism. As he dismisses the Creator of Nature, he gains confidence in its own creative and versatile potencies. God ceases to be a personal, living reality to him, or even a symbol, but more and more clearly does the stuff of being appear to him teeming with inexhaustible capacities. Diderot sees the future in experiment, in direct unveiling of nature, and his mind pursues, though it does not quite grasp, the idea of evolution.

Diderot's ethical views revealed a disturbing duality. On the one hand, he drew away from orthodox ideas of human depravity and expressed an exalted confidence in man's moral capacities; on the other hand, he loosed traditional moral scruples and glossed over sensuality as 'natural.' These two strains of thought conflict and involve Diderot in strange paradoxes. The inner check of his more rational self and the censor's curb might keep him within bounds in his openly published

works: all the more violent were his outbursts when in private letters or in clandestine writings he lets himself go on a moral holiday. For prurience and for utter disregard of decency and social sanity in personal relations, philosophical literature has few things to place alongside some of Diderot's pages.

So we find him with a wave of the hand brushing aside cherished human ideals. Men and women are for him bundles of impulses and desires, creatures of habit; moral deliberation is the seesaw of conflicting wants. Moral freedom is an illusion and a term without meaning; scruples and conscience, shame and remorse, and the sense of duty are shackles of benighted credulity; religious asceticism, a perversion of feeling and will; the disdain or restraint of passion, misguided or even unnatural. Better informed men and women who come to understand the real ways of the human breed will not fatuously curb the course of self-gratification, but will make themselves connoisseurs in appetite. So in various dialogues Diderot explores the realms of sensuality: no reproach, no restraint, no remorse, but vigorous and various avidity; not only the promiscuous practice but the principle of it, openly.

How are we to explain this strain of lubricity in Diderot's writings? The outspoken manners of the age may account for it in a measure. It was the age of *La Pucelle* and of *Tristram Shandy*, and as in our own time the rising generation is treating the surviving Victorians to a revival of it, we may come to understand Diderot better than our fathers did. This, however, is not merely a question of style but of substance. Did the eulogy of voluptuaries express Diderot's own moral temperament? His pruriency appears to be largely intellectual, in line with his consuming curiosity that sought to pierce all veils and barriers. But it was also a part of his onslaught on the ascetic citadel of the Church. In deriding sexual taboos and in eulogizing outspoken passion, he was challenging the entire solemn system of scruples and restraints and timidities on which the iniquitous social power of bigotry rested. Rabelais long before him and Voltaire better than anyone knew the devastating effect of ribald irony. So Dean Swift also rolled his scavenger's cart right through the sanctuaries.

Diderot has another more reasonable view of the moral life; it reflects his generous and socially-minded nature, but it was perplexing, for it necessitated his criticism of the ethical implications of the crass materialistic cosmology towards which his thought was increasingly bound. Assuredly, he declared, moral initiative and self-control and free decision are facts of human conduct; and without them there can be no responsibility or moral judgment. Assuredly there are other

motives to action besides desire for pleasure or the sense of self-interest. Pleasure itself is various, and the most preferable is the pleasure that arouses and seeks to realize the idea of perfection. Passions are driving forces in conduct, but the craved satisfaction is realized most reliably in a life of balance and moderation. Virtue requires the direction of passion by reason. There is in man a sense of the appropriate and a consciousness of good and evil as that which is or is not befitting our character and our human station. There is a sense of social responsibility and social-mindedness, a generous enthusiasm which leads to toil and self-sacrifice for a cherished ideal or noble cause. Justice, charity, loyalty, devotion are no mere words; nor is our contempt of moral cowardice, iniquity, or oppression due to merely selfish motives; nor is our own self-condemnation merely a fear of getting our fingers burned. There is an organization in man and there are principles which make the just man and the rascal what they are.[7]

In the advocacy of these ideas Diderot is emotional and enthusiastic, but neither does he reconcile them with his moral holidays of licentiousness, nor does he attempt to square them with his materialistic cosmology. Somehow, it was to be hoped, naturalism would safeguard human ideals. Meanwhile let men resist the powers of bigotry and obscurantism and trust their destiny to the unbiased inquiry of nature.

5. *Egoistic Hedonism and Social Order*

Scarcely any other writer on the eve of the Revolution worked out the ethical principles of French empiricism so patiently, but also so disturbingly and disagreeably as Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715-1771) in his books *On Mind* and *On Man*. Helvétius used Lockean psychology and theory of knowledge as materials for ethical-social construction, which was his real interest. He disavowed any doctrine of first principles, and would "construct ethics like experimental physics." [8]

Helvétius derives all ideas and the entire character and essence of mind from the data of physical sensibility, and regards all judgments of approval or disapproval as basically motivated by considerations of personal advantage and utility. He undertakes to establish the following theses: (1) Mental capacity or activity in general is not so much the result of original endowment as of experience and education. (2) Our passions are the dynamic in our lives. They quicken wit, recruit energy, incite to action. In particular, men are moved by the sense of their own interest and by the desire for pleasure and satisfaction. Sensible ethics must therefore abandon the hypocritical or at any rate misguided disdain of passion, pleasure, and selfishness, and should rather openly rely on these real springs of action. (3) A stable social order calls for a

system of laws in which concern for the public interest is individually profitable to the citizen. The task of a wise government is thus to align social with individual advantage.

Taking up the first of these theses, mental aptitude and capacity, the direction and energy of our activity, are described as the cumulative results of our experience. Our character is the built-up system of our habits. At the very outset we should note the radical democratic animus of this doctrine. There is no inherent preëminence of worth which distinguishes some individuals or classes or nations from others. Men are made what they are by the lives they live; to change a man's character, tastes, point of view, change his environment. This doctrine, ruling out arrogant complacent noblesse and resigned lowliness, incites social upheaval and realignment. One is reminded of the words of Cassius:

> Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed
> That he is grown so great?

The second main thesis of Helvétius contains the substance of his ethical theory. The first thing a moralist should recognize and keep in mind is that man is a creature of passions, of selfish passions, of desires for pleasure and power. Neglecting to consider the strength of a man's passions confuses our moral estimate of his acts, for virtue always depends on the strength of the passion with which one is contending in deliberation and in choice. The alleged sage may owe his wisdom to his lukewarm passions. In the contest of motives it is not the better reason but the stronger desire which prevails. Passions are in morals what motion is in physics. Avarice, pride, love, hate, envy, lust for power and pleasure, drive and direct man's will. And in all passion the inciting motive is a desire for self-gratification of some sort.

The attraction which an idea or an object has for us is in direct ratio to the advantage which it promises us, and our estimate of the acts of others is dictated by our judgment of how they affect our own interests. Below the veneer of supposedly disinterested approval or condemnation, this substance of all our preferences is disclosed. In valuing the high esteem of others, it is not mere assurance of worth that we seek, but the assured advantage which the esteem of others procures us. And the esteem of others for us is dependent on and proportionate to whatever they may consider to be their own interest in the matter. If a man consults us, he pleases us by thus avowing his inferiority and allowing us to direct his decision as we will. This is subtle flattery which we do not easily resist; and if we do come to detest a flatterer's praise, it is not because we consider it undeserved but because we may

suspect it as insincere. In all our dealing with others, each one is always playing for advantage, for position, and for assurance of satisfaction, which is the spring and goal of all activity.[9]

There is no disinterested passion; the most ardent is the most concerned. Friendship and love are born of need, which determines their intensity. Sympathy is no exception to the rule. If we alleviate the distress of others, it is because we thus relieve our own physical discomfort of seeing others suffer (on the principle on which we dislike and seek to remove anything disagreeable or disgusting), because we invite the pleasure of gratitude which gives us evidence of our own superior state and power, and because we thus secure the esteem of others which benevolence earns. Remorse and repentance similarly spring from a disturbed sense of impending punishment: we begin to fear the frustration of our schemes and so reconsider our course of action. Every passion springs from a demand craving satisfaction; the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain thus color our every opinion and estimate of our own acts and of those of others.

How does the idea of virtue arise from this tissue of opinions and passions all voicing our basic selfish desires? Helvétius undertakes to point out that probity in each sphere of relations is always relative to selfish interests. Almost one third of his book *On Mind* is devoted to the establishment of this point. All actions are judged by us either as useful or harmful or indifferent, and condition respectively our approval or condemnation or utter negligence of them. Be it the judgment of a particular individual or of a special group or society, or of an entire nation, or of the world as a whole, the esteem or disdain of acts always corresponds to the interest or stake which one feels that he has in the matter. Now, from this point of view, I may find it good policy to take account of the interests of others, but how am I to be convinced that I should have genuine respect for the social weal?

We are consistently self-engrossed, Helvétius answers, but we are all aware of the social conditions of our own satisfactions. The hostile scorn of others is a barrier to success or enjoyment, and in their own interest men cannot ignore the importance of social regard or esteem. Though each man basically seeks his own advantage, he is aware of what others expect of him; he makes concessions to that social demand of him, or rather he yields tribute to that regard for the common good which, *in others*, would redound to his own advantage. So, each one of us really demanding his own advantage, we yet agree in collectively approving what is to the general advantage of all. This yields us a definition of virtue and vice as referring respectively to acts socially useful or harmful.

Clearly, then, we have here no genuine social sense. The demand for fair play is a demand to exert our power without undue handicap, is thus a realization that our power could not prevail if handicapped, is in other words a confession of weakness. Justice and equity are prized by those who have to rely on them, but, as men value in themselves preëminence of power over preëminence of justice, so it is not the injustice and the crime of the brigand that we detest but his eventual incompetence to prevail. In craving wealth and glory men and nations really crave power, the assurance of their ability to make their desires prevail. Prevailing and resistless power, as it makes reliance on justice and fair play quite dispensable, also in practice absolves from the corresponding obligations: and not only in practice but in our moral judgments, if we are candid and not hypocritical. A strong nation violates its treaties when and because it so wishes and can do it with impunity.[10] A nation that proclaims its loyalty to its obligations is in fact confessing itself too weak to violate them. Virtue is respected because and so long as it is useful: what each man really values in himself and respects in others is the force which insures satisfaction.

The analysis of human motivation which directs the development of Helvétius' ethics dictates likewise his theory of government and legislation. This is his third principal idea. The practical problem of government is to assure the citizen's obedience to laws and his active support of the larger policies of the state. The effective solution of this problem demands a constant realization of the natural selfishness of men. People cannot be expected consistently to obey laws and support policies which they regard as onerous and in their way. A stable social order requires laws obedience to which is to the citizen's own advantage. This is then Helvétius' political-social program: make it worth a man's while to be a loyal citizen.

This doctrine on the face of it seemed arrant petulance, but it had some unexpected and radical democratic implications. Helvétius was using hedonistic egoism as the basis for a program of social reconstruction that safeguards the rights of the common man. Crime and lawlessness thrive in a society which pampers a few to the neglect of the many. Where the masses are oppressed by tyranny and exploited by a system of laws favoring a selected class, the multitude, having no part and lot in the state, is ever in incipient revolt. Change this system, then! Remember that all men, to the limit of their power, are seeking their own satisfaction, and to that end are seeking increase of power. Distribute as evenly as possible the available goods of life and the means and opportunities of satisfaction. Square the general interest with the individual. At the same time educate men's minds so that they may see

ever more clearly that it is to their own advantage to respect the social will. Fill their hearts with love of glory and desire for the esteem of others. The base and the crown of all structure of law is the regard for the people's interest.

What is in the way of moral progress in the social system thus conceived? Mean irresolute statesmanship and fanaticism. Narrow and incompetent politicians ignore the well-being of the commonalty, exploit those whom they regard as too dull and stolid to protest, and blindly tread the path to eventual disaster. Fanaticism neglects the real needs of men and women, to exalt and impose artificial virtues, relying on credulity while contending with the healthiest forces and demands of human nature. Sound and competent statesmanship, ridding itself of hallowed prejudices, should see things human as they really are. Utilize the passionate self-regard of each, to realize the welfare of all!

The publication of Helvétius' work *On Mind* aroused the liveliest interest and the most violent opposition. Substance and form alike won for it friends and enemies in abundance. The loose logic, the straggling course of the argument and its constant diversion to allow for the insertion of a tidbit *bon mot* or gossip irritated the more serious reader and aroused severe criticism; but this very overloading of the book with succulent anecdote made it a great popular success. Madame du Deffand may have asked Voltaire to save her time by selecting for her the alleged pearls in the little brochure of fourteen hundred pages, but she read the whole of it, no doubt, and expressed the current opinion that Helvétius had "betrayed the secret of the whole world." Certainly the courtiers, the idle rich of society, the perfumed ladies felt revealed in the cynical pages, but they were all surprised that precisely Helvétius should have written such a book. For he was generous to the point of eccentricity, a paragon of the social virtues. Lavishly charitable, unvindictive and forgiving even to a fault, scrupulously honest and equitable, a loyal and self-sacrificing friend, a complacent husband, despite his infidelities commanding the utmost devotion of his wife, and one of the most liberal of hosts: his own life gave the lie to his portrayal of human nature. Friedrich in Berlin expressed the wish that Helvétius had let his heart rather than his head dictate his ideas.

Serious thought in France, philosophic and theological alike, criticized the arguments of Helvétius. Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Diderot, Turgot admired the man personally, but rejected his doctrine which maligned the generous impulses of human nature. Helvétius, sharing the empiricism of the Enlightenment and its reliance on civilization, struck a disturbing note with his blunt dismissal of its humanitarianism. But the severity of these critics was checked and indeed turned

into personal championship of Helvétius by the violent storm of orthodox persecution which swept over him. Parliament condemned and burned his book; humiliating retraction was extorted from him, and even then did not earn him security; all the forces of obscurantism were ranged against him; the affair became a public scandal. Outside of France this storm had few echoes; it even caused amusement, not only in Berlin and London, but also at Rome, and in faraway Petersburg. Throughout Europe his book continued to be read, in fifty editions.

Helvétius had his revenge in his book *On Man*, deliberately written for posthumous publication. This work restated his familiar volume *On Mind*, and in our discussion of his ideas we have used both works. But the later book is even more audacious; its full candor is unleashed against the tyranny, the bigotry and veneered iniquity of king and priest.

CHAPTER XX

ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: MATERIALISTIC AND ROMANTIC MORALS

1. *La Mettrie's Doctrine of Sensuality*

The materialistic tendency of French empiricism has already been noted, also the initial reluctance to proceed to explicit materialistic conclusions. This reluctance accounts in a measure for the professed scepticism of the Encyclopedists. It must besides have taken hardihood, to which even Diderot was unequal, openly to take sides with the first unwavering French champion of matter. In the year 1751, when the *Encyclopédie* was launched, Julien Offroy de La Mettrie concluded an unsavory career by dying in a fit of gluttony. Those who are content to disprove a doctrine by citing the evil ways of its exponents have found La Mettrie scandalously easy. More considerate historians have pointed out that his practice was not as bad as his preaching, which is dubious apology. Still at the worst he was only more candid and certainly less corrupt than a Cardinal Dubois, so piety should have been well advised to dismiss the scandal-monger's dialectic and turn rather to La Mettrie's arguments.

In his championship of the all-sufficiency of matter, La Mettrie not only opposes the respectable Cartesian dualism, but declares it spurious. Descartes himself, he declares, was a materialist in disguise. Did not Descartes admit that animals, with all their sensations and feelings, are mere machines? Then sensations and feelings in man also do not require reference to any immaterial principle. But the new philosophy of experience shows all intelligence as built up of these elementary physiological reactions. Descartes and the empiricists thus point the same way: there is nothing in man but body and bodily functions. Rely on the senses, La Mettrie says, they are my philosophers. Medical, clinical evidence is preëminent here: it shows all alleged mentality as bodily and physiological. Man is simply a very complicated machine. A small obstruction or a minute fibre in the wrong place might have rendered Seneca a poltroon and made two idiots of Erasmus and Fontenelle.

From this bodily view of human nature La Mettrie proceeds to a carnal view of human conduct. Materialism here points to sensualism

and sensuality. Man is an organism actively reacting to impressions, avoiding pain, and craving, reaching out for pleasure. To ignore these basic facts of our lives is blind; to resist them, mere bigotry. Open compliance with nature is alone intelligent. One gains in tolerance as one becomes more frankly familiar with our species. Study the human animal; see why men function as they do; as people's alleged wickednesses are understood, they no longer outrage us: we are cured of moral indignation and of the edifying fever. Men's bodies are so organized that some can stand more wine, more woes, more women than others. So let life take its course. Really, if nature has made me a hog, I may, indeed I shall, go wallow in the mire. This may perhaps be distasteful to you, my neighbor, but then you need not follow me. You have your own joys, no doubt.

To everybody life affords a range of gratifications. If these are brief, we call them pleasures; more prolonged, they are voluptuous delights; permanent, they constitute our happiness. They are really the same sensations, but some are more lasting or more intense than others. What is man's opportunity, then? To get the most of joy out of life. One may brush others aside or one may become absorbed in making others happy; it is a difference in passions. To ignore the feelings of others is a hazard and, of course, one should not lose sight of the hangman or get in his way, but all this is only a matter of tactics. Men may call some passions evil and others good, but at heart it is always pleasure that is the goal of desire. Some of us may aspire to exalted virtues, but the plain satisfactions of the body are more immediate and reliable. So gather we roses while we may. La Mettrie deliberately searched the garden lest one flower escape his notice. Worry about death and a life after death is as foolish as remorse about the past. Both feelings keep us from enjoying the present. When death comes, as it will in its due time, I snap my fingers,—I have not given it a thought, and it has not cheated me out of anything. "These are my plans for life and death: throughout life and until the last breath, be a voluptuous, sensual Epicurean; but a firm Stoic, at the approach of death." [1]

2. *Chamfort's Bitter Jesting*

In the maxims and anecdotes of Chamfort (1741-1794) may be noted the license and the disgust of an age already rotting, the bitter audacity of seething revolt, and a coarse cynical leer throughout. He had never known his father, who was perhaps a grocer named Nicolas or maybe a canon of the Sainte-Chapelle; when, after his schooling, he sailed into the world to make a name for himself, he chose his name, Chamfort. Paris took him on his own recommendation; his witty sallies made his

conversation famous; he was a favored guest in high society; patrons, among them Marie Antoinette and the Prince de Condé, lavished gifts and pensions on him. Critics expected his pen to fulfil the promise of his tongue; at the age of forty he was elected to the French Academy.

But he had dissipated his energies in feasting and debauch, and found himself a premature invalid. The libertine's nausea and the rancour of the applauded jester embittered him; he hated the aristocrats who had endowed him so that he could amuse them. If he could only abandon his lusts and his luxuries, he could break the golden chain by which he was held captive; if indeed the whole system of wealth and arrogance, lavish and oppressive, could be swept away, he would welcome the ruthless levelling!

Chamfort was not willing to pay the price of self-respect, and this marks the great distance between him and La Bruyère. He only chafed under the patronage of those whom he felt bound to flatter; he could not shake off the sensuality which was ruining him body and soul. Frugality, he observed, might earn one's independence of others; he craved the emancipation but could not practice the economy. In the society in which he lived, "one should gulp down a toad every morning, so as not to find the rest of the day disgusting." [2] But Chamfort did not have toads for breakfast, and so vented his spleen on mankind day and night.

His bitterness is unrelieved by any high loyalties: it is the bitterness of utter contempt for men, wormwood at Belshazzar's feast. The affairs of men, the moral world, might seem to be directed by a devil who had lost his wits. Our pleasures and indulgences cause our ruin, and what should dignify human nature embitters it. The two bright gleams of noble sorrow in his life only served to accentuate the blackness; as for the ordinary course of daily experience, it was wickedness and stupidity. Men exploit each other, everyone approving in others whatever might subject them to him. La Rochefoucauld had described gratitude as a lively sense of favors yet to come. Chamfort observed that even rude men have a first impulse to refuse a recompense for a generous service rendered; to be recompensed is precisely to lose the advantage which their generosity has given them over the recipient. So men watch and spy on each other, professed friends with the good faith of foxes and the goodwill of wolves. Every word is poisoned; the praising is treacherous; worse than any spoken slander is the calumny of silence.[3]

Though Chamfort despised the old régime, the new social order of revolution only taught him new ways of sneering. His old patrons could be easily forgotten; across the river of the revolution was ob-

livion; but his new friends and associates brought him new disgust. The Monarchy had pampered him to indignation; the new Liberty was suspicious and intolerant and intolerable. Imprisonment and the threat of torture roused him to defiance; if freedom was to be had only by counting one's words and muzzling irony, he would rather terminate the wretched farce. So Chamfort would be done with this world in which one's heart must either break or turn brazen. But his attempted suicide was unsuccessful; it only mutilated and disfigured him, and the violence of his death was unrelieved by dignity. Chamfort's career exhibits strikingly the moral chaos which characterized many libertine and vehement spirits during the age of transition and revolution: license and social protest and rampant destruction, without high principles or discipline, and through it all, cynical revulsion from life.

3. Holbach's System of Nature

The doctrine which La Mettrie had exploited in a spirit of reckless sensuality and which Helvétius had interpreted in terms of egoism received a more systematic and saner development in Holbach's *System of Nature,* the Bible or the seasoned substance of French radicalism. On Sundays and Thursdays Baron Dietrich d'Holbach (1723-1789) was host to the philosophers, French and foreign visitors. His dinners were surely no better than those of Helvétius, but they were followed by more brilliant feasts of soul than Helvétius, much as he desired it, was able to stimulate. Utmost freedom of discussion prevailed, and in the free play of ideas, Holbach was the attentive host, quick to catch a brilliant sally or a promising lead, to encourage and to keep alive a fruitful discourse, and to garner its harvest of argument or epigram. An essentially systematic rather than a creative mind, he wove the various strands of the philosophy of negation and protest into a firm texture. Here was materialism, atheism, hedonism, religious denial, social-economic and political upheaval, unwavering and argued with driving power.

Holbach undertook the utter destruction of the traditional bulwarks of spirituality: the belief in God, the idea of an immaterial, immortal soul, and the notion of human freedom. These doctrines had been opposed before, but in no other work had all three together received such unqualified and circumstantial negation. To save his book and himself from the censor's attention, Holbach published his works clandestinely and either anonymously or under obviously false names, as when he wrote on the title-page of his main work the name of Mirabaud, a deceased respectable secretary of the French Academy. Holbach pursued the idea of God in its many varieties: theistic, deistic,

pantheistic, and he rejected them all. The alleged proofs of Deity of whatever sort are futile, and the belief itself is an obstacle to progress. The ideas of an immortal soul and of survival after death are baseless. If we examine any manifestation of soul, we are bound to find its physical basis in sensation, and its destiny is the destiny of the body. A person's soul and life is the ever-changing combination of material factors; death is the utter dissolution of the combination.

The slate is thus brushed clean, and in place of the dogmas of tradition, Holbach inscribes a thoroughly materialistic doctrine of nature and human nature. All that exists is matter-in-motion; the complexity of the world-course indicates the range of matter, matrix and germ of all that there is. Human nature is thus nothing but a very complicated bodily mechanism, continuously active, that is, receiving and communicating motions. Things and men are what they are in accordance with constant laws. Order is as abstract a term as chance is a meaningless one. There is no cosmic purpose of any sort; there is only necessity. So in human conduct: ruling out freedom or controlling reason or other similar figments of the dogmatist, we simply have the counterplay of conflicting motives, that is, motions, attractions and repulsions.

Thus observing man, we find him stirred to act by the desire for happiness. This is the prevailing dynamic, and with it the moralist must begin. The proposal to suppress passion is a proposal to unmake human nature, to order the blood to check its flow. Our life is one of restless activity: desire conflicts with desire, and a passion can be checked or replaced only by a stronger counter-passion. Man turns from one aim to another because he comes to see his happiness in that other. Before we can speak of good or bad men, we should first understand that all men are seeking satisfaction.

Merely as a conflict of passions, human conduct allows of no moral judgment. What pleases a man depends on his peculiar constitution; one man's meat may be another's poison; and what a man regards or comes to regard as necessary to his happiness, that is his interest. If there is any valid distinction between good men and bad, between virtue and vice, it cannot depend on the desire for happiness itself or the pursuit of interest, for these are always present. The moral distinction can depend on this only: wherein a man seeks and finds his happiness.

Hedonism to Helvétius had necessitated an egoistic view of human motivation. The universal craving for happiness meant to him that every man is pursuing his own selfish aim. To secure a man's loyalty you have to make it worth his while. The refusal to admit disinterested devotion to anything involved Helvétius in a tireless but also tedious

reinterpretation of every sort of action, to disclose its basic selfishness. Hence his political precept: make your laws appeal to the individual's own interest, and you are assured of good citizens.

Holbach does not yield to those sophisms, but profits from the critique to which Helvétius' doctrine was subjected, particularly by Diderot. To be sure, there is no disinterested devotion or passion, any more than there is an unmoved mover. But the proposition that in every act a man is pursuing his interest need not mean that he is selfishly opposing and preferring his interests to those of others. It is true that some men seek and find their happiness in acts that hurt or grieve their fellows, but others are attracted by ends that add to the general happiness.

This precisely is Holbach's distinction between virtue and vice. "Virtue is merely the art of realizing one's happiness in the felicity of others." [4] The man we call good is the one who enjoys doing that which makes others happy; we appreciate and praise such a man. The man we call bad is the one who seeks and finds his pleasures in the disadvantage and distress of others; we are hurt and outraged by him and condemn him. The basic norm and test is thus utility. To be good is to be useful, to contribute to the happiness of others; to be bad is to irk or harm others.

These principles duly developed form in Holbach's judgment the true basis of ethics and politics. We should replace dogmatism and edification by explanation and enlightenment. Passions are neither good nor bad but necessary; in the mechanism of conduct, if you want certain acts you must have certain motives prevail. Man is a sensible being: he seeks and experiences pleasure; but he is also reasonable in that he considers and can learn where and how to find it. Lover, miser, sincere friend, all pursue what they regard as necessary to their happiness. But this interest may be enlightened or it may be blind: even when he does evil, man thinks it is his good.

Ethics and politics must thus aim at hedonistic enlightenment: the mutuality of interests of self and others, of sovereign and subjects. Is it possible for anyone to attain his own felicity in utter disregard of others? Here we are, living with others, all pursuing happiness, each needing the other: the course of life itself imposes on men the necessity of mutual adaptation. Just as a man learns that he cannot abuse his body with impunity and so in pursuit of his own pleasure learns the need of temperance, so he may be brought to realize that active social regard for the welfare of others, justice and beneficence, are prime conditions of his own felicity. So hospitable Holbach was generously entertaining those whose stimulating discourse was making him an author. But unless

he had really enjoyed making them happy in his society, they would not have responded in kind as they did. Neighborliness, patriotism, honesty, benevolence, truthfulness, all require this enlightened motivation acting on the basic desire for happiness.

On the surface we have here a persuasive version of universalistic hedonism. The deeper animus of the doctrine is the spirit of social-political revolt. Individual acts provoke reaction on the part of others, and the social milieu inevitably provides incentives to conduct. In this sense within the limits of pliable temperament, men are perfected or corrupted by their environment. Vicious parents, a depraved neighborhood, corrupt social surroundings, an oppressive government are the moral ruin of men and women. How is the individual to live happily, in generous social-mindedness, when at every turn organized society cheats, exploits, and oppresses him, and menaces his very existence? Tyranny depraves men so that they lose all trust in government. When Turgot proposed his measures to relieve the oppression of the people, the peasantry resisted his generous policies. How is one to expect anything but dull, savage reaction from a tortured people? "By a sequence of human madness, whole nations are forced to labour, to sweat, to water the earth with their tears, merely to keep up the luxury, the fancies, the corruption of a handful of insensates, a few useless creatures. So have religious and political errors changed the universe into a valley of tears." [5]

Social-political revolution was thus being urged by Holbach as a necessary preface to moral reform and a decent human life. The existing order is rotten to the core and deserves utter destruction. Holbach saw no good for mankind until priest and king, bigot and tyrant, were swept away in the same upheaval of long-suffering humanity. So naturalism, atheism, hedonism are all charged with the unflinching demand for a complete recasting of an iniquitous social system. Only in the light of this revolutionary objective can we appreciate Holbach's tireless and passionate dialectic. To subject this variety of hedonism to a systematic critique would be effort misapplied. The problem of validating the moral demand is not really met here, and the reformatory gospel of the materialist involved him in paradoxes, none more striking than the actual social idealism of men in whose system man figured as nothing but a fragile piece of machinery.

The universal desire for happiness, in Holbach's judgment, puts all men on a par. Empiricism and the denial of innate ideas rules out all initial privilege; the emphasis on environment makes the differences between men largely acquired and thus also subject to change; the

course of nature is determined: different conditions will yield different results. There is neither God nor devil; there is only a social mechanism which has been allowed to run one way, to the distress of the great majority, but which can be refashioned and rewound to run in just the opposite direction. Fear of God is futile superstition; complaint of nature is mostly misdirected; wholesale condemnation of society and civilization is petulant and leads to no real betterment. There are grievous but definite evils due to definite physical and social conditions. Diagnose them and resolutely proceed to the cure, prepared to cut as deep as need be. Here was the vigorous brushing aside of all the scruples and deterrents to upheaval. This was the finale of prerevolutionary thought. The next step could only be overt action. Holbach closed his eyes in the year that saw the fall of the Bastille.

4. Rousseau and the Romantic Flood of Feeling

Voltaire probed and flayed the doctrines of others, exposed the unsound substance under the shell of dogmatic assurance, proceeded to irony and scepticism, but never wavered in his loyalty to the cause of enlightenment,—a champion of the reasonable life. His conclusions might differ from those of Diderot or D'Alembert; certainly he did not share Holbach's headlong materialism and resisted the egoism of Helvétius; but he is one with the Encyclopedists in relying on evidence and force of argument and intelligence. The orthodox theologian codified religion into a syllabus of dogmas: these the intellectual radicals assailed, and urged the superior reasonableness of deism or pantheism, sceptical suspense of judgment, or utter atheistic negation. All this conflict was one of theories, beliefs, reasons, a conflict of heads.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) proposed a really new argument. He did not merely argue a different side of the case; he demanded a complete change of venue, or rather appealed to a wholly different court. He defied the sovereignty of the head and yielded to the dictates of the heart. His ideas were not conclusions but preferences, and his system not a doctrine but a confession. Distrusting evidence, he put his faith in feeling. This essentially lyrical, emotional character of Rousseau's thought, irresponsible and disturbingly powerful, rebelled against established order as enslaving and corrupting. It released scruples, upset conventions and standards, and turned imagination and will alike vagabond; but it was also an eloquent plea for freedom, genuineness and integrity. Beneath the surface reasons of human conduct, it sounded its more intimate motives and revealed the deeper springs of feeling which welled up in action. This more thorough radicalism of Rousseau's

thought and temper explains the conflict in which he was involved with ecclesiastic and encyclopedist alike, explains his immediately revolutionary potency and his far-flung influence.

Basic in Rousseau's thinking, as has been pointed out,[6] is the idea of the antithesis between the absolute, primal immediacy and spontaneity of nature and the relative, derived limitation of 'culture.' Not only in social philosophy but in any account of human life the first words of the *Social Contract* set the problem: "Man, born free, is now everywhere in chains." In the primitive life of nature no artificial inequalities subjected one man to another. It was in learning how to work metals and cultivate the soil that some men saw a chance of rising above their fellows, by claiming certain lands and goods as their own possession and by making men admit their claim. Private property and the inequality which it signalizes are at the heart of civilized society, and governments are organized for the very purpose of preserving some men in lordship over others. This whole system is depraved; we may not be able to sweep it away; but to remedy its evils as much as possible, and thus to reclaim man's freedom, must be the aim of all true political science and reform.

Rousseau's keen sense of this antithesis between nature and culture determines his valuation and provides his moral standard; but in the development of his ethics a duality of convictions involves him in a paradox. On the one hand, man's primitive, unspoilt nature is pronounced good, and perfection is sought in spontaneous self-outpouring and freedom from social constraint. On the other hand, in view of the conflict between contending impulses and demands, a guiding standard is sought, obligation and conscience are emphasized, both conceived sentimentally, and virtue is emphatically declared to consist in heroic loyalty in the moral struggle. These two lines of thought in Rousseau's ethics, unreconciled and both influential, call for further notice.

Rousseau begins his discourse on the *Origin of Inequality* by dismissing historical evidence as irrelevant: "Let us begin by setting aside all facts." So in his moral judgment of man, he is not concerned to study actual conduct. A man's worth is determined not by what he does, but by what he would: not by his acts but by his moods and intimate longings. These latter constitute the real man, and in unspoilt nature these are good, or more accurately they are not evil. All our vices are acquired, and we can trace the source of every one. Wickedness is corruption of an initially sound nature. But in refusing to admit any initial evil in human nature, Rousseau does not regard moral insight as innate. Before the age of reason we may do good or ill without

ing, our acts are neither virtuous nor vicious. But from the very start there are in us attachments and resentments, native sentiments which are to mature into distinctively moral judgments.

What is it that dictates and directs these moral native sentiments? A confused analysis has reduced all motives to a basic regard for self-interest. Against this error of the egoistic school, Rousseau regards man as capable of disinterested moral approval or disapproval and treats selfishness as a later perversion rather than as the basic form of human motivation. To this end Rousseau distinguishes, as Vauvenargues had done before him, between *amour de soi*, self-love, and *amour propre*, or selfishness in the strict sense of the term. The *amour de soi* is man's primitive and unique passion, the concern for one's own preservation. This initial vitality of will, in a man rightly matured, may well lead to his active espousal of all that promotes human welfare. Guided by reason and modified by pity, it makes us humane and good. Flagrant selfishness is due to wrong relations of men to each other in a corrupt society. Thus Rousseau's polemic against *amour propre* is in line with his attack on civilization as corrupting, while his treatment of *amour de soi* as unmoral but normally the matrix of all moral good is in harmony with his account of the primitive soundness of human nature.

It would appear that uncorrupted human nature is moved by a wholesome regard for self-preservation which includes an impelling preference for justice and nobility. Leave these to themselves, to develop normally, and virtue would seem to be assured. Sound moral education does not have to inculcate virtue; it is at best negative. If it but safeguard the soul from vice, it has done its service for virtue. But man's native innocence is corruptible; our vices are due to the social situation in which we are involved. Rousseau had projected a treatise on "Sensitive Morality" in which the influence of environmental factors on character was to have been traced: doing the work of Montesquieu for the life and character of individuals.[7]

The two prize essays rehearsed the story of man's perversion and his manifold acquired iniquity, and Rousseau's other works are confronted with the problem of redemption. But it has been urged against him, that human life so readily proceeds to exploitation, injustice, cruelty, and debauchery, is the theory of corrupted primitive goodness really superior to that of dominant selfishness? [8] Should we not replace Rousseau's portrayal of human nature by that of Hobbes?

The moral soundness of natural man thus challenged, Rousseau may and does take refuge in feeling, and he also proceeds to define virtue in terms of the vigor of the will in combat and develops a doctrine of

Even while outwardly sullied with vice, entangled in degrading relations, the soul may yet feel itself spotless and beautiful within,—culpable but not depraved.[9] Succumbing to evil, it has an inner conviction of being made for virtue. In the midst of pollution and ignominy, this insistent longing is to prove excuse and consolation: the eyes are closed to the ugly facts, to dwell on the supposed inner loveliness. In its confessional and apologetic tone, this idea proved more infectious in literature than fruitful for ethics. But it has another and more significant aspect. Rousseau to the contrary, a vicious act is vicious despite maudlin protesting sentiment. But a virtuous act is not virtuous unless it is charged with moral conviction. It is in this second, positive sense that Rousseau strikes a great note in systematic ethics, and here his influence is lofty. We need not be surprised that Rousseau's portrait was the only one in the room of Immanuel Kant.

Rousseau's exaltation of sentiment in morals is in line with his habitual depreciation of the intellect. Ethics does not rest on scientific foundations, and it needs no theoretical basis. The moral sense is not an innate knowledge of the good but a native love of it. The mind may be bedeviled by conventional errors, but in spite of our assumed wrong principles, our hearts cleave or wish to cleave to the right. This is conscience, an inner principle of justice and virtue, the basic moral emotion.

The moral redemption of man is the task of conscience. The essence of practical wisdom is to perceive the true relations in which one stands to his fellows and to order one's affections accordingly. To feel towards each man in any circumstances the right emotion is to be sage and blessed. Virtue thus arises in the different relations of heart to heart; as these relations are infinitely varied, the drawing up of a list of virtues were an idle task. The important thing is to perceive which way virtue always lies, its characteristic tone and direction. In the relation of individuals to each other and to the whole "the good man orders himself in accord with all, the bad man orders all to suit himself. The latter makes himself the center of all things; the former takes account of his radius and keeps to the circumference." This seems strange doctrine for an individualist like Rousseau, but it is just in the interest of the individual that Rousseau condemns ruthless egoism and advocates self-ordering in relation to the whole. To be truly and fully oneself one must perceive and come to feel oneself as a radius in a circle.

This inherent principle of order, justice, and appropriateness, equitable and generous, is imperative, but it is also challenged. Under ideal conditions of human life the perfect good would have been thoroughly

spontaneous. But in human life as we find it, virtue is bound to be essentially militant. The very meaning of the term suggests it. Virtue is valor, force and vigor of soul. God is good but not virtuous, for virtue is arduous, and would not be worth much to us if it were easy. It is a state of war; to live virtuously means to be ever in combat with oneself. "Virtue does not consist only in being just, but in being just emphatically despite one's passions. . . . Brutus causing the death of his children was only just. But Brutus was a tender father: to do his duty he tore his heart, and Brutus attained virtue." [10]

The anticipation of Kant is here obvious, and the last quoted passage could well have occasioned the epigram which Schiller dedicated to the ethics of the categorical imperative. Even Kant's apotheosis of Duty may find its prototype in an eloquent paragraph of the Savoyard Vicar: "Conscience! Conscience! divine instinct, immortal and celestial voice; assured guide of an ignorant and limited but intelligent and free being; infallible judge of good and evil, which renderest man like unto God! In thee is the excellence of man's nature, and the morality of his actions; without thee I feel nothing in myself which would raise me above the beasts, except the sad privilege of groping from error to error, helped by an understanding without laws and a reason without principles." [11]

Rousseau's disdain of social castes and barriers, his interest in the intimate life of individuals rather than in types or classes, make him an eager champion of moral democracy. The doctrine of the inalienable personal dignity of every moral agent is the ethical pendant of the political declaration of the rights of man. Rousseau is not content to commit the individual to the promotion of the social good: the weal of the society which alone would engage his loyalties must be a weal in which no one is neglected. It may be sweet and meet that a man choose to die for his country, but that any Caiaphas should so pronounce for others and easily dispose of their lives is pharisaic iniquity.

In definite contrast to this gospel of individual rights is the state dictation advocated in the *Social Contract*. The sovereign people may fix the articles of the civic faith, loyalty to which is pronounced essential to good citizenship. The dogmas of this civic religion are cited by Rousseau: existence and attributes of God, immortality with rewards and punishments, sanctity of social obligations. Subscription to these dogmas is to be a condition of citizenship, with banishment as the alternative and death as punishment for infidelity. When we remember that Marat expounded the *Social Contract* on the street corners to the Paris mobs and that Robespierre turned the Savoyard Vicar's profession of faith into legislation, we can understand how responsible Rousseau was, not only for the Revolution, but also for its guillotine.

While the main problem of the *Social Contract*,—to recover as much freedom as is possible for man under the conditions of a stable social structure,—belongs together with the rest of Rousseau's social philosophy, the harmony of its doctrine in detail with his other works might well tax the resources of higher criticism. Consistency aside, the *Social Contract* shows how ready professed champions of freedom are to enforce on others the principles adopted by themselves, once these are given a religious form or other authoritative vesture. The words of Madame Roland come to mind: "O Liberty! What crimes are committed in thy name!"

Part III

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND OURS

CHAPTER XXI

KANT'S RECONSTRUCTION OF THE MORAL PROBLEM: THE ETHICS OF DUTY



1. Formative Factors in Kant's Philosophy

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) has been called the gate through which one enters into the nineteenth century, and the truth of this observation will become increasingly clear to us in the course of our inquiry. Whether by way of constructive revision or of more radical negative reaction, Kant's philosophy has affected vitally the thought of his successors. Even in the dismissal of his solutions the modern mind has been gripped by his problems. But though one can scarcely conceive of the nineteenth century without Kant, one cannot imagine Kant in it. The age which he inaugurated by his critique of the basic philosophical issues was bound to seek further ground for systematic reconstruction.

In moral philosophy especially, Kant's procedure represents the self-criticism of the manifold strains of eighteenth century thought. Purity of moral devotion and reality of scientific intelligence were the two treasures of his spirit, possessed and cherished in that order. To establish his title to them became the goal of his reflection, and though he attacked the theoretical problem first, yet the moral-practical issue was the more ultimate and decisive.

The formative factors in Kant's philosophical development involved him in a radical perplexity which called for as radical a revision of procedure. His early spiritual nurture was deeply religious and moral. His parents were devout simple folk, especially his mother. The Pietism which they professed seemed to find in them explicit vindication. A saddler and his wife, without learning or deep theology, could possess the living reality of religion and vital moral convictions, genuine loyalty to duty, simple dignity, and the serenity of a pious will. From his home Kant was to bring to the university basic certainties, or rather spiritual demands which sooner or later sought recognition.

These were not individual peculiarities of Kant; they also characterized the spirit of the times. Pietism, a movement in German religious life broadly corresponding to English Methodism, resisted the empha-

sis on formal theology and the rigid logic of rationalists like Christian Wolff (1679-1754). The Wolffian philosophy was also unreliable in its orthodoxy, and was therefore suspected by the Lutheran clergy. The University of Halle had been the center of this struggle which included the expulsion of Wolff and his later return to his professorship. Despite the conflict at Halle, as also at Kant's native city, Königsberg, the rationalistic spirit persisted in German university instruction: a spirit of scientific-philosophical analysis, critical of the traditional theology which Kant had ever distrusted, but critical also of the Pietist reliance on devout feeling which he had cherished in his youth.

In Kant's development the demand for harmony prevailed over any violent opposition. His favorite professor at the University of Königsberg, Martin Knutzen (1713-1751) was endeavoring to reconcile Wolffian rationalism with Pietist devotion. But while committed to mediation as an available alternative, Knutzen's mind was more directly engaged by scientific studies. He put Newton in Kant's hands, and for some time concentrated the young man's attention on mathematics and physics.

Without tracing Kant's early development in any further detail, we may note that in the main his mind's orientation was rationalistic; the range of his interests, which was wide, centered in the physical sciences. Was it by rationalistic logic, however, that the conclusions of science were attained and sustained? The study of Humean empiricism raised this question in Kant's mind, but in achieving his answer to it he was led to a critical revision of both rationalism and empiricism. We can indicate here only the broadest outline of this reconstruction of theory of knowledge, as Kant achieved it in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781).

2. *The Critique of Pure Reason*

Rationalism, distrusting sense-experience and relying on reason, beginning with eternal verities and from them by rigorous logic deriving all science and all knowledge, yielded monumental structures, formally perfect but artificial and out of touch with actual facts. The Wolffian system was like the familiar nursery toy in which a painted portly Japanese, unscrewed about the middle, reveals a smaller copy of himself, which in turn is found to contain yet another member of the family, until most deductively the entire household can be elicited, with the last little Jap in the very center. You can get out of a concept what you have first put in it. So, for example, the soul, initially defined as a simple substantial entity, was proved clearly, being simple, to be nowise a compound, hence not subject to disintegration, incorruptible,

imperishable, immortal. *Q.E.D.* Was this a proof, or was it not rather a progressive exposition of assumptions, dogmatic and perhaps irrelevant to the real problem of human destiny?

The procedure of the rationalist involved logical advance from one idea to another. Now, if in this procedure we had nothing but the citation in detail of what had been already implied in the initial definition of the concept, then the analysis yielded no real advance in knowledge. If on the other hand the ideas were not assumed but were to be really earned and attained by thought, then what warranted our confidence in their necessary connection, by reliance on which alone the mind could proceed to an assured conclusion? It is at this point that, as Kant tells us, Hume roused him from his dogmatic slumber. For Hume insisted on sticking to the data of direct experience and reducing every idea to the sense-impressions from which it was derived. Experience according to Hume justifies us in chronicling a succession of ideas; but it yields no objective warrant of necessary connection. The constant conjunction of some events in space and time leads us, in experiencing the one, to expect the other. But this is our habit of association of ideas, which we ourselves elevate into the principle of causal relation.

Here, then, were the rationalist's systems of eternal principles alien to experimental investigation of nature, and the empiricist's stock of perceptions immediately yielded by experience but providing no basis for universal law or necessary conclusion. But here again was science: it forecast the results of experiments, predicted eclipses with precision, formulated conclusions universally. So Kant asked: How is this universally valid knowledge of nature possible? What philosophical view of mind and of the world of experience can explain these facts and achievements of science?

Were our mind simply the recipient of sense-impressions, it could attain no universal law of nature. Were our ideas thought out by reason independently of experience, they would lack content. "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind." [1] Scientific knowledge involves both perception and conception. But in the experience which yields knowledge we do not have a world *and* a mind, each wholly external to the other, nor is knowledge a copy of one in the other. The mind is itself in and of the world of experience, and the world is the experienced world in which the mind is active. The genesis of experience parallels the organization of nature. The stuff of sense-data is given reference in space and time, the pure forms of perception, is related to other perceptual material, is consciously brought up and recognized by the maturing self as thus related.

In the synthesis of self-consciousness the experienced content attains meaning, character, validity. The logic of the mind determines categories of nature; there is a correspondence of cosmological order to logical order. In the process of experience the understanding makes nature possible, but it is in this process that the understanding itself, mind in the full sense of the term, is achieved. The world of physical science is the causal nexus of events in space and time. Every new experience expands the nexus or perfects the causal mesh, perfecting also the mind's self-attainment in it. Recognize the world of science as a phenomenal world in which mind and nature are thus interrelated, and the possibility of universally valid knowledge is explained. This, in answer to Hume's challenge, is Kant's vindication of physical science.

But our reason does not remain content with a scientific interpretation of possible experience. It insists on asking more ultimate questions. What are things in themselves, apart from the experience of them in space and time? Does the world itself have limits in space or a beginning in time? Is it compounded of ultimate irreducible elements, or is there no limit to division and analysis? Nature as science interprets it is a causal nexus: but may there not be free spontaneous activity in the universe? The mind that knows nature is a synthesis of experience: but may there not be a soul apart from all experience, immortal and transcending it all in eternity? Back of the conditioned order of nature may there not be a Being unconditioned and absolutely necessary? Reason thus raises the problems of freedom, immortality, and God.

In the "Transcendental Dialectic" of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant takes up these problems, in a radical criticism of rationalistic metaphysics. The conclusion of it, bluntly put, is that all these ultimate issues transcend the theoretical competence of the mind. Science is concerned with a world-order of necessarily connected events in space and time. Beyond this range of nature there is neither proof nor disproof. In this critical limitation to possible experience lies the validity of the mind's knowledge of nature, and of the mind's self-recognition in experience. God, freedom, immortality are ideas which we can neither establish nor refute.

But these ideas are involved in morality and religion. Are morality and religion, then, to be ruled out entirely? In the same critical spirit in which Kant had asked the question, How is science possible? he was bound now to ask, How is morality possible? In asking this question, and the related questions concerning religion and art, Kant enunciated a central problem of modern thought: the distinction and also the philosophical integration of physical-scientific and moral-religious categories: the reconciliation of mechanism and morals. Kant's vindica-

tion of scientific knowledge, but also his critical limitation of its province and his definite statement of its terms and conditions, dictated a critical reconstruction of ethical method.

3. *The Early Development of Kant's Moral Philosophy*

The ethical theory expounded in the *Grundlegung* and in the *Critique of Practical Reason* was for Kant an inevitable alternative due to his theory of experience. But this does not mean that Kant's ethics is to be treated simply as a corollary of epistomology. Actually in the development of Kant's thought the demand for a real universal basis of moral convictions and values gradually imposed itself, even as the demand for the philosophical vindication of universally valid knowledge.[2] In his early systematic views of ethics, as in his general philosophy, Kant showed the influence of his rationalistic training. But naturally reacting against the excessive intellectualism of the Wolffian position, and perhaps in this respect expressing a Pietist strain, Kant inclined to the British ethics of moral feeling. Neither of these views of the moral life, however, seemed to him adequate. Particularly unsatisfactory appeared to him the attempts of his predecessors to relate happiness to perfection and virtue. The Leibniz-Wolffian formal definition of pleasure as the feeling of perfection made possible a certain abstract accommodation of virtue to happiness, but it lacked the genuine ring of moral activity and moral judgment. The hedonism of the empiricists, if it included everlasting happiness in its calculations, was inconsistently theological and dogmatic; if it sought a purely secular statement, it lacked the universality requisite for moral conviction and authority. Kant was in search of a sovereign motive exacting obedience and worthy of respect.

That the realization of the ideal of goodness was to be sought in an inner state of soul and not in any outward performance, was an early conviction of Kant's. It was his philosophical version of the Pietist emphasis on devout feeling and a living personal faith. In their reaction against the overemphasis on dogmatic formulas and external conformity, the Pietists were in effect confronting the established Lutheran hierarchy with Luther's plea and principle of faith, against works and ritual. The firm grasp of this basic idea was ever characteristic of Kant's ethics, which in this respect has been called the deepest philosophical expression of Protestantism.

Actively responsive as Kant was to the course of English and French ideas in his time, it was inevitable that the writings of Rousseau should engross him. Too stern to yield to Rousseau's relaxing impulses, too cool to be carried away by Rousseau's irresponsible fervor or by any

zealotry or reverie, Kant yet saw, beyond the immediate incendiary radicalism of Rousseau's ideas, their more ultimate and important meaning. In Rousseau's protests against the trappings of civilization was his plea for the inner man; in Rousseau's gospel of feeling, his perception of inner attitude as the true sign of moral character. Kant did not go with Rousseau in negating culture and returning to 'nature,' but in the *Émile* and in other works of Rousseau he was impressed with the emphasis on human dignity irrespective of status or external performance. We must recognize this influence of Rousseau which Kant openly acknowledged. We are also bound to note the basic difference between the two. For all his eulogy of the inner voice, of conscience, Rousseau yet lacked a real conviction of duty. Rousseau's tone was one of apologetic confession and fervid aspiration: Kant proceeded from recognition of duty to declaration of loyalty. Moral activity and perfection, to Rousseau, involved the emancipation of natural man from the trappings and shackles of social régime. To Kant, they demanded the self-affirmation of the pure dutiful will over the natural impulses and desires. In moral as in theoretical philosophy Kant's critical analysis probed deeper levels and on more radical foundations reared a new structure of principles. He might use the words of the age which produced him, but in those words were already the deeper meanings of the age which he was to inaugurate.

The record of Kant's lecture-courses at the University of Königsberg shows that for almost forty years he gave systematic instruction in moral philosophy. The recent publication of his *Lectures on Ethics*, based on students' notebooks, enables us to see his doctrine on its way to assuming its Critical form.[3] These lectures were supposed to be expositions of two textbooks of Baumgarten, but Kant used Baumgarten's warp to weave his own ethical design. After considering some basic problems, the nature of moral obligation and responsibility and the supreme principle of morality, and examining in some detail the relation of morality to religion, Kant proceeded to an extended treatment of the various virtues and vices. His classical ethics of the categorical imperative may be seen here in the process of finding form and expression. In some cases the earlier phrasing of leading ideas, while less formally 'Kantian,' is simpler and perhaps more straightforward.

Against any description of actual human behavior, which is the concern of anthropology, Kant declares that moral philosophy is concerned only with what ought to be done; it is essentially imperative. Kant here distinguishes three kinds of imperatives: technical, asserting necessary means to a problematical end; prudential, asserting the necessary means

to the universal end of men, happiness; and moral, dictating absolutely regardless of any ulterior end, not modified to meet particular needs or interests, but authoritatively and universally legislating for all. Disinterested loyalty to the moral imperative is the heart of goodness. The supreme principle of morality is "the harmony of actions with the universally valid law of the free will." By appeal to this universal principle special problems in ethics may be settled: the invariable keeping of promises, the practice of benevolence. The test is this, whether our conduct can be a universal rule: if it cannot, then we are moved not by regard for the principle itself but by the desire for certain specific results in the circumstances. Our action then lacks moral worth. "That action is immoral whose intent cancels and destroys itself when it is made a universal rule." [4]

The moral law then remains supreme; it is not to be trimmed and adjusted to fit men's frailties, but is to be kept pure, and our will is to be lifted in devotion to it. In this emphasis on the inner spirit of loyalty to law, happiness is not ignored, but there is no yielding to hedonism. Not happiness itself, but worthiness to be happy is the important thing. Moral achievement is in the spiritual elevation itself, the life within.

In view of the prevailing formalism of Kant's Critical ethics, it is of interest to find him in these *Lectures* devoting attention to the various virtues and vices in detail, ordered in the frame of duties. His leading idea is the recognition of moral worth as the worth of persons. This conviction determines reverence for oneself and for others, and in each specific case and relation reveals our duty. Humanity in our own person and in others is worthy of esteem and inviolable. This principle guides Kant in his arguments against suicide, against sexual laxity, against exploitation and oppression.

4. The Ethics of the Categorical Imperative

This gradually maturing conception of the nature and significance of moral activity received special emphasis and definition of statement as a result of Kant's conclusions in the *Critique of Pure Reason.* The vindication of scientific knowledge, demanding as it did the critical limitation of the understanding to the causal nexus of events in space and time, and the exclusion of the Ideas of rationalistic metaphysics as beyond the mind's competence to establish or to refute, left moral convictions in a precarious state. If so far as our knowledge goes man and his actions are involved in the causal mesh of nature, we could, to be sure, investigate the behavior of men as of other mammals, or of metals; a science of anthropology would be available for us alongside of

biology or chemistry. But how could we ever get beyond causal description and explanation of conduct to moral judgment, to praise or blame? How is morality possible?

Consider in what morality consists: what is it that makes an act moral or immoral? The traditional answers to this question were not acceptable to Kant. Theology cannot provide the premises of ethics, for the bulwark of theology, a theoretical proof of God's existence, is unavailable. But what knowledge of human activity could the scientific view of nature and of man in it allow except the causal statement of conditions and course of behavior: dispositions, impulses, clashes of desires and emotions, prevailing motives determining the will to action, experienced pleasure or pain?

Most of the proposed theories of ethics are spurious owing to their failure to distinguish between the 'physics of morals' and moral philosophy. A great variety of confused standards and principles is on hand, but no clear perception of the central idea: "at one time perfection, at another happiness, here moral sense, there fear of God, a little of this, a little of that, is marvellous mixture." [5] How could moral standards be stated in terms of pleasure and pain? Overlook that what pleases me may displease you, and that what delighted me last year or even yesterday may weary and disgust me now, or the reverse. Even without this variety and change, hedonism would still fail to provide an adequate standard, for hedonism cannot get beyond the statement that pleasure is or is not experienced by certain persons from certain acts under certain conditions. But whether any such experience is worthy of approval or disapproval, that is a question that calls for a different kind of answer.

No more adequate is the moral judgment of acts according to the inclination or emotion which prompts them. The sight of another's suffering which may move a susceptible person to pity and benevolent action may leave the phlegmatic or stolid man unconcerned. But this observation nowise warrants us in calling these acts good or bad. As well might we praise or blame men for their physical endurance or feebleness, their keenness or dullness of mind which may make them capable or incapable of certain actions. Leave a bar of iron out in the rain, it will rust, but a bar of gold or a painted bar of iron will not rust. By appropriate treatment of the soil, by the use of chemicals, or by grafting resistant stock we may get rid of certain blights and change the quality or even the kind of our crop. The criminologist knows of similar human husbandry, but though crime may to him appear as the rust or blight of human life, the correction of these environmental factors is not necessarily an achievement of virtue. Even so on a larger

scale, in the life of societies and nations, we may examine the operation of certain laws under certain conditions, natural and institutional: the political, economic, urban and rural régime in the history of peoples. We might, as we trace the various lines of complex development which we call progress, anticipate the future course of history, undertake to write the universal formulas of human existence on this planet. But all this is anthropology and should not be confused with moral philosophy, which is not concerned with what men do or suffer, but only with what they ought to do.

So we have Kant's answer to the question, In what does morality consist? Goodness is not in what is accomplished or in the empirical desire and inclination. A man may contribute to charity because he does not know what to do with his money or because he lacks the courage to refuse requests or because of social vanity; a man may expose corruption in order to gratify his love of scandal; a man may help another out of difficulty or danger because of overabundant energy or curiosity. Virtue and vice go deeper than the act itself; they are in the quality of will which we manifest in our acts. Kant declares in the first principle of his ethics: "Nothing can possibly . . . be called good, without qualification, except a Good Will." [6]

This alone is morally important: one should *will* the good. But we are not to confuse Kant's ethics with the ethics of good intentions. The good will which he lauds is no mere empirical impulse or inclination, nor is it good because of what it accomplishes. Unaffected by its usefulness or fruitlessness, it is good simply by virtue of its volition; its goodness is inherent, "highly esteemed for itself, . . . without a view to anything further." Only the principle of duty can evoke and manifest such worth. The good will is simply the dutiful will. The will loyal to duty, however, should not be confused with the will to perform *a* duty. Kant repeatedly makes the distinction between acting as duty requires and acting because duty requires. The center of attention in moral judgment is not in the fulfillment of something which duty demands, nor in the feasibility of the contemplated act; it is solely in the respect for the principle of duty itself. Goodness thus involves, apart from any regard for consequences or susceptibility to desires, the purely rational active espousal of the law of universal worth. "I am never to act otherwise than so *that I could also will that my maxim should become a universal law.*" The good will is thus concentrated on rational fitness; it is rationality in action; "the will is nothing but practical reason." [7]

But how can we claim for men such a purely rational capacity? Kant recognizes the objection; he admits his inability to cite a single

thoroughly authenticated case of a purely dutiful act. The usual course of experience points rather in the other direction: back of so much apparent moral loyalty we find 'ulterior motives,' we come upon "the dear self which is always prominent." [8] But without a purely dutiful will there could be no morality. We should, therefore, consider further the character of the moral law, and also the significance and implications of the pure respect for it which characterizes the good will.

Laws of nature express the necessary dependence of certain events or states of existence on certain antecedent conditions. In our own experience also we recognize the necessity of certain things as means to desired ends. The laws of hygiene or practical efficiency or prudence are of this character. One should take exercise, we say, or follow a certain diet, be regular in keeping appointments or in paying one's bills. Why? we ask, and the answer must be forthcoming. All these are means to ends which are considered desirable. If we pursue these ends, we must adopt these means: just as, in order to secure a certain effect, we require the respective cause. These laws and rules involve only conditional obligations. Kant called them *hypothetical imperatives.*

In contrast to laws of nature and to all rules of utility or efficiency or prudence, is the unconditional note of moral obligation. Here are two students taking an examination. Neither one of them actually cheats. But one of them may have refrained from cheating because he was afraid of being caught, or because he disliked his neighbor and would not be dependent on him for help, or because he was not sure that even cheating would see him through, or simply because he did not care enough about his grade to take any chances. But to the other student honesty may have been a loyally chosen alternative: irrespective of consequences, on principle he would not cheat in any circumstances whatever. We should easily see where the real honesty in these two cases is to be found. The mark of moral obligation is that it does not admit of the question, Why? If I ask why I ought to tell the truth, you may know that veracity is no virtue of mine; if I ask why I ought to do or not to do anything whatever, I only show that my view of the act in question is not moral. Does not our moral approval of a person's conduct vanish the moment we recognize that he has been moved by what we call 'ulterior motives'? That is, the very crux of moral action is in its disclosure of loyalty to duty and principle alone, without any ulterior considerations: I will as I ought. The obligation of the moral law is unconditional, ultimate; Kant calls it a *Categorical Imperative.* In acting out of respect for the categorical imperative, we are not looking forward to any desired consequences. The universal fitness and worthiness of the principle itself commands our dutiful

loyalty. By our volition we would establish the worthy principle as a universal law.

5. *Rational Formalism and Respect for Rational Character*

In his resolution to maintain his distinction between moral philosophy and anthropology, to keep his moral motive free of all empirical corruption, Kant appears to be involved in ethical formalism. In dismissing the empirical, it may be asked, has not Kant emptied morality of all content? The moral law is not *a* law; it exacts nothing except respect for itself as law; duty points to nothing but itself; our duty is to be actively dutiful. If we could legitimately speak of any specific act as virtuous, a virtue, it is only because it serves to exemplify the essential character of virtue as rational loyalty to universal principle. So Kant cites several duties by way of illustration. We may consider two of them. May I, trying to borrow money, promise to pay it back at a definite time even though I know that I cannot so repay it? But if this were to become universal practice, the making of promises would become futile and would defeat its purpose. Or may I, if enjoying prosperity, dismiss from my mind the destitution of the poor as no concern of mine? But for me to will such callousness would be self-contradictory, for conceivably I might be in need of help and sympathy myself: so how could I be willing to establish a state of existence which would deprive me of all hope in case of need?

In these and similar instances the criticism might be made that, despite Kant's intention, the formal appeal to rational universal consistency has been replaced by the appeal to general effectiveness or even by covert or explicit self-regard. The formalist might reply that we can scarcely expect to illustrate adequately the purely rational character of virtue by specific examples taken from the empirical field. Only a plausible conclusion can be reached in this way, that honesty in making and keeping promises and benevolent regard for the needs of others are our duties. We may now ask: Did Kant or do we require this test of universalizing the maxims of honesty and benevolence in order to be assured that they are instances of virtuous conduct? But testing of this sort, scarcely inferior to Kant's, might be used with forms of conduct the goodness of which, to say the least, is open to grave doubts. A free-lover might conceivably adopt his promiscuity not only as a program of personal practice but as a matter of conviction which he would advocate for all. An anarchist translates his convictions into action: by word and deed he would make all men, if he could, share his violent resistance to compulsive authority. Are free-love and anarchism then justified morally? How is Kant's ethics, in advocating dutiful loyalty,

to be clearly distinguished from moral fanaticism? If we were to say that the free-lover's, the anarchist's, the fanatic's maxims cannot be rationally universalized, would we not be appealing to principles which may be valid and relevant in morality, but for which Kant's formalism has made no provisions? Kant himself notes that mankind might well subsist, or even fare better, if each man took and kept his own and let others do likewise, without charity but also without exploitation. And as to truthfulness and the keeping of promises, might not the deceitful man reason that in a society of mutual deceit he would readily take his chances in the universal contest of cunning? Witness the world of professional diplomacy. Reflections of this sort disturb our confidence in the adequacy of Kant's moral criterion: or rather, it is because of the abstract formalism of Kant's criterion that it yields such confusing results when applied to concrete human problems.

Excessive formalism and rigorism in the conception of duty, as they deprive it of content, affect its genuine authority. Though duty be the center of moral value, yet it can be center only in a circle. Kant's distinction of pathological love from practical-rational devotion is significant, but his moral depreciation of spontaneous love neglects an important factor in certain cases of moral excellence, too complex to be reduced to abstract formal statement. A mother is not the less virtuous because she loves the child of her dutiful care.

In emphasizing the rationality of the good will, Kant was not bound to adopt pure formalism in ethics. A more concrete view of rational character was available for him. The recognition of respect for rational character and personality would have yielded in his ethics an explicit synthesis of dutiful loyalty and spiritual perfection. These two are present in Kant's thought, but they are not adequately related, because in Kant's advance from the one to the other his formalism is not overcome.

A good, purely rational will, whose every act is a dutiful reaffirmation of the moral law, itself manifests absolute worth. It is not a means to anything beyond itself: "rational nature exists as an end in itself." So Kant's categorical imperative is given a second version, of the utmost ethical significance: "*So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only.*" [9] From the point of view of this principle the idea of duty reveals a deeper and more fertile meaning than is yielded by formalism. It is disclosed more clearly in what is called the higher life of man, but all the way through the basic truth obtains. In his resolute pursuit of truth, investigation of facts, rigorous logic, the scientist is respecting the dignity of the life of intelligence with which he is identi-

fied. The true artist, be he poet, painter, or musician, finds the fulfillment of his character in loyalty to the principle of beauty as it utters itself in him. In religious worship, reverence for the Divine arouses a counter-reverence for man, in all humility and surrender. The pursuit of truth, of beauty, of good, of God are manifold expressions of the fundamental self-recognition of man. The law to which a man is loyal is the law of his inmost being; it is not imposed on him from without. He can act not only in conformity to principle, but *on* principle; he can be the living bearer of ideal values. Therein is his moral dignity and worth.

But we are not to think only of the spiritual aristocracy of humanity. Kant's principle applies in the humblest daily life. For the moral dignity of a man does not depend upon intellectual maturity or artistic genius any more than on social rank and status. Respect for the claims of spiritual character is dynamic in all the individual virtues, and the corresponding respect for the human dignity of our fellowmen is basic in all social ethics. In the *Metaphysics of Ethics* Kant develops this idea further in his treatment of the duties owed by man to himself as a man, not a worm, as a person capable of self-reverence and self-judgment, self-perfection, and of his duties to his fellowmen: beneficence, gratitude, sympathy. Pervading all human relations is the importance of reverence for personality. Man is not to be treated as a means only: he is not just cannon-fodder, nor an animated tool, nor an instrument of pleasure or of profit. His energies may be employed for the achievement of various ends in instrumentalities physical and social, but the entire enterprise in which he is engaged must ultimately be subordinate to or in harmony with his human career and its principle of dignity. The laws which he obeys as a moral being he obeys dutifully, because ultimately he finds his self-recognition in them. Hence we get the third principle of ethics: *The will of every rational being is a universally self-legislative will.*[10] This principle of the *autonomy* of the moral will is regarded by Kant as fundamental to a true ethical system.

In this exaltation of the principle of human dignity, be it noted, Kant shows no sentimental idealizing of human actualities either primitive or civilized. In this respect he is to be distinguished from Rousseau. "Man is indeed unholy enough; but he must regard *humanity* in his own person as holy." This amazing fact, the moral dignity of the rational will in the face of the empirical nature of man, moves Kant to sublime rhetoric in his apotheosis of Duty: "*Duty!* Thou sublime and mighty name that dost embrace nothing charming or insinuating, but requirest submission, and yet seekest not to move the will by threatening aught that would arouse natural aversion or terror, but merely

holdest forth a law which of itself finds entrance into the mind, and yet gains reluctant reverence (though not always obedience), a law before which all inclinations are dumb, even though they secretly counterwork it; what origin is there worthy of thee, and where is to be found the root of thy noble descent which proudly rejects all kindred with the inclinations; a root to be derived from which is the indispensable condition of the only worth which men can give themselves?" [11] Kant's solution of this problem points to the power of the moral personality to affirm itself over and against the mechanism of nature. As this moral elevation of man is above empirical conditions, so it is not affected by empirical individual-social status. The categorical ethics of the dignity of man thus reveals itself as on principle democratic.

"In so far as men live under the guidance of reason," Spinoza had written, "thus far only they always necessarily agree in nature." [12] So Kant's categorical imperative, as it leads to the mutual recognition of the inviolable moral dignity of every person and to the idea of every rational will as universally legislative, gives rise to another conception which Kant regards as very fruitful: the idea of the *Kingdom or Realm of Ends.* This is a union of rational beings in a system of common laws to which they are loyal and with which they are identified. Each one is a member of the realm, subject to the laws which himself has legislated. Each one is a sovereign, himself author of the laws to which he faithfully conforms. Ideally this harmony of authority and allegiance would rule out any compulsion. But if in actuality the maxims of rational beings do not naturally agree with the principle of the will as universally legislative, then they *ought* to agree. The imperative character of the principle is then recognized as duty. In the kingdom of ends men respect in each other the pure rationality which the daily empirical round of events may not disclose, but which is nevertheless their essential character and destiny as moral agents. In distinction from the value, instrumental and replaceable, which other things in nature have, men are recognized as possessing intrinsic worth, that is, dignity; each in his own right a unique and indispensable member of the kingdom of ends. So by virtue of their moral capacity men are recognized as having that claim on each other which dignity alone involves.

We have ventured to read the larger meaning of Kant's basic moral principles. Certainly they are richly significant in revealing the individual and the social career of human personality. In this broader interpretation, however, the frame of the Kantian system has been neglected and its formal limitations have been transgressed, for we have regarded the categorical imperative as a concretely operating principle, the moral will as loyally achieving its perfection in the world of action,

and the kingdom of ends as the ideal progressively being realized within us all, the moral heart and core of human history.

We may say that this in substance is the moral faith of humanity, that if we are to take morality seriously, some such view of duty and of the higher career of man must be entertained. We shall see how Post-Kantian idealism in various ways sought to realize this prospect in ethics; and Kant himself regarded it as morally essential that men live their lives *as if* the ideal vision were a reality. Should we not, then, demand a revision of the description of human character as given in the *Critique of Pure Reason:* of man as merely subject to causal determination according to natural laws? But this was not Kant's procedure; he preferred to consider the more ultimate implications of morality as Postulates of Practical Reason. These he entertained in counterpart to the physical-scientific view of nature and human nature. A dualism thus arose, the overcoming of which the Kantian philosophy required but did not achieve. To the elements of this larger problem in which Kant involved his successors we must now turn our attention.

6. Kant's Postulates of Morality: Freedom

In his distinction of the categorical from the hypothetical imperatives, of the moral law from all laws of nature, Kant expressed his conviction that morality can nowise be derived from empirical sources. The morality of duty and of unconditional obligation cannot be grounded in experience, for experience is a system of causal relations in which everything depends on something else. Human conduct in the realm of nature can only be regarded as a nexus of relatively conditioned events. But the moral autonomy of the rational self-legislative will signifies action on principle, independent of empirical determination. Man seems to reveal here a duality of character. The categorical nature of moral obligation indicates the pure rationality of the will which it moves; it therefore transcends the empirical world of necessity and implies freedom. But its imperative character, the very idea of *ought*, implies the uncongeniality of the sphere of sense-experience in which the ideally free will actually operates. Thus moral obligation necessitates the postulation of human nature as at once determined and free, determined by the necessity of the causal nexus in which it is involved, yet acting freely in its moral capacity. Theoretically we are not prohibited from entertaining the notion of freedom; ethically we are compelled to maintain it, if morality is to have any significance. This, in the main, is Kant's theory of freedom as an ethical postulate.[13]

Kant's treatment of the problem of freedom discloses inconclusiveness and perhaps indecision. We may ask: How is this duality of

operation, causally determined and also free, to be conceived? Though every event in experience be causally necessary, may not the entire system be grounded in freedom? Then man's empirical character would be thoroughly determined, while his intelligible character, freely and universally legislative in the realm of ideal principles, would dominate in moral activity the empirical character. But could it really dominate it, so that a man might truly say in his daily life: "I can, since I ought"? This the intelligible character could achieve only in the medium of time, which it by definition transcends; or if the intelligible character were to affect the empirical timelessly, then the latter would have to be somehow motivated beyond the empirical range, which would be contrary to the conclusions of Kant's theory of experience. Thus, so long as we regard categorical imperatives as actually operative in human conduct, Kant's doctrine of transcendental freedom and of the empirical and the intelligible character seems to involve theoretical inconsistency.

The ambiguity of the categorical imperative is manifest in other ways. Can it be that we are aware of the sense of duty as we are aware of physical compulsion or mental constraint? If hearing the call of duty, we do not heed it, our act would be not only lacking in virtue but emphatically evil; we should be responsible for our betrayal of the moral will. But would we also be held responsible if we lacked altogether the awareness of the imperative which professedly is the very source and ground of all freedom and responsibility? If in such a case we should not be responsible or culpable, why should we be to blame if our rational will *cannot* prevail, so that, hearing the call of duty, we yet do not heed it? All such questions a strict Kantian may rule out of court: the categorical imperative precludes any inquiry into its origin or justification.[14] But if the free self-legislation of the moral will is wholly independent of the empirical character of a man, then how is the actual moral perfection of a man to be conceived? On the other hand, if in this perfection response coöperates with challenge, so that, in the words of Browning's "Rabbi ben Ezra,"

> . . . nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul,

then might not the recognition of the categorical imperative be attainable by the empirical path, and more generally, would not the relation of the empirical to the intelligible character call for revision in non-dualistic terms?

If we sought a precise statement of the sense in which the freedom of the intelligible character is to be understood, further confusion may be in store for us. Free it is of the causal determination by antecedent

conditions, but ultimately its activity is the expression of its rationality. That which the ideally good will *would* do, and which the good will hampered by the impediments of sense-experience *ought* to do, is nowise absolutely elective. Just because it is purely rational it is not arbitrary. If man's empirical character is linked with the causal nexus, and his intelligible character is the inevitable manifestation of eternal reason, then surely determinism of some sort is reaffirmed here. Freedom would seem to designate the self-determination of reason in distinction from the susceptibility of our empirical character to incitements and impulses. In the *Metaphysics of Ethics* Kant states explicitly: "The less a man is subject to physical compulsion and the more capable he is of moral compulsion (by the bare idea of duty), the freer he is." [15] Such a view would give a new meaning to responsibility, in self-representative and so accountable, acknowledged and answerable conduct. Freedom in this sense would be manifested gradually in a person's attainment of distinctive rôle and career. In this case also Kant's dualism of the empirical and the intelligible character would call for a radical revision.

Kant's elastic theory lends itself to still another interpretation. The doctrine that transcendental freedom is a postulate of practical reason might be taken to mean that we are to act *as if* we were legislators in the moral world. So we might ask now, not whether our acts are free but whether our attitude towards our acts is the attitude of free men. In this sense freedom would be taken not as a characteristic of certain specific acts and events, but rather as expressed in a certain point of view from which we may regard our conduct. Our acts are what they are, but we are free in rising above our acts to pronounce judgment upon them. We ought to act *as if* we were free agents: in this recognition and judgment is the affirmation of our moral freedom in our empirical servitude.

This attitude of the moral will, however, is presumably essential to all moral-rational beings. Freedom here does not mean spontaneity but rational-imperative judgment. This is not a negation of determinism but a heroic recognition of it, a rational verdict over conditions which reason ought to dominate. Or, better put, it is a concentration of the will on the dutiful allegiance rather than on ability or feasibility. There is to be no concession to status but a reaffirmation of the ideal: vigilantly imperative freedom. The deliberate self-discipline which it involves, a hardy and cheerful loyalty, is called by Kant "ethical ascetics." In terms of this conception of freedom moral progress could be conceived as the gradual surmounting of the contrast between aspiration and performance, between ideal verdict and factual conditions: but

along with the surmounting, a progressive exaltation of the imperative standard. So Kant writes in the *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason:* "To maintain a freedom perpetually threatened and endangered, it is necessary that we continue always armed and ready for a conflict." [16]

Our analysis of Kant's doctrine of moral freedom should reveal a radical defect in his ethical method. A morality which seeks its basis over and above the world of possible experience, while it may appear in the first chapter free from the impediments of the empirical and so may allow of a more sublime statement, yet finds in the end its noumenal dignity too dearly purchased. The 'as if' of Kant's system means either too little or too much. The moral law either applies really in the daily course of human experience, in which case the account of the moral will and of the empirical character should be revised so as to permit their organic relation; or else the moral law does transcend the empirical sphere, in which case the expression 'as if' has undertones of illusion.

Difficulties equally grave and due to the same basic ambiguity are disclosed in Kant's treatment of Immortality and God as Postulates of Practical Reason.

7. *Immortality and God as Ethical Postulates*

The speculative arguments for the immortality of the soul cannot engage us here. Both in the *Dreams of a Ghost-Seer* and in the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant had set aside this problem of a future life as one beyond the competence of human understanding. The only soul we know is the self of experience. When reason goes outside the process of self-consciousness to speculate about the permanence of a soul-entity, it becomes involved in confusion.

For Kant man's immortal destiny is properly an ethical problem, a postulate of practical reason, and only this view of it is of interest to us now. Kant proceeds to it as a result of his analysis of moral activity as purely rational respect for duty. No less emphatically than the Stoic sage Kant insists on the disinterested pursuit of virtue for its own sake. No ulterior considerations for the consequences or emoluments of righteousness are entertained in the truly moral motive: duty commands unconditional devotion.

The purity of the dutiful will thus rules out all hedonism. No regard for happiness is to govern the moral choice. But Kant does not dismiss happiness altogether; he had always regarded it as an element in the fulfillment of reasonable human existence. Already in his Pre-Critical ethics, as has been noted, worthiness to be happy as distinguished from happiness had been emphasized as the moral culmination. In this distinc-

tion happiness is recognized but is also assigned its place, as the result but not the aim of moral action. In the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant develops this idea in his analysis of the Highest Good, the *summum bonum.* This notion is in need of elucidation: "The *summum* may mean either the supreme (*supremum*) or the perfect (*consummatum*). . . . It has been shown . . . that virtue (as worthiness to be happy) is the *supreme* condition of all that can appear to us desirable, and consequently of all our pursuit of happiness, and is therefore the *supreme* good. But it does not follow that it is the whole and perfect good as the object of the desires of rational finite beings; for this requires happiness also." [17] So, while Kant reëmphasizes that the supreme devotion of the moral will is to virtue, namely *worthiness* to be happy, yet in the consummation of man's moral career his worthiness *to be happy* must find its realization.

In a rational universe virtue and happiness must find their confluence: How? The analytical reduction of the one to the other is, according to Kant, ruled out. Neither the Epicurean statement of virtue or moral good as the promotion of happiness, nor the Stoic explanation of true happiness as the serene conviction of virtue are admissible. The unity of the two must be synthetic. But in the world of experience we do not find that virtue, as defined by Kant, is either a condition or a result of happiness, universally. A purely rational career must therefore include man's prospect beyond this mortal span, to achieve the confluence of virtue and happiness. But the firm possession of this ideal of happiness proportioned to virtue involves the recognition of a rational direction of the universe to this effect: "in other words, it must postulate the *existence of God.*" [18]

The attachment of the argument for God's existence to this version of Kant's argument for immortality is significant. The virtuous cannot himself achieve happiness, either here or in the hereafter, because the achievement of happiness is beyond his province as a moral agent. The promotion of his happiness can only be the concern of others: so Kant includes in the moral life, together with the pursuit of our own perfection, the furtherance of the happiness of our fellowmen. We are told in Scripture to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and all these things "shall be added" unto us. But, even if we do not admit in this view of human destiny the least regard for the ultimate blessings of righteousness as an element in moral motivation, or rather just because we do not so admit it, the question arises whether this perfect good, *bonum consummatum,* requiring virtue plus happiness, is the imperative good of Kant's ethics. It is not: the demand for the confluence is in the ethics of the categorical imperative a subsidiary and

supplementary demand, a rider on the moral law as Kant formulates it. If matching happiness to virtue is the sovereign function of God, then neither this conception of God's nature nor the corresponding argument for God's existence are strictly moral in Kant's sense of that term or admissible in his rigorous ethics.

Alongside of the argument just considered is another version of Kant's reflection on the problem of God and human destiny. Kant probes further the implications of the highest good as the *bonum supremum.* What does its perfection involve? Virtue in the ethics of the categorical imperative demands the rational will's mastery over impulse. Purely rational perfection is thus the ideal and ultimate goal of every moral choice: I ought to achieve a perfectly holy will. But this ideal, necessarily implied in each step of our moral activity, is not realizable in any finite time. Our infinite progress towards the infinitely perfect ideal is therefore a postulate of our moral career. The reality of this Infinite Perfection is also affirmed: in this sense "it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God." [19] The reasoning here is no more, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," but rather this: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This is Kant's more distinctively moral argument for immortality and God.

The discordance between duty and inclination is in the foreground of Kant's ethics; hence its imperative character. "No imperatives hold for the Divine will or in general for a *holy* will; *ought* is here out of place, because the volition is already of itself necessarily in unison with the law." [20] God eternally *is* as I *ought* to be and what I require immortality to *attain.* But does this mean that morality points to the ultimate transcendence of the dutiful-arduous activity which *is* virtue? From this point of view the conception of the Realm of Ends, as an ideal of eternally more perfect achievement and prospect, gains in depth and range of significance. Kant's definition of religion, subjectively regarded as "the acknowledgment and recognition of all our duties as if they were divine commandments," [21] may be reinterpreted to express the perennial challenge of the ideal of perfection to the aspiring moral will, actively to reaffirm itself and in its reaffirmation to gain a higher prospect of perfection and respond to a still loftier challenge.

8. Strength and Weakness of Kant's Ethics

The strength of the Kantian ethics is in its imperative note, in the insistence on the normative character of moral judgment and on genuine disinterested devotion to ideal values as the essence of virtue, in its un-

qualified respect for rational character and for the moral dignity of man. Against all theological doctrines of virtue as pious or calculating subservience to God, and against the various accounts of morality as manifold gratification or prudence, Kant held fast to the ideas of duty and dignity and irreplaceable worth. But for the fruition of these ideals, which in his judgment were alone deserving of reverence, the field of experience, as he had cultivated it, did not provide suitable soil. Hence the ambiguity and the dualism in which he was involved. The empirical content of nature and human nature, the causal nexus in space and time, reveals no element of real worth; the noumenal dignity of the categorical realm suffers from lack of content.

The synthesis and the ultimate integrity of these two was required but it was not attained by Kant himself. "He had really before him all the elements of a teleological interpretation,—the concept of a kingdom of ends, the unity of rational beings, perfection and happiness as necessary objects of volition, the moral law as the natural law in the domain of freedom, . . . but he does not draw the conclusion that the moral law is the natural law of the kingdom of ends, in the sense that on its realization depends the maintenance and the actualization of that Kingdom." [22] The manifold endeavors to achieve this synthesis and integrity of nature and spirit characterize as they also distinguish the philosophical systems of Post-Kantian Idealism. But before turning to this period of German thought, which manifests the tremendous germinating power of Kant's basic ideas, a brief survey of the general cultural transition may serve to give us more definite orientation and perspective.

CHAPTER XXII

FROM LESSING TO GOETHE



1. Lessing's Gospel of Tolerance and Spiritual Endeavor

Kant's reformulation of philosophical method signalized a turning-point in culture. The "Copernican revolution" which Kant recognized in his critical procedure concerned not only theory of knowledge: the self-recognition of intelligence in nature opened new vistas in every direction of human experience. The new philosophy was a mighty germinating power, but the rich fruition was made possible by the prepared field which Germany provided. Those who espoused Kant's method or sought to revise and perfect it, those who opposed it, even those who did not understand it technically, all shared in the quickening of self-consciousness that characterized the new age. The cult of tolerance and philanthropy, the vision of boundless progress on new paths of human order and endeavor, the disdain for traditional forms and the demand for radical refashionment, of which the French Revolution was the outstanding expression, the more intimate and no less intense plea of the heart that would not be denied, whether in the gospel of Rousseau or in the lyric outpourings of the Romantic poets: in them all was the challenge of Spirit moving from the periphery to the center. Kant's philosophy may be seen in truer perspective in this larger cultural setting. The year 1781, the year of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, was also marked by the death of Lessing and by the publication of Schiller's *Robbers*.

The influence of French thought on the German Enlightenment was decisive. The more critical German minds reacted against French rationalism and traditionalism, seeking inspiration in the works of English genius, especially in the drama, Shakespeare against Racine. But French leadership and stimulus were apparently alike in the spirit and in the program of reform. It was Voltaire and the Encyclopedists who first championed the English-Lockean philosophy as a platform of reconstruction. The German Enlightenment, however, manifests more than passive responsiveness either to French or to English ideas.

In Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) creative power was sustained by unwavering devotion to truth and disdain of compromises.

He beheld Leibniz's boundless prospect: activity as the essence of things, maturing intelligence in the strategy of nature, unblemished and prevailing perfection despite all error and evil, the world as the Republic of Minds. Lessing sought to free this vision from doctrinal limitations and to give it fulfillment of expression as a living ideal for modern humanity.

We should mistake his temper if we were to regard him simply as a Leibnizian. He was not concerned with systematic philosophical construction and he was not consciously the member of a school. When he had to avow his kinships and special devotion, it was Spinoza rather than Leibniz that he acknowledged, yet scarcely confessing himself a disciple. So he told Jacobi: "If I were to count myself a follower of anyone, I should recognize no one else." [1] Spinoza's pantheism expressed Lessing's idea of God better than Leibniz's theology with its accommodation to traditional orthodoxy. But in spite of his veneration for Spinoza, Lessing's view of the world was Leibnizian: not a system of eternal relations but a living, striving, attaining reality: not geometry, but history. Thus marching with Leibniz beyond Spinoza as he was then understood, to a more dynamic or dramatic view of the world, yet refusing to surrender Spinoza's cosmic piety or to make any Leibnizian compromises with the theologians, Lessing first expressed the temper and the moving ideas of the new age, and expressed them the more effectively because they were not formulated in technical treatises but uttered with poetic power.

Lessing is not content to expound activism and perfectibility in general. He espouses the cause of progress and enlightenment as the divine purpose in the world, and this heroic idealism becomes his religion. In his tireless endeavor he is sustained by his devotion to truth, to truth active and growing as man's intelligence matures. Thus human life becomes to him a quest and a challenge; from higher levels of achievement, fuller expansion and range of outlook and energies towards ever vaster and boundless vistas.

The ideal of perfectionism characterized the best minds of the German Enlightenment. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Lessing's intimate friend, illustrated in his own career the wisdom of the policy of religious tolerance which he advocated. Mendelssohn's ethical ideal was one of spiritual effort after perfection, which he regarded as the fundamental dynamic in human life and as man's highest principle. The moral life is for him the most natural and appropriate life for man. The necessarily social character of man's endeavor to realize his full fruition dignifies morally the active participation of each in the common work of enlightenment and civilization. But Mendelssohn was not satisfied

with a naturalistic statement of virtue. When he sought proofs of God's existence, when he demanded assurance of human immortality, he was contemplating also the fuller meaning and justification of man's moral career. For without immortality moral endeavor appeared to him finally frustrated and meaningless. What gave Lessing's moral utterances a different tone from Mendelssohn's was his concentration on the dignity of high endeavor, pursuit of truth, progressive achievement, rather than on final consummation either here or in any hereafter.

Lessing's consecration to Truth as the prime condition of perfection and blessedness makes his career one of self-conscious creative enlightenment. In every field of his activity he would clear up confusion and prejudices. So we must regard his social liberalism, his leadership in literary and artistic criticism, his championship of new ideals for the German drama, his courageous advocacy of the principles and methods of Biblical criticism. These were all expressions of his basic demand for enlightenment, of his devotion to truth. He would have chosen the Gospel words for his own: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Characteristic is his version of the Faust-drama, of which we have only a fragment. Satan would destroy Faust through his love of knowledge, but it is the devil's delusion that man's pursuit of truth can ever cause his downfall; in the end Faust is justified in his devotion and moves to new inquiry with redoubled zeal.

Lessing devoted so much of his energy to the cause of religious freedom because he recognized the central importance of religious convictions in human life, and therefore the spiritually disastrous effects of religious intolerance. Against traditional rigidity of dogma and ritual, against sectarian exclusiveness and hostility, he advocated humanitarian community of spiritual effort, the all-human worship of searching minds. This ideal of tolerance is the theme of his drama *Nathan the Sage*. Deeper than any specific traditional expression is the truth of religion in the thought and in the lives of men. How can any people have a monopoly of the Divine truth?—

> To whom does God belong? What were a God,
> Belonging to a man?

Mankind needs, not formal uniformity of belief, but community of genuine spiritual effort, not conversion to doctrine but aversion to prejudice and passivity, alert and generous endeavor. But his endeavor must be more than barren longing: and here Lessing anticipated and criticized a weakness of Romanticism which Rousseau had manifested:

> How much less hard are pious reveries
> Than upright actions? . . .[2]

So in Nathan's story to Sultan Saladin, the judge told the three brothers, each of whom claimed that he had the one true ring: the true jewel has the marvelous power of making its possessor beloved of God and man. This is your test, and this the test also for Christian, Mohammedan, or Jew. It is by its light and blessing in human life that the truth is revealed.

In his work, *The Education of Mankind,* which may be regarded as his spiritual testament, Lessing contemplates the history of religion as God's progressive self-revelation to man, as man's education in the perception of the divine. This rise in perfection is manifold; it reveals a maturing conception of God, a change in emphasis from ritual and dogma to conduct and critical conviction, and an equally important change in religious-moral motivation. Beyond the Scriptures of the past and present, Lessing looks forward to the Gospel of the Future, in which pure moral devotion would replace orthodox conformity, and in which men would obey God's laws not for the sake of rewards or fear of punishments, but heroically, "doing the good just because it is the good." [3] Here was a promise of the ethics of the Categorical Imperative.

Lessing championed disinterested inquiry, unpartisan reform, tolerant piety, loyalty to virtue for its own sake. The intrinsic worth of spiritual endeavor was prized by him above any final attainment: "Did the Almighty, holding in his right hand *Truth,* and in his left, *Search after Truth,* deign to tender me the one I might prefer,—in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request, *Search after Truth.*" [4]

2. *Herder's Philosophy of History*

The achievement of a historical sense, which marks the advance from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, connects Lessing's name with that of Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803). In the book of nature Herder read the revelation of "one increasing purpose"; the interpreting of it became his great work: *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Mankind.* This purpose and significance, in his view, are not alien to nature and divinely superadded. Herder begins as a naturalist: "the earth is a star among stars." He would trace the rise and development of human powers in relation to natural conditions, and his treatment of racial traits and of the growth of institutions reminds us of Montesquieu's. But the deep conviction which is progressively confirmed by this sort of naturalistic survey is for Herder the conviction of the potential and gradually realized spirituality of nature: the eternal self-utterance of the Divine in the course of existence.

Culture, language, institutions are the pulses and the pillars of the world. Man's form and anatomical structure, stronger in defense than

in attack, indicates a peaceful existence as normal for him. His mental-spiritual nature and needs demand social expression; man finds his goal and his meaning in humanity, and in its highest expression, religion. The spiritual culture of mankind is the most natural course of human destiny; it is the rational aim of man and the source of his highest satisfaction. "Ever renewing its youth in its forms, the spirit of humanity flourishes and comes to new life in nations, generations and races." [5] To this distinctively human career death cannot be a final and insuperable barrier. Of this Herder is certain; he regards this life and mankind's present estate as the foretaste of still higher achievement, beyond the bonds of mortality. So man on earth is a representative of two worlds, rising from brutishness to the higher humanity of spirit. This is his career and this is his moral challenge. God has placed our destiny in our hands. By the very laws of man's nature his individual life finds its fruition in the larger life of humanity, in civilization, and his activity and endeavor here on earth point beyond, to eternity.

In all this career of spirit there was for Herder nothing occult or supernatural. He reacted sharply not only against the traditional contrast between this world and the City of God, but also against Kant's implied or unresolved dualism of nature and spirit, the realm of causal necessity and the Realm of Ends and categorical imperatives. Moral obligation for Herder has its roots in human experience; conscience matures with the development of civilization. Man's highest sanctions and ideals are beyond his actual attainments, but they are in the line of his normal career. Though we may not always comprehend nature, yet we may be sure that we never transcend it: as our lowest is in it, so our highest is not above it. "The work of Providence proceeds according to general great laws in its eternal course; it is with diffident step that we now turn to consider it more closely." [6] The 'diffidence' itself is the sense of the inexhaustible potencies of nature; it is the obverse expression of a cosmic optimism which sustains moral endeavor and reveals history as the epic of spirit.

3. Romantic-Sentimental Reactions

The reluctant initial support which the Kantian method found in philosophical circles changed steadily to intense and spreading enthusiasm. Resistance to the rising tide of criticism called for some accommodation and skilful tactics. In ethics we may note the persisting influence of English and Scottish ideas; against Kant's categorical imperative, morality is still conceived in terms of consequences, or virtue is referred to moral sense and to the generous response of the heart, not to practical reason but to feeling.

Effective and more far-reaching in its influence was the resistance to Kant's Practical Reason and to his stern duty in the name of intuition, faith, and mystical assurance. The leader of this sentimental-mystical aggression was Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743-1819). His goal and his own more distinctive strategy may be seen to advantage by a glance of comparison with the procedure of Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788), the self-styled "Magus of the North." Hamann combined desultory studies and unsystematic thought with tenacity of devout convictions. Conceptual analysis and logical demonstration were to him abstract and artificial; his philosophy, if it can be so called, was an ardent plea for the recognition of the immediate response of the soul to reality, man's direct communion with God in intuition and feeling. Against reason, Hamann championed illumining faith: in faith distinctions are resolved, oppositions overcome; immediate certainty-in-communion is attained. So the godly life is not an application of rational conclusions but the intimate outpouring of the devout heart. "Think less and live more!" he exclaims.[7]

In place of Hamann's recalcitrancy and perversely oracular expression, Jacobi preferred subtler reasonableness of argument and a persuasive style. But in Jacobi also we find impatience with analysis or abstract demonstration, romantic unreasoned convictions, predilection for individual response and emotional fervor, tender confidences of 'beautiful souls.' His reaction towards rationalism was negative throughout; it showed itself in his treatment of Spinoza. Despite his genuine admiration for Spinoza's thoroughness, integrity, and natural piety, Jacobi found in the very consistency of Spinoza's system the most perfect expression of the basic defect of all rationalism. It leads to universal necessity, to fatalism and atheism, to denial of all genuine morality and religion. So all reasoned systems must find their final pattern in Spinozism, and their ultimate futility. Against the ever inconclusive mediation of reason is the immediate penetration of intuition and faith. In his earlier writings Jacobi had opposed faith to understanding and reason; but in his later works, seeking by more acceptable phraseology to conciliate the hostility of critical minds to his position without altering his basic thesis, he calls reason the power of the mind to grasp truth without demonstration, its inherent sense and taste for truth.[8]

As the ultimately real is never proved but is immediately felt and believed, so the genuinely good is not to be analysed and abstractly vindicated; it is to be felt, loved, and lived. As the Sabbath is for man and not man for the Sabbath, so the moral law is for the sake of man and not man for the sake of the moral law. Deeper and more reliable

than fulfillment of the law is the true feeling for the fine and lovely act. If Desdemona violates the formal principle of veracity when with her last breath she seeks to shield Othello from the charge of murder, she is the more truly loyal to a higher principle of the heart.[9] Morality is not in unconditional obligation to categorical imperatives, but in the free and wholehearted espousal of the good, with unquestioning trust that Divine Providence will make it prevail. Love of the right and pious assurance make the life of virtue a blessed life. The primal source of moral judgment is in incontrovertible moral sense and feeling. Its ultimate reliance is on the reality of the supersensible, on God, which is reaffirmed by every moral and spiritual act. We may see here both the elements of kinship of Jacobi's ethics with Kant's and their opposition in basic principles and procedure.

The characters in Jacobi's philosophical romances,—Allwill, Woldemar,—are forever probing and questioning their hearts. Jacobi aimed to have in his morality the intimacy and the warmth which were lacking in the Kantian, but he lacked the sterling integrity and the strength of the ethics of duty. In Jacobi's emphasis on intimate assurance and generous and godly feeling there was an indulgence of personal temperament, a romantic hazard. It led to humoring of caprice and relaxing of moral convictions, or to fanatical rigidity and obscurantism.

Romantic untrammeled self-expression characterized the thought and the life of Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), who called his philosophy "a system of fragments." Not logical consistency characterized it but emotional dogmatism, unsteady but intense in the assertion of his feeling of the moment. A brilliant, versatile mind, ardent and headlong in thought and expression alike, with boundless sweep of aspiration and ideal longings, yet unscrupulous in self-indulgence, Friedrich Schlegel represented the boldest romantic ventures: protest against any conventional sanctions, emphasis on vehemence and resistance to consistency, even to consistency with oneself: the exaltation of prevailing impulse, the gospel of the unquestionable subjectivity of genius. The world was to him a succession of mirrors in which the beautiful soul reflected itself. In every experience and relation of life, even the most intimate, the genius revealed, indulged, proclaimed itself.

Theory and action conditioned each other in Schlegel's career, for he was bent on preaching what he practiced. His studies of classical culture, of which he was a master, had centered his attention on aristocratic excellence and freedom of self-utterance. The common sort of man, as the ungifted writer, required the leading strings of tradition, but the genius made his own laws and forms, free master of 'the gram-

mar of virtue.' His life vindicated itself by its rich spontaneity rather than by the conformity to any set principles.

Of this romantic individualism, Schlegel's *Lucinde* may be regarded as the manifesto. To love Dorothea Veit, Mendelssohn's daughter, and to have her for himself was his right; to dismiss her banker-husband without a thought, his privilege, as a man of genius; to submit to the formalities of divorce and remarriage, would have been weak concessions to common forms: on principle these two would consult only the promptings of their hearts. And because this romantic achievement was itself a masterpiece of living, so Schlegel felt bound to give the world the lyrical benefit of it. When self-indulgence is thus erected into an ideal, and gratification finds added zest in believing itself the ritual of a new and loftier morality, then license may be paraded as noble freedom, and even unblushing sensuality may be dressed up and perfumed as the philosophy of free genius. Ever-seeking a satisfaction which it never completely experiences, the imagination of genius creates ideal worlds which it in turn dissolves: always superior to its achievements, never equal to its aspiration, its career of insatiate self-expression is a life of irony.

Though this romantic self-engrossment found a reckless and even corrupt expression in *Lucinde*, so that even the romanticists questioned its good taste, aesthetically and morally, the basic principles of self-loyalty and exaltation of love thus compromised were all the more in need of vindication. This vindication Schleiermacher undertook, subjecting the book of his dear friend to the most radical reinterpretation, so as to find in it the community of body and soul, of sense and spirit in love, and thus to proclaim the deeper moral and even religious significance of *Lucinde*. But if Schleiermacher thus saw the higher and deeper meaning of love, of which *Lucinde* rehearsed the manifold indulgence, Schlegel showed only too lamentably how the noblest feelings incline to depravity when unsustained by a basic moral devotion. Unwittingly Schlegel was illustrating in his wilful book the truth of Kant's emphasis on the dutiful will.

The unreliability of headlong sentiment was shown in Schlegel's complete reversal of position later in life. In 1808 he and Dorothea, whom he had finally married in regular style, both joined the Roman Catholic Church. The former champion of boundless freedom now adopted the principles of sovereign authority and became as zealous in his advocacy of religious and political conservatism as he had been in his earlier spirit of rebellion. He excluded *Lucinde* from his Collected Works; in his *Philosophy of Life*, published at the close of his career,

he came forward as a protagonist of order and stability of institutions. The former rhapsodist of free love ended by exalting "the fundamental law of Christian wedlock" and "the inviolable maintenance of this sacred law of marriage." [10]

The distrust of mere conceptual analysis, the ideal of boundless vision and lyrical soul-utterance, prerogatives of genius, the exaltation of the moral will above the intellect, and of creative imagination above both, the preference of enthusiastic assurance to logical conclusiveness and of mystical fervor to dogmatic theology: all these characteristics of romanticism found expression in the poetical philosophy of Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772-1801) who wrote under the name of "Novalis" and whose premature death cut short a career of the greatest promise in German literature. His personal nobility and charm drew to him the leading spirits of the Romantic epoch in Germany; his need of an object of consuming devotion expressed itself not only in his tragic love which is uttered throughout his poetry, but also in his admiration for Plato and Spinoza, for Schiller, for Fichte, and for Goethe.

Profoundly convinced of the deep cosmic significance of moral activity, inner core of man's being and index of reality, Novalis combined his poetic-idealistic and his Christian convictions in his apotheosis of love and found the supreme utterance of spirit in poetic activity. God is love: not only morality has its essence in love, but love is the heart of all personality, the goal and final meaning of Nature, the fountain-source and the sea of the divine stream of poetry. "Love is the ultimate aim of world-history, the Amen of the universe." [11] Moral feeling, the consciousness of 'ought,' is the feeling of creative ability; it reveals to us a divine communion and artistry in the alleged mechanism of nature. Nature is a work of art, the love-dream and the phantasy of the Cosmic Poet. So the poet on earth is the most godlike of men, for the essence of morality is to be as good and as poetical as possible. And the poet is closest to reality, for the essence of the real is activity, and the highest activity is that of creative genius. The poet understands nature better than the scientist, there is more truth in poems and fairy-tales than in chronicles: "The world becomes a dream; the dream, a world." [12] Not in the recital of stiff data nor in the exhibition of bloodless concepts is reality to be revealed; it is always most intimate mood and spirit; only the heart can understand and respond to it in love, and only lyrical and fairy speech can express it.

So the poet is the true seer and prophet, and the love which consumes him is his insight into the heart of things. As Spinoza, whom Novalis called "the god-intoxicated man," saw in the whole course of nature ultimately God, so for Novalis philosophy itself is the nostalgia of the

soul, the longing to be at home in the cosmos. "It can bake no bread, but it can give us God, freedom, and immortality." [13] In finding God we find ourselves; the world is explained as philosophy and poetry are understood, as we and our creative activity become clear to ourselves. So by ennobling our passions we rise to the highest love, and in rising we find ourselves. The final mystery which we seek to understand, we carry it in our own bosoms. Back of the veil of the goddess of Sais which we seek to pierce is,—our own self. "Whither are we going, then?—Ever homeward bound." [14] So as a philosopher and a poet alike, Novalis surrendered himself to the fairy enchantment of reality, and in the lyrical chant of it sought to find wisdom. Not separating the prose of reality from the poetry of fiction, as he came to believe that Goethe had done in *Wilhelm Meister*, he sought to achieve their indissoluble union, and in this spirit wrote his uncompleted *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, which he intended as a direct counterpart to Goethe's work.

4. Ethics and Aesthetics in Schiller

The genius of Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) united poetic with reflective power. No one responded more significantly and creatively than he to the two high sources of inspiration in German thought, Goethe and Kant. Goethe stirred Schiller to more mature poetic expression, as the living embodiment of creative spirit. Schiller understood the nature of that genius and interpreted it to Goethe. In the philosophy of Kant, to which he gave years of devoted study, Schiller found a reasoned statement of truths and realities to which his own mind sought to give more concrete and living utterance. Beyond the range of nature, Kant contemplated the higher values of Spirit. Always at home in nature, Goethe was to Schiller the visible realization of the naturalness of the ideal. To regain spirit in nature without surrendering its dignity and purity, was Schiller's goal in his reinterpretation of Kant.

Certain striking epigrams which have become commonplaces of philosophical writing give us perhaps the wrong perspective in considering Schiller's attitude towards Kant. The Kantian ethics insisted on the pure rationality of the dutiful will, as distinguished from any merely natural attachment. Shall we, then, depreciate maternal affection and wholehearted friendship? Schiller's satirical lines are known to all:

> Willingly serve I my friends; but, alas, I do it with pleasure;
> Therefore I often am vex'd that no true virtue I have.
> —As there is no other means, thou hadst better begin to despise them;
> And with aversion, then, do that which thy duty commands.[15]

But this tone of deliberate ridicule nowise expresses Schiller's estimate of Kant's ethics of duty. He could champion it as eloquently as Kant: "If you confess the truth because it is the truth, and if you practice justice because it is justice, you have made of a particular law the law of all possible cases, and treated one moment of your life as eternity. . . . The judgment of all spirits is expressed by our own, and the choice of all hearts is represented by our own act." [16] It is because he cherishes the principle of noble devotion that Schiller was impatient with the opposition of duty to natural inclination. Schiller's characteristic attitude towards Kant was never one of hostility, nor even of criticism; he regarded himself confessedly as a Kantian, but would temper the austerity of the master's doctrine by revealing the naturalness of duty in the morally mellowed life.

The achievement of this synthesis of spirit and nature was a recognized aim of Post-Kantian philosophy and, as we shall observe, was pursued in various directions. In Schiller's personality poetic creativeness and moral endeavor and exaction vie for predominance; moral perfection could not be perfection to him if it lacked the note of cherished beauty. He had been transported by the Greek union of goodness and loveliness. This undivided estate of man's soul which had characterized classical antiquity at its best, Schiller would regain for modern civilization: "Man not only *may* but *should* bring pleasure and duty into harmony." [17] Inclination is not necessarily opposed to duty: the two are both rooted in nature. Their distinction, their opposition, their agreement represented various stages in human development. Mere inclination would not yield moral worth, but true goodness does not require the spurning of all inclination by the sublime imperatives of duty. For virtue to Schiller is precisely "an inclination to duty." The idea of duty need not have that Kantian rigor from which all the Graces shrink. The ideals which the moral will recognizes and respects as duties express man's highest essence and can engage his consuming love. Where duty and love, reason and inclination are in perfect agreement, there we have the "beautiful soul," consummate human perfection. No particular wish or volition or action expresses its excellence, but its entire character. Its love does not become sensual desire, nor its obedience, fear; it unites dignity with grace.

Kant, replying to Schiller, denies that pleasantness can be associated with the awe and respect aroused by the dignity of the moral law, but he finds in the idea of duty "a feeling of sublimity of our own destiny, which attracts us more than any beauty." [18] Kant is concerned to insist on the sublimity and the imperativeness of duty; Schiller, on its appeal to the 'beautiful soul' and on the wholehearted response to it,

beyond mere obedience, to be sure, yet not only in respect but in love. In Kant's ethics, though actually the dutiful will is ever imperious over resistant inclination, it points to its ideal perfection as a holy will, in which this conflict is transcended. This holiness, or rather this love of the beauty of holiness, Schiller would realize on earth, and his words call to mind the speech of Socrates in the *Symposium.*

For this realization Schiller relies on our aesthetic nature. The two anchors of virtue, in his judgment, are religion and taste. The cultivation of taste engaged his deepest thought. His Letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* contain the best expression of his aesthetic-moral ideal. The conflict between reason and sense in human nature is not to be resolved either in terms of easy sensuality or in austere commitment to principles. The inner spirit must become objectified, and the external objectivity must gain form and significance. Aesthetic culture expands the range and variety of our significant experience; we see the most of others and are most fully and truly ourselves. So we attain the highest plenitude of being.

It is in the spontaneous aesthetic experience of *play* that man is completely human, realizing and expressing his whole nature and achieving beauty. In Schiller's thought this spontaneous and harmonious play of all man's faculties in aesthetic experience corresponds to the pure disinterested respect for the moral law of Kant's dutiful will. But instead of Kant's austere respect for the imperative ideal, Schiller points to the wholehearted espousal of it by cultivated spirit, reason and sense. "By beauty the sensuous man is led to form and to thought; by beauty the spiritual man is brought back and restored to the world of sense." So the unprincipled slave of passions and impulses is raised to a recognition of law and form; his free devotion is more real than any exacted obedience, and in the transcendence of his low attachments he finds his own higher loyalties and his truer self. "There is no other way to make a reasonable being out of a sensuous man than by making him first aesthetic." Because in the experience of beauty his whole being has been harmoniously engaged, he is truly free, not drawn this way or that by particular disordered desires. In the attainment of integrity and freedom of character a complete self-identification with the ideal is achieved which is the mark of moral perfection. "When we find in man the signs of a pure and disinterested esteem, we can infer that this revolution has taken place in his nature, and that humanity has really begun in him." Through free interplay of reason and sense in aesthetic experience, the rightful dominion of reason is naturally attained. In this endeavor to realize the naturalness and the humanity of the ideal,

without neglecting its sublime dignity, above uncultivated sense, Schiller expresses some of the deepest convictions of our modern culture.[19]

5. *Goethe and Philosophy*

The philosophy of Goethe (1749-1832) is original not because it is novel but because it is thoroughly his own. It is not a part of his learning but of his experience. He responds to other thinkers, assimilating or rejecting, but always remains himself, and the direction is his own. The dominant idea, aim and touchstone of Goethe's thinking, is his deep conviction of a living principle in nature, in the external world and in humanity. As the life and spirit of a living being that is not superimposed upon its many members but permeates each part, so is nature's unity. Nature is not a sum or a heap; it is not fragmentary, but integral in each part:

> Nature no kernel has,
> Nor shell;
> Her all in every part doth dwell.[20]

To such a pantheist the French materialism of the day was unthinkable. For the emancipating work of the French Enlightenment, Goethe had words of praise, and for Voltaire in particular; but the crass materialism in which it ended impressed him as sterile. He rejected it, as alien to his spirit, this account of the world in terms of mere matter in motion, frictions, contacts, collisions, masses and dissolution of masses, nothing more! "It seemed to us so gray, cimmerian, so deadly." [21] In this resistance to what was spiritually dull in the French Enlightenment, Goethe took his rank with the men who were championing another, more humane idea. The violent romantic rebellion of Storm and Stress certainly stirred the young Goethe: the longing for boundless freedom, the cult of the titanic, the impatience with any formal bond, the disdain for tradition. But Goethe's prevailing sanity and saving grace of humor were bound to lead him to that aspiring but serene activity which became increasingly characteristic of him as he matured.

With Herder, Goethe was gaining a historical sense and the deep cultural insight that comes from alert tolerance. Goethe did not really need Herder to reveal nature to him as the matrix and the living scene of spirit; but Herder did lead him to perceive more clearly the reach and the roots of the spiritual realm, its order and its onward movement through history. So Goethe was enabled to go beyond Herder, to achieve a synthesis of Herder's humanism and of what passed for nat-

uralism in the eighteenth century. In this synthesis material nature was not merely material, nor mind a mere ripple in the Dead Sea of matter. But while firmly resisting the materialists, Goethe found equally unconvincing and uncongenial all philosophers who sought to find reality above nature, and sat as it were in judgment of nature. So, against the uncomprehending view of nature from without and the condescending view of it from above, Goethe saw a really true view of it from within, a view of nature entire and living. Ancient hylozoism, the conception of the whole world as alive, engaged his imagination early, but was too naïve to hold his intellect. It was not until he came to Spinoza that Goethe found a kindred philosophy.

Goethe's own mind was thoroughly prepared in attitude for Spinoza's monism. It was Spinoza's idea of the cosmic unity of the order pervading all things which impressed Goethe. But he did not master all of Spinoza's apparatus, nor did he follow him the whole way. To feel himself one with Nature was a sublime experience, but Goethe insisted on feeling himself *one*. Spinoza's mind was filled with the divine Nature in which all things are: Goethe's mind contemplated poetically the perfection of all things that are thus one in the divine Nature. This more poetic or more dramatic Spinozism of Goethe led him to further divergence. It is not only the monism of the all-embracing world-*order;* it is the monism of the all-pervading, self-revealing divine *activity*. It is the drama of nature, in which all things, and especially all persons, are evolving and perfecting their respective rôles. Goethe does not depreciate finite personality but demands an immortal destiny for it. If my essence is in and of the universe, and this essence is unique activity, then my extinction is ruled out. So Goethe was bound in his more mature thinking, while never losing his loyalty to Spinoza, to revise the doctrine radically, so as to gratify his keen poetic sense of the characters, the rôles, the living action of the cosmic drama. Goethe's philosophy is thus a Spinozism pulsating with life and active character.

Goethe lived in the most intimate responsiveness to the life and spirit of his time, but with a freedom from partisanship that was a part of his Olympian spirit. It may serve to explain his relation to his greatest contemporary. He does not seem to have sensed the epoch-making significance of Kant's works when first published. All Germany was reading, thinking, teaching, disputing Kant, but, in spite of Jacobi's urging, Goethe had read but little of the Critical philosophy. It was really Schiller's devotion to Kantian studies which aroused Goethe's interest, but Schiller did not think that Kant could give him, Goethe, anything. Goethe read Kant's *Critiques* with no thought of taking sides, but only anxious to see what Kant might have for him. Goethe's studies,

as his passions, were means to an ever fuller and more mature poetic utterance.

That real knowledge was neither in passive reception from without, nor yet in purely rational notions, was as clear to Goethe as to Kant. The Kantian insistence on the integrity of nature in the subject-object world of experience was in line with Goethe's fundamental line of thought. But there was in Kant a sceptical strain and also a new supernaturalism, or rather a new cleavage between the world of nature and the supreme ideals. Goethe opposed them both. Spirit and nature could not thus be only counterpoised: unless they were also integrated in a higher synthesis, one or the other must prevail, in a one-sided philosophy.

The main Post-Kantian idealists, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, were in turn called to professorships at the University of Jena, largely owing to Goethe's influence at the Court of Weimar. Goethe knew them all well, learned a deal from each one, but remained unconvinced. The unity of spirit and nature which he sought could not be in a moral exaltation of spirit at the expense of nature, nor in vague effacement of differences between these two, nor in a too logical and dialectical synthesis. Goethe demanded a living union. This demand was the deep expression of his whole being, which he found vindicated everywhere. The two-lobed leaf of the oriental gingo-tree transplanted in his Weimar garden became to him a symbol of his own inmost life:

> Do you not feel it in my poems?—
> I am twofold, and yet one! [22]

"Twofold and yet one!" is just the point: the world discloses not bare identity of parts, nor yet random and irreducible differences, but rather the living organic unity of diverse parts and elements. This entire philosophical problem, and also its solution, Goethe has stated in two packed lines:

> To reach unto the Infinite,
> Distinguish first, but then, unite! [23]

Kant had done the former, the distinguishing, and while he had not achieved the synthesis, he had emphasized the demand for it and ruled out some pretended solutions. Kant had beaten off interloping spirituality in the shape of teleology, and on the other hand he had exposed the spurious systems of morality, hedonistic and sentimental. He had thus imposed the demand for a real synthesis.

Especially did Goethe value Kant's aesthetics, not because of its detailed perfection or even adequacy, but because of the profound insight

of its central idea. Just as Kant recognized no final causes in nature, so likewise he admitted no ulterior purpose in art. In the work of art the Word has become flesh; the idea has gained sensible form and substance, and in the perfection of this embodiment has found its full self-realization. But this naturalness of art suggested to Goethe, if not an aesthetic view of nature, at any rate a sense of kinship between the two realms of spirit and nature. The great artist literally holds the mirror to nature: in both nature and art the whole is living in each part; the idea is sensibly apparent. Nature utters spirit. Was this the further function of art, to reveal to us nature herself as the cosmic artist, uttering her meaning in living forms from the lowest types of existence clear up to man? And did not Kant find man's direct knowledge of the absolutely real in his recognition of the moral law, the categorical imperative? Virtue, the life of duty, is not a means to something ulterior, but is its own justification; man's own self-perfecting is the highest Ought; the achievement of personality, itself the chief fruition of nature, is our supreme duty.

So here is a philosophy that reads into Kant as it had read into or out of Spinoza, what itself demands and recognizes in man's spirit and in nature. Unlike Kant, Goethe does not depreciate the sensible to exalt the spiritual and noumenal; and in this respect Goethe is more positively naturalistic than Schiller. Neither in morality nor in art does man leave nature behind; rather does he enter more fully into the heart of nature. Science, poetic creation, moral activity: these are but various versions of the one drama of nature. One should not in wholesale vagueness neglect the unique rôles of the characters in this drama, nor again should one seek the meaning of the drama beyond itself, that is, beyond nature. It is its own warrant; its divinity is immanent; its beauty inherent; its virtue, in the dutiful activity itself.

We may follow the lead of *Faust:* "In the beginning was the *Act.*" [24] In the beginning and all the way through: is not this the central thought of Goethe's masterpiece? This finality of truth Goethe realized, that real truth is beyond finality and inexhaustible, that only in eternal perfectibility is real perfection of truth or of any other value. This is the conviction of the dying Faust:

> Yes! to this thought I hold unswerving,
> To wisdom's final fruit, profoundly true:
> Of freedom and of life he only is deserving
> Who every day must conquer them anew.[25]

So again, in a letter to Zelter: "Moral progress consists in knowing that life, if it goes well, is to be regarded as a constant fighting and over-

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So again, in a letter to Zelter: "Moral progress consists in knowing that life, if it goes well, is to be regarded as a constant fighting and over-

coming." [26] Here is the mystery and the marvel of spiritual life: in aspiration man reveals his limits and surpasses himself. Man does not stake his fate on the external event, nor yet disdain it in his worship of some Supernature; but the event itself is pregnant with its own vaster meaning, ennobled and exalted by its own Beyond. So the Mystical Choir sings at the close of *Faust:*

> The unattainable
> Here becomes an event . . .[27]

This conviction, humble yet elevating, of the inexhaustible perfection with which we are one in principle: is not this the essence of piety and likewise the dynamic of all creative achievement? The important thing is moral resolution, vitality of aspiration. At the end of *Iphigenia in Tauris,* Thoas hesitates before the noble decision. Iphigenia urges him:

> For doing good, one needs no thinking over.
> *Thoas:* Indeed so often good but leads to evil.
> *Iphigenia:* Distrust alone the good to evil turns.[28]

Not pain is the real evil, nor failure, nor frustration, but rather instability of effort, the hazard of stagnation. In the true Realm of Ends nothing is final and conclusive, and again nothing is a means to some ulterior, ultimate end, but each stage is justified in its own activity as fertile and creative present.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE IDEALISTIC QUEST OF SPIRITUAL UNITY



1. Fichte's Exaltation of the Moral Will

Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) was the first to undertake a systematic reconstruction of Kant's basic ideas, in a philosophy which emphasized moral-spiritual values and the deepest and most intimate self-penetration. "The kind of philosophy one chooses," he said, "depends upon the kind of a man one is; for a philosophical system is not a dead piece of furniture to be rejected or accepted as one pleases, but it is animated by the soul of the man who has it." [1]

Fichte's own character was a concrete instance of the Kantian ethics. Its stern demands and lofty outlook, but also some of its final perplexities, may be read in him. Here was a man upright, austere, unyielding, a man of consecration and never of compromise; exacting and aggressive, but as the protagonist of a principle: impersonally, not egotistically ambitious. The free devotion to principle which he cherished in himself he would recognize in others, but while he respected all men on principle, he found the actual will of most of them, in Kant's words, unholy enough. Even his defects were but the obverse of his virtues. Beyond his stubborn pride was his dutiful exaltation; his tactlessness in particulars and his deficient sense of humor revealed his consuming earnestness. The inner world was the world of realities for Fichte; this was the kernel; the rest, the external, was but shell. Kant had taught him that not the outward event mattered but the inner principle and quality of will: not happiness but the deserving of it. In the everyday moral-social enterprise are revealed, or at least hinted, the integrity, the unity, the creative principle of Reality. Why should we travel abroad in search of Nature, when we should first and last probe the flowing depths of our own being in which Reality is mirrored?

We shall find in Fichte the Kantian ethics of the categorical imperative pursued with sublime resolution to some of its ultimate corollaries. But Fichte intended his ethics to yield deeper insight into the basic truth to which he gave expression in his *Science of Knowledge*. In his own way, in the critical Kantian setting of his argument, Fichte would revindicate the Socratic dictum, Virtue is Knowledge.

Let us understand first what genuine knowledge means. It is not knowledge *about* things; it cannot be imported into a passively receptive mind. The endeavors to explain knowledge and the self as due to causal determination from without are manifold and are all futile dogmatism according to Fichte. You can never *derive* consciousness and knowledge: unless you recognize the self as a first principle, you cannot explain it at all, nor its unity and freedom, as products of nature. This is the merit of Idealism: it begins with the immediately certain activity, unity, freedom and the self. The self-affirmation of ideal free activity is the primal reality. Nature, the entire objective sphere is the field of operations of the ideal activity. Thus arises the subject-object dualism: finite self over against an objective world.

In self-consciousness these two, subject and object, imply but also oppose each other. How the objective world, in knowledge, becomes or is a subject's experience, is the problem of theoretical philosophy. How the self's ideals become and are objectified in a life of character and worth, is the problem of practical philosophy. Fichte's basic solution of these problems is already indicated. We understand what understanding means, we come to know knowledge, by the same initial certainty which also assures us of our genuine career as moral agents. More ultimate and more decisive than the determination of character by natural conditions is the dutiful self-affirmation of the moral will: not enjoyment but achieving, not factual status but ideal vindication of a conviction which is also a challenge. Nature, my nature, is for me my anvil on which I am to hammer out Perfection.

The student of Fichte may already have read between our lines the three formulas of Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*. The Ego posits itself; the Ego posits a Non-Ego; the Ego posits a limited ego in opposition to a limited non-ego. These much-repeated formulas need not have more importance for us than they had for Fichte himself. The main point in them is Fichte's emphasis on self-activity. The primary fact for Fichte's philosophy is thus *Conviction:* knowledge certain of itself, truth knowing itself true. Such conviction the self has and can have only of itself, not of itself as a mere product of nature, which is what it can never really know, nor of nature except as the field and stage of its own self-achievement and vindication. In this conviction all philosophy, theory and practice, may find living unity.

Fichte's resolution, on the one hand to go beyond Kant in really integrating morality and knowledge but on the other hand not to lose sight of the characteristic moral note, is shown in his sharp distinction of juridical and moral sanction, which in so many ethical theories appear in confused relation. The social system of rights has its source

in the same self-activity in which morality finds its field and prospect, but rights are not to be confused with duties. Jurisprudence can deduce its categories without dependence on morals. This deduction Fichte undertakes in his *Science of Rights*. "The conception of Rights is . . . the conception of the necessary relation of free beings to each other." [2] Were we to imagine a single man, alone in the universe, his cognitive and even his moral career would be conceivable, but no question would arise of his rights. Right is a claim of one person on another. In the contraposition of individual wills which social life involves and develops, the affirmation of the freedom of each is confronted with the counter-affirmation of the freedom of others. This mutuality in limitation and recognition yields the concept of right. We may have a claim *to* a thing, but clearly it is always a claim *on* a person or persons.

This strictly inter-personal character of the juridical relation suggests a community with the moral, which should not tempt us into confusion. Though rights imply obligations they are not to be confused with duties. My right is a claim on another which I *may* press and which he *must* acknowledge. Different from this legal warrant and corresponding compulsion is the moral *ought*. I *need not* press my right against you: higher and deeper moral considerations may make me indifferent to the legally available advantage. You are *bound* to grant my claim, but there is no virtue in your compliance with my demand which the law imposes on you. Morality goes beyond this sort of relation. The social system in which this mutual limitation of free individuals is imposed is a system which the moral will accepts as a vehicle in its achievement of perfection, but it accepts it as subordinate.

The system of rights and social order of law thus clearly distinguished from the system of moral activity, is yet a field in which, on a higher plane, man achieves his moral career. Of interest from this point of view would be a comparison, which can only be suggested here, between Fichte's treatment of the system of political, social-economic, and family rights and the corresponding social duties as treated in his institutional ethics. Fichte's political theory, inspired to a large extent by Rousseau's *Social Contract*, seeks for the state a power and authority expressing the general will, at once social realization of individual wills and restraining check on them. Because he recognizes the necessary mutual limitation of individual wills in the social order he resists arbitrary imposition of authority or exploitation by individuals and classes. Fichte was and remained to the end a champion of what he regarded as the true ideals of the French Revolution, but he did not yield to any specific political or social-economic partisanship. Whether in Kant or in Rousseau or Babeuf, what he sought and found and cher-

ished was the recognition of the rights of man, the cultivation of self-activity, free, responsible, aspiring, heroically creative. Against the reactionary rigid adherence to established injustice, he recognized the right of revolution; dominating his social philosophy was his respect for the rights of man; his mind was alert to the promise of the larger life and the higher achievement. Before his eyes was ever the larger freedom for the sake of the higher duty. So we may see the course of transition in Fichte's thought from jurisprudence and social-political philosophy to ethics in the stricter sense: the transition and the advance from rights to duties.

Morality is in the free self-determination of the will to dutiful action. The moral will is autonomous and self-legislative; reason here is actively reaffirmed as its own law. Face to face with the impulses, desires, and limitations of his nature, man recognizes the higher demands of his truer self, unachieved and imperious. The world to our moral view of it is the object of dutiful achievement, a task and a challenge. Each moral act is a reaffirmed free resolution, a renewed assurance of freedom, a maturer self-recognition in activity, a deepened insight into the ideal source and destiny of nature.

In our reach towards the ideal, it is by realizing in our lives the moral horizon that we come to know God. For God is not a thing, a settled existence, but the ideal of infinite perfection, ever real in the process of spiritual activity, involved and reaffirmed in the life of conscience. To live one's life in loyalty to the ideal of perfection, is morality; to be assured in faith of the external imperative reality of the ideal, is religion. The reality of God is affirmed in the daily reality of the godly life. This is faith *in* God, as distinguished from alleged proof of his existence.[3] In the later version of his ethical principles Fichte emphasized the metaphysical and the religious implications of morality, but the active devotion of the moral will to the imperative call of perfection still remained in the foreground.

The dutiful self-determination of the moral will is called conscience. It is not distinguished by the kinds of acts to which it impels us, say, benevolent acts. Conscience is not an impulse at all but the realization of the imperative character of principle. Without this conviction, the act, whatever it be externally, lacks moral value. Moral perfection is in conscientiousness. So Fichte formulates his conclusion regarding the formal condition of the morality of our acts: "Act always in accordance with your best conviction of your duty; or act according to your conscience." In practice, this demand is twofold: on the one hand, a demand for perfection of moral insight, to know our duty; on the

other hand, a demand for reaffirmation of active loyalty, to do it, and to do it because it is our duty.

Just as man's dutiful affirmation of will reveals his moral character and destiny, even so his reluctance to active loyalty indicates a radical evil in him which it is his mission in life to resist and overcome. This is the gospel which Thomas Carlyle is to preach in *Sartor Resartus*. The fundamental vice in human life, therefore, is sloth, laziness of will. From laziness arise cowardice and falseness. Cowardice is laziness in our dealings with others, readiness to flee or to submit rather than stand firmly at our post. This craven withdrawal or surrender seeks safety in lying. The liar is a coward, and is a coward because he is lazy, supine before the challenge and the prospect of his moral career.

Bringing these two lines of thought together, Fichte reaffirms the imperative dignity of the dutiful life. Whatsoever conscience confirms is always duty; nor does conscience err, if we but hearken to it, nor is our duty really beyond our reach. "The impossible is never duty; and duty is never impossible." This being the one thing needful morally, all else is to be subordinated to it, or rather, all other things are to be instrumental to my moral perfection. My body, my intelligence, my individuality and my social relations, all are transfigured and gain new significance when they come to be regarded as conditions of the achievement of moral personality. The State is to be made the medium of moral maturing and realization of man, as the Church is to be an ethical society for mutual eliciting of perfection. The true morality is not of life apart, nor a lofty upper chamber of life; it pervades life all the way through.

A more concrete application of the categorical imperative to daily life may be found in Fichte's Theory of Duties, the closing part of his *System of Ethics*. We may briefly call attention to several instances of the way in which he endeavors to deduce precept from principle. I am an instrument of the moral law: in my submission to it is my true affirmation. So the law of self-preservation is now given a new version: I am to preserve myself, body and mind, in the fittest condition as a vehicle of moral realization. Bodily vigor, mental alertness, physical and mental discipline thus gain in moral significance. I preserve and cherish my life for the sake of my moral mission. Abandonment of my task is inadmissible: suicide must be ruled out. It is cowardly to flee from life rather than face its duties or hardships; it is unworthy despair to conclude that one's moral career is irretrievably frustrated. But likewise it is treacherous to forsake duty for the sake of life and delude onself with the hope of atoning for the betrayal by later moral

achievement. Our life is for duty, and in duty we preserve it or we hazard it. This conviction sustains our life in all emergencies; in it we face outward defeat and disgrace with serenity. So Fichte concluded his *Appeal to the Public against the Charge of Atheism:* "Now I lay my pen aside with the serenity with which I hope to lay down my entire life's work on Earth and proceed to eternity. To utter what I have uttered here, that was my concern; what further is to come of it, concerns Another."

In our relations with others, the respect for our own moral dignity and for that of others is shown by Fichte to involve radical departures from conventional morals. Fichte condemns individual physical compulsion of man by man, and he rejects lying as immoral in any circumstances whatever. With regard to the former, Fichte is somewhat ambiguous. He insists that we must always appeal to another's will by rational argument, but never subject him or ourselves to the moral indignity of using physical force. Yet the State does not have the same obligations; it may use force and compulsion in peace and in war; besides, Fichte grants us the right to disarm the aggressor and then to reason with him. Against lying of any kind, however, he is inflexible. Rejecting all subterfuges or concessions to expediency,—white lies, benevolent lies,—Fichte declares: "I positively owe every man absolute frankness and truthfulness; I must not speak anything against the truth." [4] The contempt we express for the one whom we seek to deceive is immoral. Even though our lie may be meant to keep him from suffering or from doing harm, we can never know that the truthful course may not have prevailed with him. Our way ought to be the way of truth and of all that truth may exact of us. The position of invariable veracity which Fichte seeks to maintain at all costs has been and doubtless will be repeatedly challenged. But we should not miss two points upheld in Fichte's argument: his refusal to surrender principle to advantage, and his plea not to treat any man as beyond moral reach, as only an obstacle or a danger to be set aside by any expedient means. Is it not because a lie implies such a negation of a man's moral career that it is resented as a mortal insult?

The more he emphasized the dignity of man's spiritual career, the more anxious Fichte was not to vitiate his reverence by either theoretical or practical self-conceit. To find my life I must forever be losing it; the achieving of my moral destiny calls for disinterested and even impersonal devotion to the ideal. Is this 'panmoralism,' this pantheism of the moral will, more explicitly pantheistic in its final statement? Primal cosmic reality is the Absolute Ego, which is above finite individuality. If the ultimate goal of spiritual activity is the ideal of the

Infinite, beyond all individuality, in which ideal all our strivings and achievements are absorbed and transcended, is not the moral career of personality only a heroic episode in the cosmic epic, and in that case is Fichte's philosophy rightly understood as *ethical* idealism? [5] The problem raised in these questions is essentially metaphysical, and, as we shall note, the persistent probing of it marks the further course of Post-Kantian Idealism. Fichte, awed by the Infinite but never quailing, holds fast to his moral conviction of boundless perfectibility. The *Initiation into the Blessed Life* is permeated by this spirit: unwavering advance to the clear ground of duty directly before us, with the dim horizons of unfathomed Infinitude always beyond. The closing pages of the *Vocation of Man* breathe humility exalted through aspiration: "I do not understand my complete vocation; what I ought to be and what I shall be transcends all my thinking. I know for certain at every moment of my life what I ought to do in it: I ought to develop my intelligence and acquire knowledge in order to extend the sphere of my duty. I ought to regard myself, body and soul, merely as a means to the end of duty. All I can care for is the promotion of reason and morality in the kingdom of rational beings, progress for its own sake. I regard myself as an instrument of the rational purpose and respect and love myself only as such. All the events of the world I measure by this purpose alone. My entire personality is absorbed in the contemplation of the goal. I am in the world of the highest wisdom and goodness, which penetrates its plan and executes it without error, and in this conviction I rest and am blessed." [6]

2. *Schelling's Search of Spirit in Nature*

In the course of modern idealism F. W. J. von Schelling (1775-1854) represents a turning point, not a destination. It had been his fortune, as he put it, to have turned a page in the book of thought; actually he turned over several pages, some already written, some yet to be completed, by other men. A mind of impetuous, unstable originality, he careered through several philosophical systems in the brilliant first decade of romantic profusion, doing his thinking in public, as Hegel ironically remarked. During those ten years he made history; during the next thirty he became past history; then he returned, to discourse on mythology and revelation to an age engrossed in positive science.

Schelling's originality is better described as romantic boldness of intellectual devotion. He is a protagonist rather than a creator; his systems are enthusiastic revised versions of Fichte, of Spinoza, of Bruno and Jacob Boehme and the Neoplatonists. Excelling in alert intuition rather than in persistent constructive reason, his writings abound in

fantastic abortive notions that belong among the curiosities of philosophy, but also in profound ideas which other more thorough minds were to think through and realize: Hegel, Schopenhauer, Eduard von Hartmann. That such powerful and opposite currents of thought all find their sources in Schelling, indicates his vigorous but also unsteady genius.

The unsteadiness of Schelling's thought is due in part to his manifold breadth of outlook. Like Leibniz whom he championed, Schelling felt the counter-claims of both spirit and nature too keenly to grant either of them complete dominance in his view of reality; but he lacked the systematic genius to achieve the synthesis of the two. Like a sphere illumined but half-submerged, the truth of Fichte's idealism, brilliantly evident, was yet a half-truth; it demanded a disclosure of the other half. Subjective idealism and naturalism each require the other to correct and supplement it. Fichte had contemplated nature as the Ego's self-erected barrier or field of ideal operation. Schelling would expand or complete this truth by its counter-truth: the Ego itself is the mature self-recognition of Nature. Nature is dormant Spirit. The course of Nature is the gradual attainment and self-revelation of spirit. The notion of nature as dormant spirit, supplementing subjective idealism, demanded in turn a view of Reality more ultimate than either nature or spirit, the ultimate Identity in which they both are rooted.

Though nature and spirit, object and self-consciousness, are thus primally submerged in the Absolute, yet in it they emerge; it yields them both. Not only unity but also multiplicity, not only ideal harmony and perfection but also the clash and the cleavage, the manifold drag and distortion in the world must somehow be in the career of the Absolute. Evil cannot be wholly outside of God, yet God is not evil. As Schelling's later philosophy assumes an increasingly religious form of expression, his effort to explain and interpret evil emphasizes the problem of ultimate synthesis and its difficulty. So we may note the many voyages of Schelling's philosophical Odyssey, from the Fichtean beginnings, the philosophy of nature and transcendental idealism, to the philosophy of identity, and to his later positive philosophy and religious-mythological speculations.

In his account of moral activity Schelling emphasizes an idea which Fichte had already recognized and which was to receive fuller development in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Morality is a process of self-realization of personality; but realization of self is concretely achieved through relation to other selves; only with persons can one deal and act as a person. The moral consciousness is essentially social and matures through the communion of selves. So Schelling unites in one

revised statement two Kantian maxims of the categorical imperative: "So act that your will be absolute will; so act that the whole moral world . . . could will your act; so act that by your act . . . no rational being be set up as a mere object but always as coöperating subject." [7]

We act freely, yet we are involved in the necessity of the world-order. Our dealings with others may reveal the recognition of moral principles of free loyalty, but also the submission to laws of social necessity and compulsion. Schelling distinguishes moral from legal obligation more explicitly than Fichte. Above the mechanism of nature with its laws is a higher nature of social necessity, in which persons mutually limit and compel each other. The systems of legal enactment exhibit the maintenance of active equilibrium in the process of conflicting and compensating demands, rights and obligations. On a radically different plane and acting on another sort of principle is the striving, the loyalty, the respect of the moral, freely self-affirming personality.

Corresponding to the notion of nature in theoretical philosophy is the idea of history in the practical, disclosing the union of freedom and conformity to law. The attainment and maintenance of social order in systems increasingly complex involves the concept of progress; but from this idea we may not readily proceed to that of man's infinite moral perfectibility and advance. How are we to think of the destiny of humanity so as to be assured that, as it were by the law of prevailing perfection, the moral ideals of free selves become increasingly motive forces in the social order? Here the finite self is ambassador of Reality: as nature and spirit, necessity and freedom mutually condition each other in me, so in the larger life of humanity, and so in the world-process.

Schelling's first writing, at the age of seventeen, was a dissertation on the Genesis story of the Original Sin, and the problem of evil assumed a grave importance in his thought, particularly in his later philosophy. His study of Jacob Boehme, the mystic of the Renaissance, and his relations with Franz Baader (1765-1841), whom he influenced but who affected his speculations in a theosophical direction, emphasized the mystical tone of his theodicy. Evil, according to Baader, came into the world through man's abuse of free will. In the exercise of his freedom man cast away his divine inheritance and degraded himself to the level of brute nature. He need not have sinned, but once fallen, he lost the power of self-restoration. So the basic theme of man's moral career cannot be the natural perfection of human character or the respect of the autonomous will for the moral law, but the redemption of fallen humanity by the love and grace of God.[8] In

practice this meant, to Baader, resistance to secularism in ethics and to liberalism in thought and social policy, exaltation of the Church as the divine instrumentality for the salvation of men, emphasis on sacramental and mystical devotion. Schelling could not follow Baader in his aggressive obscurantism and his alliance with political and social reactionaries, but he was influenced by Baader's theosophy. Our spiritual life is a life in God; thinking, we share in God's infinite thought; the consummation of intelligence is realization of our mystical communion with the Divine.

The problem of the possibility of evil is for Schelling bound up with the problem of freedom. Against the explanations of evil as mere negation or privation or finitude, imperfection, or else as a cosmic power coördinate with God, Schelling maintains the positive character of evil in a monistic system. Though we may speak, with Spinoza, of God or Nature, we should not confuse God with nature, God as the Perfect Reality with God as the ultimate ground of all things. In God as nature is the possibility of free will, and free will that should ideally be unique radius in the divine circle may wilfully set itself up as an independent center. In this perversity of self-will lies the possibilty of evil. This possibility of evil becomes actual in the lives of men. But though perverse self-will can drag human nature below the beast, it is will also which can lead man to the highest. As evil has its source in the misdirection of self-will, so good is attained through self-enlightenment and right orientation of will; it is overcoming of self-will. Evil is a stage in man's moral achievement through enlightenment, from self-willed waywardness to self-realized reverence and devotion to the highest, through moral endeavor, intellectual activity, artistic creation, the attained integrity of spiritual life: unity within and community with God, a piety of nature. So goodness is revealed as finally godliness.[9] But though the self becomes one with God and all discord is overcome, the self is not swallowed up but realized. Even so in artistic creation, which to Schelling was a nearer approach to the perfect unity than the moral career of man afforded, spirit is one with nature, yet it is not lost but most perfectly expressed.

3. Religious Finality and Moral Order: Schleiermacher

The rich personality of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), with its many contending demands, yielded a philosophy of life which appears perverse in its compromises but which to deeper insight reveals a recognition of essential though opposite principles and a resolution to achieve a synthesis of them. His synthesis was primarily and finally religious. The most significant German theologian since Luther, Schlei-

ermacher reacted against the rigid traditionalism of the established Lutheran church, but also against the barren formulas of Wolffian rationalism. The devout feeling of the Pietists had moved him deeply, but he could not follow their uncritical thinking. Still more emphatically did he resist the easy dismissal of religion by 'emancipated' souls who sought to fill its place in their lives with intellectual activity or reformatory zeal or artistic enthusiasm or even by inspired or effusive sensuousness. (Only his personal devotion to Friedrich Schlegel led him to seek deep wisdom in the unprincipled *Lucinde.*)

His own education and spiritual culture, combining in turn Moravian intense pious feeling, rationalistic rigor, naturalistic objectivity, social reform, romantic exaltation, engaged different sides of his personality. He would not resign any one of them altogether, but undertook to achieve their active harmony. In this harmony the intimate mystical tone of feeling was to prevail over any intellectual pattern or external design and structure. In his work, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers,* Schleiermacher distinguished the finality of religion from theological doctrine on the one hand and from ecclesiastic or moral-social performance on the other. Religion is not a system of beliefs, although the effort of the intellect to formulate the content of religious experience may and does yield a theology. Nor is religion a way of conduct individual and social, even though the will may seek to translate the inner dynamic of religion into outward activity. Doctrines of God's existence and nature, of creation, of miracles, or immortality are all intellectual constructions, possible science or metaphysics: their validity and finality are the validity and finality of doctrines; religion is neither reducible to nor derivable from them. Forms of ritualistic or liturgical service, moral regulations, individual and social discipline, propriety and philanthropy are all external expressions of the inner dynamic. They are of and for their time and region; inevitably religion seeks these external manifestations, but itself is deeper and more intimate in man's soul. To confuse religion with creeds or with conduct of whatever sort is to miss the inner strain and to mistake variable form for the basic and persistent spirit. Religion itself is more than doctrine or practice, using but yet transcending both. It is our intimate and absorbing experience of the All, the living revelation of the Infinite in the finite, or in the language of piety, God's life in man, "the sum of all higher feelings." Religion is man's utter yielding to the Infinite in direct and pervasive experience: "a feeling of absolute dependence . . . a sense and taste of the Infinite." [10]

As in his philosophy of religion Schleiermacher appeals to direct unassailable experience, the Kingdom of God within us, so in his ethics

he would perceive and realize the Kingdom of Ends not above but in nature. His ethical method would thus combine or reconcile idealism with realism. The moral character of man is not the supersensible achievement of pure reason, nor yet a passively received end-result of empirical conditions; it issues from the reciprocal activity of nature and reason, and the manifold strains of this mutuality are manifested in the various virtues and vices. Reason and nature are not to be conceived as two distinct beings but as two phases of reality. Spinoza's influence on this method of approach is as evident as the influence of Kant in raising the basic problem. Schleiermacher interprets nature, the objective activity of life as a process which is rationalized in morality. The principles of reason thus become living forces. The achievement of this active harmony is moral good. The discord, resistance of 'nature,' unprevailing or unsteady 'reason,' is evil. The systematic elaboration of this main idea, with constant attention to concrete evidence which the 'realism' of the system demanded, might have yielded an ethical theory as rich in content as Hegel's ethics of self-realization. It is not that Schleiermacher's ethics contains no reference to individual conduct or social-institutional forms and organization, but his treatment of these is too formal and schematic. So it is that, despite his professedly realistic aim and his resistance to the Hegelian pure analysis of categories, it is his ethics rather than Hegel's which suffers from abstract schematism. Schleiermacher's elaboration of his ethics does not realize the fullness of concrete significance which is promised in his fundamental idea.

The actual prevailing of reason over nature is disclosed partly in the historical process, in which we can see the emergence and establishment of customary forms and sanctions, and more consciously and maturely in the achievement of rational directive principles in morality. In his *Monologues*[11] and more systematically in the *System of Ethics* Schleiermacher portrays nature as becoming vehicle and sign, organ and symbol, of universal and individual reason: on the one hand moulding and shaping, on the other conceiving and expressing significant structure. Men appropriate a part of nature, make it as it were part of themselves, and in social fellowship organize a system of rights mutually safeguarding their own. Or men seek to give their most intimate feelings of infinite dependence symbolic expression, socially preserving these cherished signs in the life of organized religion. Or nature itself is viewed, in science, as the intelligible symbol of universal rational order. Or again nature, human life, becomes in the political order of the state the organ of universal reason. All the way through, the rational ordering of outward life is the expression of the inner

striving and perfection. Manners and customs are the outer garments of the soul. The moral life is neither merely subjective individual indulgence and longing, nor yet a conventional-social levelling off in which the living contour of the individual is effaced; but the individual and the general system stand in reciprocity, and each reflects and reveals the other.

Ethical science is treated by Schleiermacher under three heads: as the doctrine of the Highest Good, the objective end and fruition of moral activity; the doctrine of virtues, the forms of rational excellence and worth manifested in the pursuit and attainment of the good; and the doctrine of duties, the directing principles of moral activity, the forms of moral obligation. Of particular systematic interest in ethical theory is Schleiermacher's treatment of the virtues, to which he devoted the second part of his *Science of Ethics.*

Schleiermacher distinguishes virtue as Conviction *(Gesinnung)* and Readiness *(Fertigkeit)*, and these are manifest in Discernment *(Erkennen)* and in Expression *(Darstellen)*, thus yielding four cardinal virtues: Wisdom, Love, Composure, and Steadfastness. These are not really four virtues, but represent a fourfold manifestation of the rational life. Wisdom is the insight of right judgment or conviction in which every action of man attains ideal content; the expression of this right judgment is Love. Similarly the insight and discernment of a ready and vigorous spirit is Composure (Temperance), and the expression of this reliable spirit of self-possession is Steadfastness (Courage, Fortitude). The general correspondence of Schleiermacher's table of virtues to the Platonic is apparent; but, as Jodl has pointed out,[12] the replacement of Justice by Love is significant; it indicates a fusion of Classical with Christian ideals, in which the Christan prevail. Wisdom, moreover, here inclines to Faith, and the Composure and Steadfastness share the character of Hope, all together yielding St. Paul's triad of virtues.

Schleiermacher's doctrine of duties, considering moral obligation on its universal and on its more directly individual sides, reveals four forms. Universally he distinguishes legal duties and professional duties; individually, duties of conscience and duties of love. This part of Schleiermacher's ethics contains stimulating reflections on individual and social rectitude, which however are not as fully developed in the published version of his lectures as they perhaps were when delivered.

It should be kept in mind that this ethical theory was the work of a man who was and felt himself to be primarily a religious seer and a theologian. So in the progressive development of his ideas a Christian-theological view of the moral life is emphasized, in which the prevailing of reason in nature becomes the salvation of man, and the moral

ideal of perfection is seen as the real perfect life of God on earth in Christ. What marked Schleiermacher as a spiritual leader was his resolute attempt to reconcile and to fuse the critical insight of intelligence with the direct and unassailable self-utterance of the soul in feeling, without subordinating either one to the other. In his ethics is the endeavor to fuse idealistic with realistic views. The Divine Logos is to be revealed as incarnate, ideal principles as objective realities and forces in nature. The spirit of this resolution reveals Schleiermacher's romanticism, the plea of the heart that would not be denied. Schleiermacher's strategy is scientific-philosophical in intention, but the actual execution of the plan is too formally schematic and abstract. The recognition of this fact, however, cannot alter our estimate of Schleiermacher's profound influence on the quickening of religious insight and expansion of spiritual outlook in the last century.

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CHAPTER XXIV

SOCIAL REALIZATION OF PERSONALITY: HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT

1. *From Kant to Hegel*

Kant's problem,—to distinguish, but also to reconcile nature and spirit, causal necessity and freedom, the world of facts and the world of values,—determines the course of German idealism. Fichte sought to vindicate at all costs the primacy of moral activity. Schelling vaguely and variously portrayed nature as dormant spirit, spirit and nature as swallowed up in the neutral Absolute, clash and conflict as incipient in the ultimate neutrality, and evil as emergent. In his endeavor to achieve the synthesis of nature and spirit, Hegel showed marked resolution to give due recognition to both, and to pursue the slower but more reliable method of logical analysis and integration rather than the fiat of moral devotion or romantic-mystical fusion.

In his conception of the problem and in his method of dealing with it, G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) manifested a keen sense of the two sides of the conflict: a naturalistic-logical conviction of fact, an inexpugnable sentiment of the ideal, the demand for a harmony embracing both strains but effacing neither. This keen sense of duality and this demand for real reconciliation characterized the temperament of Schleiermacher and determined the strength but also the difficulty of his career. In Hegel's philosophy, as in Schleiermacher's life, unity was to grow out of the very midst of conflict.

The problem of the basic antithesis of nature and spirit was bound to engage Hegel, for his mind from early youth was alive to paradoxes, contrasts, dilemmas. His school-days were days of classical inspiration; he knew his Greek literature well, translated the *Antigone* of Sophocles. A Christian of devout Protestant ancestry and a theological seminarist, Hegel responded to the Christian view of the world as the vale of sorrows and to the Christian hope of salvation from the bondage of this life in the celestial realm of the hereafter, even as he responded to Greek tragedy. Yet the classical concentration on the present scene also possessed him, the conviction and the pursuit of the beauty, the truth, the virtue and excellence of life here and now. To reconcile the

spirit of historic Christianity with the spirit of classical antiquity was one of Hegel's early ideals.

A second grave contrast was involved in his social thinking. In sympathy with the romanticists, young Hegel responded to the protest for individual rights of which Rousseau had been the most eloquent champion, the protest against the suppression of the individual by the social order, the ardent plea for self-recognition, for the right of the humblest man to live his own life spontaneously and fully. The fire of these hopes had blazed in the French Revolution and it glowed in the mind and in the heart of Hegel's youth. Though the growing conservatism of Hegel's maturity revised and even Prussianized his social-political program, the basic demand for the full fruition of personality remained dominant.

The deep impression which the study of Kant made on Hegel's thought was to be expected, and likewise Hegel's reinterpretation and revision of the Kantian philosophy. Kant had vindicated scientific knowledge and the naturalistic-causal view of experience, but he had also proclaimed the Primacy of Practical Reason and aimed his philosophy towards the Realm of Value. Yet supreme and sublime as the moral realm was for Kant, it was not unambiguously real. Above this life of flesh and blood, it had a sort of celestial but unearthly perfection, like the perfection of the Christian Heaven. Hegel shared Kant's moral ideal, but he would have that ideal real. One with Kant in the disdain for spurious ethics, ethics of sentiment or of mere external performance and consequences, Hegel had the piety of the dutiful will; but he demanded a really achieving duty, a morality rooted in real life. He recognized the contest between the *is* and the *ought*, but just on that account was resolved to overcome the contrast, to gain harmony from the discord, and prevailing unity out of the differences which human experience manifests.

So Hegel felt a Christian aspiration for a celestial perfection of the spirit, but also a classical demand for the realization of perfection in secular terms. Conscious as he increasingly became of the paramount importance of social order and institutional structure, he never wavered in his emphasis on the self-realization of personality. No one in modern philosophy, while recognizing the clefts and contradictions in life, set himself more resolutely to express the prevailing principles of integrity and concrete unity. This in essentials is the Hegelian problem: How can we not only feel but know this principle of unity in the world of differences, the integrating spirit in an intelligible world?

This demand, it should be reaffirmed, was nowise alien to Kant, but it had not been realized in his ethics. Kant had concluded that the

actual daily life of men, being part and parcel of the course of nature, was involved in the causal mesh of necessity. Yet man as a moral being could not be wholly sundered from man as a member of the world of causal facts. Without a synthesis of the necessity of nature and moral freedom, the career of duty and virtue remained a sublime but unrealized Ought. Heredity, environment, education, a multitude of causes necessarily determine our actual conduct. How can we be truly responsible for what we actually do? Though the good will alone counts in morals, it is nowhere in evidence as an active and achieving power. The philosopher needs Goethe's wisdom: to distinguish first, but then to unite. How may we explain the opposition of causal necessity and moral freedom so that the contrasts themselves, not finally tearing life asunder, contribute to the deeper unity and the more complex and higher organization of human life?

2. *The Hegelian Dialectic*

We may recognize not only the ethical but also the more broadly philosophical significance of Hegel's answer to the problem of German idealism. Nature and Spirit are both real, but spirit is higher than nature; or better, spirit is a higher and a more fully realized nature. The objective world of particular differences and causal relations is not initially a world of moral self-recognition, but it is the medium and the matrix of moral experience, the field in which self-consciousness and its principles are to grow. The apparently random sequence is order in the making; in the conflict of opposites, organization and harmony is achieved; the world is a developing world, its maturing points towards intelligence, its steadily prevailing structure and order are preëminently revealed in the activity of thought. Hegel capitalizes Thought, not as mere cognition or abstract conception, but rather as the dynamic ideal and the increasingly real significance of all reality. Hence the basic importance of the Hegelian Logic; it is meant as an account of reality in its central manifestation. The dialectic of thought is the pulse and the rhythm of reality.

The fundamental idea in the Logic of Hegel is that the growth of intelligence is a growth of organization. The world as presented to common sense is a multiplicity of things that may be described or measured but are not really connected, even though they are somehow together. Scientific intelligence connects these fortuitous self-identities; it discloses nature as a nexus of causally related processes, in which the existence of each thing is contingent on a certain antecedent, a necessity clearly ascertainable in detail but indefinite as to ultimate ground or meaning. To the more penetrating insight of philosophic thought,

reality is a system of rationality which reveals not only factual connections but organic significant unity, in which everything is finally intelligible in terms of its membership in the system, and the system is a Whole progressively manifested in intelligence and realizing spiritual character. This, in outline, is the logical version of Hegel's Absolute Idealism. The progress of thought is from discrete bare identities to analysis, distinctions, and chains of causal connection, and then to the unity of a spiritual system.

The achievement of concrete unity through the organization of differences is the essence of the dialectic of thought. The concentration on any idea involves claims which the idea fails to sustain, discloses radical limitations and inadequacy, and swings thought to the opposite idea. But this antithesis to which the mind now has recourse is no more adequate or final than the thesis from which thought had recoiled. In the very recoil, a certain loyalty to the negated idea persists; abandoned it is, but not utterly and finally. The counter-inadequacy of the antithesis, as it involves a counter-recoil, brings thought in renewed touch with reaffirmed or reconstituted elements of the initial thesis. So through the contrast and counteraction of two ideas the mind proceeds to a mediating and higher third idea, in which valid and fertile elements of the two opposite ideas are integrated in a truer synthesis. This truer synthesis, however, is itself not definitive. Too abstract preoccupation with it only serves to expose its defectiveness in turn, sends thought again to its opposite extreme, and so enables it in another dialectical movement to reach a still higher synthesis. Thus the mind pursues its career, from the uncritical dogmatism of common sense, through the overcoming and synthesis of necessary but misleading abstractions, to ever more concrete and more significant truth. This statement of the Hegelian dialectic is not merely a psychological account of the mind's procedure with its ideas, the way we learn. It is the account of the logical activity itself, the dialectic of categories. Ideas are not passive pawns that we manipulate in the game of intellection; ideas "have hands and feet," and in its experience a thinking mind comes to know *their* careers that so significantly reveal the inner structure and character of Reality.

3. The Objective Mind: the Realm of Morals

The dialectical movement of thought,—thesis, antithesis, synthesis,—characterizes not only thinking but social movements, historical development, the career of mankind in all its aspects. Morality in human life is the translation of the ideals and principles of spirit into objective terms, in conduct and institutions; it is thereby also the progressive at-

tainment in the course of human existence of self-realization and personal worth individual and social. Both of these views of the process of moral activity should be kept in mind in understanding Hegel's ethical theory.

Hegel is steadfast in his philosophical conviction that nothing is real except the idea; but the very character of spiritual process, in his view, propels it beyond mere subjectivity. The world of nature is present to the mind; the mind discovers, experiences, and must reckon with it; but it is not fully and intimately the mind's world. The inner world of mind, the subjectivity of spirit, from the most elementary sensations and feelings to memory, imagination, and to the highest range of thought in reason, is the progressive and ever clearer reflection in and on itself: inward and self-identical. Yet neither the externality of nature nor the subjective isolation of mind can remain final alternatives for spirit. It not only is aware of nature, it reacts and it acts.

Free mind is the will acting on itself; it reaches towards universality and is yet individual; it seeks an over-individual realization of itself. My real recognition of my own freedom demands that I recognize it as not merely my own and subjective. In knowledge intelligence cognizes its object as intelligible and so not ultimately alien. The self reaches out and demands natural embodiment. The free will meets not only the barrier of external conditions; it is confronted with the reality of other wills. My freedom and my self must be sustained objectively and objectively realized in contest and in community with other free selves, in an over-individual world of activity. The freedom of others, recognized as a condition of my own, involves me in laws essential to self-realization. The mind not only reflects on nature but is actively reflected in it; the career of the self transcends subjective isolation, and man lives his fuller life in the lives of others. This is the realm of objective mind or spirit: a world of social institutional order realizing in nature the ideals and the essential freedom of personality.

In this objective realization of spirit which constitutes the theme of Hegel's ethics, we are to expect a gradual recognition of the moral ideal in the social order: advancing from abstract right (including the legal system of private property, contracts, violation of right and the punishment of wrong),—to morality, the subjective phase of the self-legislative will, acting in free self-identification with the laws which it obeys, —and so to the progressive realization of personality in the ethical system of social institutions, the fulfillment of the individual in the family, the completion of the man in the townsman and the citizen, the life of the state as the ethical fruition of character.

These three stages, abstract right or legality, morality, and the ethical

order of society, may be surveyed as a historical development in human experience. Primitive man has been regarded as brutal and selfish. But his selfishness and brutality are due to his still incomplete humanity. Humanity in the full sense of the term demands self-consciousness, and consciousness of self involves relation to other selves and a progressively social character. This social relation is a contest and conflict, and it can and does become a community. The struggle of the subject's self-assertion with a resistant medium of objectivity, the overcoming of the barrier between subjective purposes and objective conditions, the fuller realization of a person in his self-identification with the ethical system of society: these are not only stages in the career of the self, but expanding fields in which the self is active.

4. Abstract Right

The individual will, acting and affirming itself in external embodiment, may constitute certain things its private property. This is the first step in the expansion of self which is also the evolution of right: I and mine, you and yours. In appropriation, a person manifests the majesty of his will over things; for things have no purpose of their own and can only be incorporated purposively as the rightful property of persons.

It may be noted at the outset that this very nature of property involves the rejection of slavery. I can have no proprietary claims to another person. To enslave a man is to ignore and violate his essential character as a free will, and for him to be thus subjugated is a negation of self: a double and radical perversion. Only when we maintain steadfastly the sovereignty of persons over things is private property both justified and kept in its place. The reasons which rule out slavery should apply to unscrupulous exploitation, in which one person is treated as merely another person's means or source of enrichment. Nor, it would seem, may excuse for enslavement or exploitation of so-called lower races or classes be found in the fact of their incompletely developed humanity. In his ruthless disdain of spiritual potentialities in others, the oppressor is himself degraded.

"Since property makes objective my personal individual will, it is rightly described as a private possession." [1] Hegel thus rejects Platonic communism; to own property is a person's need and right; indeed Hegel calls it a duty. By the same token, this cannot be the exclusive privilege of some persons. So everyone as a person must have property; but how much, the question of distribution, would depend, he thinks, on additional considerations: on need, capacity to use, differences of

mind and character. My proprietary right to anything is my right to use it or to use it up as a means to the realization of my will and purpose. In serving my purpose, my property fulfills its nature. Furthermore my ownership involves the right of relinquishing my property if my will so dictates.

In the right of ownership, as we see, transfer of property is involved. This is Contract. In my relinquishment of what is mine, other persons may enter in acquisition or in exchange of proprietary interests and rights. What is mine I can consent to recognize as yours, if you are willing to have it. Contract thus involves the free coöperation and choice of persons, but it concerns the property of things. Marriage would meet the first of these two requirements of a contract, but nowise the second; hence marriage is not rightly understood as a contract. Nor is the idea of 'the social contract' any better. Both marriage and the state find their true meaning on a higher level of personal realization, not in abstract right and contract but in the ethical system of society.

The thing which I own has no rightful claim over my will, whether in use or in relinquishment; but when I transfer my property to another person, my will is engaged with his will which has rights against me as I against it. Contract thus manifests explicitly the universality that is implicit in abstract right. But the individual will may and does assert itself contrary to this universal principle in abstract right, by violation of proprietary rights, of contract, or by personal violation. Hegel distinguishes unpremeditated wrong from fraud and from crime. Wrong is always a violation of the law-system of abstract right by the private will. The right thus violated must be reaffirmed and reconstituted. This is punishment. Hegel rejects all utilitarian theories of punitive justice. The just penalty is neither a threat or deterrent to others, nor a means of reforming the criminal; it is essentially the solemn reassertion of the principle of right which the crime had violated. Only by thus being punished can the criminal still continue to participate in the vindicated system of right; only in his punishment is his personal dignity respected; for animals and things may be made harmless but cannot be punished. To dismiss a person's crime would be to join with him in ignoring the system of right. Though he may not be supposed to consent to his own death, the state may yet exact it; for a person, as will be noted, finds his fuller reality in the state, and so the state, according to Hegel, has claims on the individual's life. If the criminal, who deserves to be punished, has a scrap of personal dignity left in him, he should protest against any arbitrary pardon. The murderer has a right to be hanged!

5. Morality

In the field of abstract right we have the conformity or else the opposition of the private will to the legal will. We have here, as Kant would say, obedience to law, not respect for it: only legality, not morality. Before genuine morality can be attained, the obedience to law must become the genuine loyalty of a self-legislative will to its law. Not the external act, not the outward embodiment of the self is now important, but the inner spirit. Morality, in the sense here used by Hegel, is really one stage in the fuller realization of ethical character. The perfection of the moral will in social-institutional life demands as a prerequisite that the will be truly in harmony with itself. The lack of such a harmony is the wrong-doer's plight; the criminal has violated his own integrity and frustrated his own moral fruition. The inner claims of personality on the will demand respect: loyal concern for them characterizes the scrupulous conscience. This inward and intimate aspect of the moral life, emphasized in Kant's doctrine of duty, engages Hegel in the second part of his ethics.

In dealing with purpose and responsibility and with intention and well-being, Hegel emphasizes the inner quality of will rather than overt acts. Oedipus, unwitting slayer of his father, is not to be arraigned as a parricide. But though Hegel would not judge an agent by the bare consequences of his act, neither would he ignore the consequences. The act cannot scorn or disown its results, yet among the results may be that which the will never intended, did not choose, could not anticipate, and which could not be imputed to the will. One should beware not to be betrayed by the appeal of so-called good intentions. I am not to be condoned for performing an act which has some evil consequences, even though I did not will those consequences and would in general have disapproved of them. Part of my duty as a scrupulous moral will is to consider fairly my entire act including its normal or likely results. So even in his probing of the intimate subjective side of morality, Hegel would not ignore the completion of the willing in the doing. "The laurels of mere willing are dry leaves, which have never been green." [2] But he would also look beneath the surface to read the heart of an action which escapes superficial recital of externalities. "No man is a hero to his valet,—not because there are no heroes, but because he is only a valet." [3]

Conscience is regarded by Hegel as the self's utter conviction in its resolute will of the absolutely good, the will to make the absolute good its good. Without this resolution, the inner spirit would be lacking in an action, no matter how well it might turn out. So this subjective

scrupulosity of the conscientious will is indispensable to true goodness. Yet the dutiful will to make the absolute will mine, as it concentrates attention on subjectivity, runs the hazard of lapsing into moral fanaticism or into wilful caprice, the setting up of my own good as the absolute good. Thus conscientiousness may be on the verge of disowning the objective moral order. So good and evil have the same source: the free will may recognize the universal and may loyally identify itself with it, but it also runs the hazard of perverse subjectivity, the wilful denial of the moral order.

6. *The Ethical System of Society*

As man attains a self-legislative will, the loyalty to duty, conscientious resolution, and the demand of spirit for objective activity are translated into a demand for a world-order in which man *can* live conscientiously. The law within me must find embodiment; I require a world in which my moral potentialities may be realized. This is the world of social institutions; in it morality finds its objective fruition, in the ethical system. The gradual overcoming of individual barriers, the social interpenetration and fusion of individual lives, does not mean effacement of personality. On the contrary, by seemingly losing himself in the ethical institutions of society, man finds himself more fully in the larger life. He is not the less but the more and the more truly a person because he is a husband, a father, a neighbor, a townsman, a citizen. The individual's personality grows into the family, into the civic community, into the state. In all these three institutions, a deeper unity of selfhood and an enhancement and enrichment of personal character is attained.

The Family

In the life of the family we are not independent individuals but members. The family is a unity of feeling, the feeling of love. Family life manifests and develops in a special way the spirit of love which vitalizes virtue. In the intimate devotion of love, it is not that a person renounces his individual aims and purposes, to espouse those of the beloved; but in love both persons find fuller self-realization in perfect mutuality, each completely identified with the life of the other. Marriage cannot be truly interpreted as a relation in which either person is subordinated or a means to the private needs or purposes of the other. Marriage is not a merely sexual union, nor a civil contract or an economic expediency, nor yet a union of romantic passion and emotional caprice. It is essentially an ethical union. Monogamy and lifelong loyalty must therefore inevitably be the ethical form and destiny of the

family. Completely mutual recognition of self-consciousness is essential; husband and wife must each be utterly one with the other. On principle indissoluble, the marriage union cannot include divorce as a contemplated alternative, nor can it admit of divorce on demand by the husband or wife, but only when sanctioned by the constituted ethical authorities in the state.

In the life of the family, husband and wife, parents and children and kinsfolk find meaning and expression of personal worth which would otherwise have remained quite unattained. In thus being a condition and a medium of spiritual growth, the family finds its ethical justification. In the personality and growing life of the children, the unity-in-love of the parents realizes objective manifestation. Through the family solidarity, in purpose, means, and property, each for all and all for each, the process of ethical expansion continues. The upbringing and education of the children, itself an expression of family spirit and unity, as it serves to launch the new generation in the world of action, prepares for more expansive activity. The family or the clan naturally grows into a people; and also by the association of various families for the coöperative satisfaction of common wants or for the sake of larger corporate enterprises, expansion of the range of personality is achieved in the institution of the civic community.

The Civic Community

Hegel regards the civic community as an intermediary institution between the family and the state. The intimate life of the family, in which each member is thoroughly identified with the others, who are not others to him, is broken up or rather ramified into many families, each one unified, but at best only coöperating as individuals or groups. Men are brought together as neighbors or fellow-townsmen; we realize the importance of common effort, and so we are on the way to the attainment of a truer harmony on a larger scale, but the attainment is not yet. So the problems of the civic community are problems of fair distribution of tasks and goods, mutual obligation, maintenance of security and peace. Where the sense of individual interest is so real, genuine coöperation requires clear perception of common advantage in civic enterprise, and the social discipline of intelligence is an essential condition of communal order.

Three aspects of civic life call for special mention: the economic system of wants and resources; the maintenance of rights in the administration of justice; the policing of the community, and the care for the particular interest as a common interest in the corporation or guild.

In the economic life, the desire for equality and also the desire of

each person to be himself and distinctive, lead to the multiplication and extension of wants. Out of this process arise the problems of labor and wealth, and of producers and consumers. The resources supplied by nature become goods only as human labor acquires and fashions them for use. Labor creates wealth; differences in skill and also elements of chance in acquisition produce economic inequalities: a situation of grave moral implications which Hegel does not explore sufficiently. The various fields in which men are active distinguish the farming class from the industrial and merchant class; and alongside of these the administrative class of various civic officials. The importance of property, already realized in the section on Abstract Right, is more clearly brought out here. The vitality and stability of the civic order require that each individual have a real stake, a genuine part and lot in it. To engage the active coöperation of each of its members, society demands that each be advantageously engaged. The economic corollary of this general principle discloses the moral gravity of the problem of unemployment.

The recognition and the effective maintenance of individual rights in the civic community concern the administration of justice. The abstract rights find objective constitution in a system of laws. Laws must be universal and known to all; not vaguely implied in tradition, unwritten laws, but explicitly formulated. Where the universal concern in public security is thus publicly acknowledged, the civic community has a recognized share in individual interests and transfer of rights, as for example a sale of land is not fully completed until it has been officially declared and registered. So the just protection of the rights and property of each against the encroachment of others is at least in principle recognized by all; and crime is seen not merely as the violation of abstract rights but as a wrong jeopardizing definite common welfare.

The defense of recognized individual rights against fortuitous hindrances and encroachments is the task of the police. Here sound civic counsel seeks a balanced view between extremes; between arrogating to the police surveillance of every side of individual life, and the blunt denial of police interference as unwarrantable intrusion. Society must reconcile individual freedom of trade with the general interest and welfare. While respecting a man's control over his property, it may rightly assume the guardianship of those who wantonly squander their own and their family's substance. The civic order is concerned in the poverty of individuals, and must also resist the emergence of a pauper class. More positively community life expresses itself in the corporation or guild, the explicit participation of the private individual in business of public import, the socializing of private enterprise so that it gains ac-

knowledged civic character. Communal life thus realizes and expands the range of personal character; men recognize and attain diligence and fairness in labor and in trade, loyalty to law and justice, genuine free respect for the rights of others and for the commonweal. As in this way the townsman comes to see his own active life as bound up with the larger life of the community and as more fully realized in it, civic life and order pass into the more expansive and also more truly integral life of the state.

The State

The State is capitalized by Hegel as "the actually existing, realized moral life. . . . All the worth which the human being possesses—all spiritual reality, he possesses only through the State. . . . The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth." [4] Self-consciousness attains true freedom in citizenship, and the individual realizes his highest goal in his highest duty, as a member of the state. The state is not artificially formed by contract; it is rooted in the common lives of men and is the highest fruition of social character.

It is of the utmost importance to the understanding of Hegel's ethics that we realize the significance of his principle that the individual finds his final ethical self-realization in the state, what this means and what it does not mean. It does not mean that men are rightly subjected to the dictates of autocratic rulers who acknowledge responsibility to God alone; nor that in formally constitutional states the individual is to surrender his own freedom of spirit, his ideals or religious convictions. The most intimate life of the individual cannot be absorbed in the state, but the over-individual realization of each person, his real liberty, his rights and active membership in the lives of others, all find in the state their goal and destiny. Therefore the state is not to be judged by him, but he is to be judged by the state. The state is not a means or convenient instrumentality, nor is his devotion to the state justified only when expedient and advantageous. The state is sovereign by right, of higher worth, and a man's loyalty to it is not conditional as may suit his convenience. Were the individual thus to subordinate the state to his own private advantage, he would be neglecting his own higher and larger life, which is possible only in loyal citizenship.

Patriotism is not love for a country which is enriching me and in which my property is securely my own. It is the mark of a true citizen that his thought of his country is not primarily a mercenary one. "By patriotic feeling is frequently understood merely a readiness to submit to exceptional sacrifices or to do exceptional acts. But in reality it is the sentiment which arises in ordinary circumstances and ways of life,

and is wont to regard the commonweal as its substantive basis and end. . . . Genuine patriotism is simply the result of the institutions which subsist in the state as in the actuality of reason." [5]

In the Internal Constitution of the State, Hegel distinguishes three functions: the legislative, the executive or administrative, and the function of the prince as constitutional monarch, uniting legislative and executive powers. It is of interest to note that these three functions are discussed in the reverse order, as if to indicate the right rank of precedence. The princely sovereignty is the concrete expression of the law and constitution in the state; for laws and constitutions are not framed but grow out of the life of the people, and in that larger life the prince is absorbed, representative and emblematic of it. Actually, though Hegel advocates constitutional monarchy over aristocratic government or democratic commonwealth, he regards all these forms as having only a historical interest, and considers it idle to ask which of them is to be preferred. The particular application of the law and will of the state is the function of governmental administration. But because the laws are the formal expressions of the living state-order, they need progressive interpretation and formulation. The legislature gives formal statement of the laws that are involved in the constitution of the living state. The participation of all citizens on an equal basis in this legislative function of the state, whether directly or through their elected representatives, is not advocated by Hegel. Though he champions the principle of the moral dignity of persons, he does not entertain a high regard for the sound judgment of the rank and file. He would not utterly disdain public opinion, nor deny it expression; but it cannot be decisive until rightly interpreted. "Public opinion deserves, therefore, to be esteemed and despised; to be despised in its concrete consciousness and expression, to be esteemed in its essential basis. . . . In public opinion all is false and true, but to find out the truth in it is the affair of the great man. He who tells the time what it wills and means, and then brings it to completion, is the great man of the time." [6]

The criticism of Hegel, that he subordinates the individual to the will of the state, has often been made, and also repudiated. The right judgment should not fail to distinguish between the logical implications of Hegel's theory of realization of personality and Hegel's own concessions to a reactionary exaltation of the state. A selection of passages might make plausible the estimate of Hegel as a Prussian official in his political thinking; but it is true that, even in his resistance to what he regards as disintegrating democratic ideas, he always contemplates the state as the ethical self-realization of the individual. The citizen's surrender to the state is a liberation, even as in the life of the family self-

surrender yields a deeper self-realization. If we should thus follow the logic of the idea of progressively realized personality, a revised distribution of emphasis and a revision of tone might well be demanded in many parts of Hegel's institutional ethics, especially in the treatment of the state and of representative government. Such a restatement would only be reaffirming the deeper and fuller meaning of Hegel's social-ethical idealism.

That this fuller meaning does not find explicit and unambiguous expression in Hegel's text, can scarcely be gainsaid. Hegel's treatment of international ethics is meager. The recognition that man's ethical horizon has not yet overarched national boundaries is justified by the facts, but Hegel's ethical ideal points in principle inevitably towards an all-human cosmopolitan citizenship: "Above all Nations is Humanity." Hegel's own treatment of External Sovereignty and International Law is hardly inspired by that spirit. His apology for war is, in plain word, infamous. By war, so he had written elsewhere,—and thinks so well of his words that he repeats them towards the conclusion of the *Philosophy of Right*,—by war "finite principles are rendered unstable, and the ethical health of peoples is preserved. Just as the movement of the ocean prevents the corruption which would be the result of perpetual calm, so by war people escape the corruption which would be occasioned by a continuous or eternal peace." But, while writing in this vein, and proceeding to reassure us that "modern wars are carried on humanely," [7] Hegel also looks beyond the idea of the state as absolute and owing loyalty to naught beyond or above itself. International relations fluctuate; with the progress of civilization, the issues between states are to be settled by the higher judgment of humanity. "The destinies and deeds of states in their connection with one another are the visible dialectic of the finite nature of these spirits. Out of this dialectic the universal spirit, the spirit of the world, the unlimited spirit, produces itself. It has the highest right of all, and exercises its right upon the lower spirits in world-history. The history of the world is the world's court of judgment." [8]

Hegel's ethics, as has been noted, spreads over the social sciences; or, more significantly expressed, the basic Hegelian spirit is manifested in his treatment of the whole sociological field as the stage of man's expanding ethical career. Man's highest aim is to be a person, and from the outset the mandate is clear: "Be a person and respect others as persons." [9] Personality is realized as man gains solidarity and community with others through the spreading system of social institutions. The good person is the good husband and father, the good townsman, the good citizen,—the good man, so we should conclude. Corresponding to

the causal nexus of physical nature is the world of persons, in which meaning, value, spirit, character are discovered, elicited, realized in the interpenetration of minds and lives.

Even in its full maturity, institutional order comes short of realizing perfectly the utmost demands of spirit. The perfect expression and communion cannot be in political terms, in the life of the state; it can only be spiritual; it is achieved in art, religion, and philosophy, the realm of Absolute Mind. In art, the idea finds concrete embodiment and the two are one; mind utters itself directly in the world of sense; the Word becomes flesh. Though religion seems to emphasize differences by insisting on the chasm between the finite and the Infinite, yet it is itself a bridge over that chasm. Religious development registers an idea of God ever more sublime and yet ever more intimate. In the Absolute Religion, Christianity, the Infinite is worshipped as Our Father, one with us in the person of the Savior. This final unity of spirit and embodiment, of the Infinite and the finite, which in art and in religion is uttered in sense and in imaged speech, finds in philosophy a rational expression. In the life of understanding, spirit attains its full freedom in the world. The mind recognizes in the world-process the progressive achievement of rationality, and in this philosophic insight it is fully itself and fully one with the world.

Seen in relation to this sphere of Absolute Mind, Hegel's entire account of ethical order substantiates, but it also presupposes, the principle basic in his whole philosophy, which he fairly sets forth in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right:* "The spiritual universe is the natural:"

> "What is Rational is Real;
> And what is Real is Rational."

The Hegelian ethics of the 'objective mind' is thus an essay in the cosmology of value. The idealistic first principles warrant ideal demands in human conduct and attitude; the career of personality recognizes and vindicates these demands and confirms the truth of the basic idealism. It is a virtuous circle.

But from the viewpoint of a fundamental irrationalism, nature would be really and utterly as it so largely seems, brutal and blindly neutral to any worth. To darker insight nature may be disclosed as a resistless and futile sweep and drive. So it seemed manifest to Arthur Schopenhauer. The world of living things, men's lives in particular, offered no lack of evidence to sustain the desolate view of human character which followed from such a cosmology: a character of congenital per-

versity, insatiate greed, callous or cruel and miserable withal. Morality, to such a view of human life, would not be in affirmation and realization individual or social, but only in renunciation and denial. So the ethics of pessimism, to which we turn in the next chapter, is significant as the climax of emergent irrationalism, a drear counterblast to the essentially optimistic cosmology of Spirit which, as has been seen, reached its culmination in Hegel's Absolute Idealism.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MORAL GOSPEL OF PESSIMISM



1. *Irrationalism and Pessimism: Schopenhauer's Metaphysics of the Will-to-Live*

The moral philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) is notable as a radical criticism of Kant's theory and of its idealistic and optimistic developments, and as the pessimistic corollary of irrationalism, Schopenhauer's doctrine of the Will-to-live. Idealistic ethics proceeded from the recognition of the supremacy of Spirit; morality was conceived as the realm of Practical Reason, or of the Objective Mind: of prevailing intelligence in an ultimately rational world. The practical optimism,—as expressed in Kant's postulates and the Primacy of Practical Reason, or in Fichte's creative aspiration, or in Hegel's expansive realization of personality,—was an inference from the theoretical optimism of self-reliant spirit. Against this entire course of ideas Schopenhauer waged a tireless polemic. Morality, if morality there be, must start from the dismal counter-conclusion, of the senselessness and futility of will-driven existence. In ethics as in cosmology Schopenhauer maintains the radical antithesis to Post-Kantian idealism. Regarded in this way, his theory reveals its finally unavailing character but also its grim power.

There is an important difference in Schopenhauer's reaction to Kant and to the Post-Kantian idealists. He opposes the latter all the way through; they had builded upon Kant's cheering but unwarranted concessions in the *Critique of Practical Reason.* He, on the contrary, would proceed from the inescapable drear results of Kant's theory of knowledge. So he proclaimed himself as Kant's authentic heir. With Kant he agreed in regarding knowledge as limited within the range of experience; but Kant's phenomenalism received in Schopenhauer's statement an illusionist emphasis. Object and subject mutually imply each other; the world known by the mind is only the mind's idea, the mind's version of reality, not the basic original. Schopenhauer accentuates the conclusions of Kant's Transcendental Dialectic, denies the possibility of a theoretical metaphysics, materialistic or spiritualistic. All that intelligence professes to know is mere appearance; the mind cannot pass

beyond the charmed circle of its own categories, nor perceive the nature of things-in-themselves.

Fichte had also recognized the inevitable restriction of the mind by the subject-object dualism; so he sought the pathway to reality by the creative fiat of the will. But the ethical idealism to which Fichte proceeded was due to his spiritual interpretation of will-activity. Quite the opposite is the nature of will, according to Schopenhauer. And this is the point at which he confidently takes a step beyond Kant, but, as he says, upon firm and solid ground, not up in the air as the idealistic acrobats of his time.

Ultimate reality, the thing-in-itself, is neither mind nor matter. It is a process neither intelligent nor intelligible; the mind cannot understand or explain it. Schopenhauer calls it Will in order to express its character as ceaselessly impelling, craving activity. In our awareness it is that which is most immediate, primal and deepest, and once we recognize it in ourselves as ourselves, we may come to feel the same ubiquitous power, heart-pulse and dynamic of all existence. From the lowest stage of being to the highest and most complex, this incessant drive determines the nature of things. It is gravitation of masses, cohesion and disintegration, attraction and repulsion; it is chemical affinity, magnetic bent to the North, coagulation and formation of crystals. On a higher level it is vegetative impulse, germinating, taking root, the sunflower reaching towards the sun, plants in dark cellars reaching out greedy feelers towards the beam of light, meager pines splitting the rock through the crevice in which they press for nourishment. It is animal craving activity, from the least worm to the mature intelligence and self-consciousness of man. It is prior to consciousness; consciousness itself and intelligence are its means of operation, and alongside and behind the lofty intellect is this unfathomable propulsion. It is instinct seeking gratification, awareness of stimuli and active response, consciousness aware of itself, motivated action, the whole gamut of ideas and emotions: prejudices and partisanships, loves and hates and envies, fears and hopes, longings and devotions and despairs that sum up the lives of men.

The visible organ is the vehicle and contrivance, or better, a specific operation of the Will-to-live: gills, fins, wings, claws, the insect's color-mimicry, the snake's venom, the dog's keen nose, man's hand and also man's brain, his dexterity, his cunning, his intelligence. Deeper than the difference between conscious and unconscious, mental and physical, organic and inorganic, is the basic identity of them all as the farflung instrumentalities of the impelling drive that courses through all things, the Will-to-live. It is not a power that operates on things or

in things; the operation precisely constitutes them, that is what they all are.

At the level of human consciousness, the Will-to-live is manifested as insatiate desire. Man's basic experience is want, and so life is primarily pain, unsatisfied craving. Pain is the rule, the positive; pleasure is the negative, only the exception in our life, the temporary relief or occasional satisfaction of want. But no sooner is one desire gratified than our will reasserts itself in a new want and a new craving, a new pain; or else our life lapses into the deadly boredom of wanting nothing in particular, dull longing without any objective to spur it on. So the will-driven soul is ever insatiate and never satisfied.

The life of endless craving is thus miserable and essentially futile; it is also self-centered, a life of ruthless disregard of others, Men are forever engaged in a war of conflicting greeds. Exploitation, oppression, cruelty callous or diabolical characterize human affairs. We are so accustomed to the sordidness that any departure from it surprises us or puts us on our guard against likely subterfuge; or else, as if by common agreement, we undertake to muzzle the beastly greed by social restraint, to hide it from too flagrant view by screens of politeness and etiquette. How can we, then, perversely close our eyes to reality? "To this world, to this scene of tormented and agonised beings, who only continue to exist by devouring each other, in which, therefore, every ravenous beast is the living grave of thousands of others, and its self-maintenance is a chain of painful deaths; and in which the capacity for feeling pain increases with knowledge and therefore reaches its highest degree in man, a degree which is the higher the more intelligent man is; to this world it has been sought to apply the system of optimism, and demonstrate to us that it is the best of all possible worlds. The absurdity is glaring." [1]

Our life, in truth, is a bankrupt concern, a business that does not pay expenses, for the craving and the effort are frustrated even when they seemingly reach their end. Work, torture, trouble, and need are the lot of us all. And we do not even have the consolation of any grandeur in our distress; our greed is abject; our knavery is ever despicable. "As if fate would add derision to the misery of our existence, our life must contain all the woes of tragedy, and yet we cannot even assert the dignity of tragic characters, but in the broad detail of life must inevitably be the foolish characters of a comedy." [2]

2. *Schopenhauer's Criticism of the Kantian Ethics*

In such a view of human life, a life of insatiate greeds preying on each other, of wretched and futile desires, what meaning could morality

have? A moral philosophy which ignored these basic facts of human nature and motivation would be vain irrelevance. In the fourth book of *The World as Will and Idea* Schopenhauer, probing the dismal outcome of his metaphysics of the Will-to-live, had traced the large outlines of a pessimistic ethics of redemption. In his work *The Basis of Morality*, he takes up more systematically this problem: "Is the fountain and basis of Morals to be sought for in an idea of morality which lies directly in the consciousness (or conscience), and in the analysis of the other ethical conceptions which arise from it? or is it to be sought in some other source of knowledge?" [3] This question is ostensibly the same as that which had confronted Kant in his *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, and Schopenhauer's first task was accordingly a criticism of the Kantian ethics. Despite his manner of treatment, severe in the case of Kant, contemptuous towards Kant's followers, especially Fichte, Schopenhauer's critique of the ethics of duty is among the most searching, and it is also an indispensable introduction to his own theory of morals.[4]

Kant undertakes to establish moral philosophy on a basis of 'pure practical reason.' Ethics is not a statement and statistical summary of what men do, but a universal pronouncement of what they ought to do, irrespective of their actual practice. This first false step, according to Schopenhauer, vitiates the entire procedure of Kant's ethics. For how are we warranted in declaring what 'ought' to be done, even though it never is actually done? Unless such a rescript is based on the facts of human life, though it may maintain solemnly a lofty authority above and beyond experience, it is finally vain and ineffectual pretense. If, however, it does find its substance and force in effective compulsion, then it is only a disguise of the old morality of rewards and punishments, social or theological legalism, a spurious ethics in a new solemn garb.

Stating his criticism in terms of Kant's own terminology, Schopenhauer would maintain that a categorical imperative, the conception of an unconditional obligation, is completely unthinkable (he also calls it nonsensical). But a hypothetical imperative, obligation deriving its force on motives by appeal to consequences, would be compulsion, therefore not moral. The conclusions seem to be that ethics cannot disregard actual human conduct, and that morality cannot adequately be expressed in terms of law and obligation. Both of these inferences Schopenhauer undertakes to develop and maintain against Kant.

It is because Kant cannot find morality in experience that he would dictate it categorically from above. But emptied out of any specific content, the alleged law of reason would have only its bare lawfulness

to recommend it. So Kant finds that the moral imperative affirms simply its own universality and necessity. *The* duty appears to be to act dutifully, as we have it in Kant's maxim. The mere appeal to universality does not yield a distinctively moral response, and is thus barren as a moral principle. Schopenhauer maintains in fact that Kant's alleged disinterested categorical imperative finds its actual fuller statement in terms of the very egoism which Kant had initially and solemnly disdained. Though Kant insists on disinterested dutiful motivation,—speak the truth though the heavens fall,—yet he declares as a certain conclusion that in a rational universe the heavens will not fall through veracity, that it is undutiful conduct which proves self-defeating in the end. Lying is wrong, for according to Kant's maxim, it could not be made a universal law; were it universalized, no one would believe me or else "would pay me back in my own coin." Duty is bound to prevail and virtue to find its confluence with happiness, man's immortality providing the scope for it, and God assuring the adjustment of goodness to good fortune in the realm of ends. "In spite of [Kant's] grand *a priori* edifice, Egoism is sitting on the judge's seat, scales in hand." [5]

Kant's arguments vindicating veracity, benevolence, justice in terms of his own maxim may not all warrant Schopenhauer's interpretation of them as ultimately implying egoistic motivation; but Schopenhauer appears to be sustained in his basic claim that, if the moral imperative is to have any substance and concrete significance, it must be in some sense rooted in experience, and find its sanction in human nature. In this criticism of Kant's ethics, the fundamental principle and method of Schopenhauer's moral philosophy are revealed: "Ethics has to do with actual human conduct, and not with the *a priori* building of card houses—a performance which yields results that no man would ever turn to in the stern stress and battle of life, and which, in face of the storm of our passions, would be about as serviceable as a syringe in a great fire." [6]

3. The Ethics of Compassion

We require a basis of morality that will apply to living men and women, not to mere 'rational beings.' We should accordingly analyze human conduct, to distinguish the various incentives to action and discover if any motive of moral worth obtains.

This investigation of moral value in terms of motivation indicates another respect in which Schopenhauer differs from Kant. Kant distinguishes the freedom of moral acts from the causal necessity of all events in the world of phenomena. Against this distinction, Schopenhauer insists on regarding all human acts as determined. An action is

moral not because it is free but because of the kind of motivation which determines it. Good actions, if goodness there be, cannot be actions in any supersensible realm, but in the same world of experience and as truly subject to determination as any events whatever. Motivation is only another variety of the operation of antecedents on consequents: more complex and less immediate but none the less necessary. Every specific action of ours is determined by antecedent factors or motives, and these again by others. But all of them together are as they are ultimately because they are ours, expressions of our being. What I do follows from what I am. I should act differently only if I were another.

But why am I as I am? To this question no answer is forthcoming. The essence of me and of you operates under the conditions of space and time and is accordingly determined; but itself as the Will-to-live, the ultimate dynamic of all, is beyond determination and free. Freedom thus does not characterize any specific action, but the inexplicable root and kernel of all being. In reaching the limits of all determination we meet the unfathomable.

Proceeding now to distinguish various motives and their determination of actions, Schopenhauer notes that in the very nature of the case men are moved to act by considerations of weal or woe, of oneself or of others. It is wholly against nature to pursue one's own woe: so three incentives remain as objectives of action: one's own weal, another's woe, another's weal. Schopenhauer pronounces the first two of these three incentives antimoral; no good can come from them, yet together they exhaust well-nigh all of human conduct: Egoism and Malice. The 'maxim' of egoistic action is: Help no one, but so far as it is to your advantage, hurt others. The malicious man acts on the maxim: Help no one, but as much as you can, hurt others. Malice and selfishness thus agree in utterly disregarding the well-being of others; but selfishness is preëminently concentrated on pursuing one's own advantage. The egoist would destroy the world without a qualm, *if* the destruction served his own purpose. But utterly indifferent to the needs of others, the selfish man would not lift a finger to hurt another, if he saw no advantage accruing to himself. Assure yourself that he has no further profit in molesting you, and you may rest in peace. So where no one else enters to interfere with the egoist's gain, he might pursue his own way interfering with no one, and his acts would then be morally neutral. But the malicious and spiteful man has made it his special joy to see others suffer; he is not happy unless he is hurting others, and would risk hurt and even destruction if he could gratify fiendish ill-will. These two incentives lead to all the vices of human life. "From *Egoism* we should probably derive greed, gluttony, lust, selfishness,

avarice, covetousness, injustice, hardness of heart, pride, arrogance, etc.; while to malice might be ascribed disaffection, envy, ill-will, spitefulness, pleasure in seeing others suffer, prying curiosity, slander, insolence, petulance, hatred, anger, treachery, fraud, thirst for revenge, cruelty, etc." [7]

To counteract these vicious motives in human nature and to yield moral worth, if moral worth there be in men, another motive power is needed, and indeed there is only one other, *Compassion.* This is a motive aiming at the well-being of others, refraining from the infliction of any harm. Its maxim is, Hurt no one, but so far as you can, help others. Only when it genuinely springs from within can it check the egoism that normally sways the will; otherwise, laws, religious restraints, rewards and punishments, self-respect, human dignity, and categorical imperatives are of no avail. Only when the lot of others so affects me that without any ulterior considerations I come to participate in the sufferings of others and seek to relieve them, only then is my conduct truly compassionate and then only is it good. The essence of moral value is in the overcoming of selfish desire. In this respect goodness shares the same basic character with other values, with the impersonal objectivity of truth and with the desireless contemplation which, according to Schopenhauer, is the essence of art, the perception and expression of beauty.

Compassion may be either negative or positive: the two cardinal virtues are thus Justice and Lovingkindness. The just man follows the first part of the maxim, Hurt no one. He does not shift onto the shoulders of others the burdens which life piles on us all. The lives of others are not made the more miserable because of his living, and when he dies the sigh that men breathe is not a sigh of relief. Respecting the rights of others, fulfilling his assumed obligations, doing his share whether compelled or not, the just man has always others in as clear a view as himself and makes no one else his victim or his tool. But lovingkindness, positive compassion, moves us to active promotion of the well-being of others; the compassionate soul responds to the cry of distress and, forgetting all thought of personal advantage, seeks to alleviate suffering wherever found. All actions which men acknowledge as good are, according to Schopenhauer, reducible to justice or lovingkindness, are thus forms of negative or positive compassion. Uncommon as these virtues in their genuine forms are, we may yet observe that justice is a more characteristically masculine virtue; women incline less to justice than to lovingkindness.

But what is the essence and the basis of compassion? Schopenhauer seems to find its two moments in the two components of the word, the

same in various languages, Sympathy, Compassion, *Mitleid*. The compassionate man *suffers*, and he suffers *with* others. The impassable gulf which separates the selfish and the malicious from their neighbors is effaced in sympathy. A deepening conviction of oneness with others is the ground-note in all compassionate action. And this conviction is tragic; it is a communion in woe. Life is a distress; the distress cannot be escaped at another's expense; the distress is essentially due to the will-driven desire for the gratification of self, the egoism which makes men rivals and foes of each other. Compassion is the practical recognition of the illusion and the evil of self-engrossment; it is therefore the evidence of a deep insight into the tragic enigma of existence. "To be just, noble, and benevolent is nothing else than to translate my metaphysics into action." [8] Compassion, alone good, points beyond itself; justice and lovingkindness, relieving the distress of others, lead the moral saint to relieve and to renounce the essential distress, the will-driven life itself, to curb and deny the Will-to-live. Thus compassion culminates in asceticism. It is not suicide that Schopenhauer has in mind when he advocates the denial of life; for suicide registers the victory of unquenched desire, not its subjugation. Not cessation of living is the goal, but extinction of craving. The prevailing mood of Christian asceticism, and even more, Buddhist quietism dominates Schopenhauer's conclusion. The man who has renounced desire and self has left the sweep and whirlpool of seeking and effort. He finds and attains the desireless, selfless calm of Nirvana.

This ascetic-quietist culmination of compassion has been criticized as involving racial self-annihilation and so the self-extinction of morality. Should all humanity adopt Kant's ethics of duty, the world might become an assembly of stern Puritans; but at the altars of Schopenhauer's ascetic ideal, mankind could continue to worship for just one generation. Yet this is not the main defect; it only serves to indicate it. Schopenhauer criticizes severely Kant's dismissal of experience in his ethics; but on what experience has he based his own theory of morality? In his account of human character as egoistic or malicious, he professes to draw inevitable inferences from his metaphysics of the Will-to-live. Though we may not share his pessimistic portrayal of the facts of human life, we recognize it as what is to be expected from his account of the nature of reality. But all the more surprising is his gospel of compassion and self-effacement. If the ultimate reality manifests itself at the human level as insatiate greed, how is sympathetic conduct possible? If the Will-to-live is the source and dynamic of all existence, then how can denial of the will take place?

Schopenhauer openly recognizes that a truly compassionate act is

the rarest thing in the world, but insists that it alone is good; even as Kant declares the purely dutiful act virtuous, even though such an act had never been performed. Both find morality beyond the common run of experience: Kant, in the dutiful loyalty to the moral law; Schopenhauer, in the will-curbing sympathy and self-renunciation. But while Kant's account of human experience and of natural order does not make provision for the categorical imperative, it does not exclude it. Kant's Realm of Ends transcends the causal nexus, but does not nullify it. That it expands and deepens it, or reveals its fuller fruition, was the claim of the Post-Kantian idealists. Schopenhauer, however, unlike Kant, does have a theoretical metaphysics, and if the nature of ultimate reality as explained in the doctrine of the Will-to-live, involves human selfishness, how can it admit of a single case of genuinely compassionate action? Schopenhauer himself is aware of this basic difficulty in his system, and also of the specific perplexity in which it involves his ethics. "Every purely beneficent act, all help entirely and genuinely unselfish, being, as such, exclusively inspired by another's distress, is, in fact, if we probe the matter to the bottom, a dark enigma, a piece of mysticism put into practice; inasmuch as it springs out of, and finds its true explanation in, the same higher knowledge that constitutes the essence of whatever is mystical." [9]

It is not Schopenhauer's ethical exaltation of compassion which is most important here. Considered only in this way, his moral theory, a pessimistic variety of the ethics of benevolence, invites a variant of the familiar criticisms. Not Schopenhauer's laudation of sympathy, but his recognition of it in his system is the significant point, for this moral gospel involves and demands a revision of the irrationalistic-pessimistic metaphysics of the Will-to-live. The familiar concluding words of his masterpiece are crucial here: "To those in whom the will has turned and has denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky-ways—is nothing." The aesthetics and the ethics of Schopenhauer disclose capacities in human nature for disinterested contemplation, for justice and lovingkindness; they indicate an insight into human nature and reality beyond insatiate greed and beyond the Will-to-live. The self is not inevitably selfish; it can be compassionate, even self-effacing.

We may now see in a new light Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's maxim as egoism in disguise. The dutiful act is not selfish in the damaging sense of the term used by Schopenhauer, but fully self-expressive. The self-recognition of moral character reveals that the 'ought' is the expression of man's truest and deepest self, a fellow-member with all other persons in the Realm of Ends; in which he wills for himself only

what he would will for others, freedom of realized personality in loyal devotion to ideals. So Kant's ethics involves the idealistic metaphysical development which has been traced in the previous chapters. But Schopenhauer's gospel of salvation, in ethics and aesthetics alike, reveals the need of revision in his metaphysics on which they were supposed to rest. In his gospel of salvation he reached a wisdom more final than the pessimism. In the doctrine of disinterested contemplation and of the world-renouncing insight of the moral saint, was involved a revised account of the rôle of intelligence, as not inevitably and finally the tool of the Will-to-live, and therefore an advance beyond the initial irrationalism.

So the problem was bound to be raised: Where lay the deeper truth between Schopenhauer and Hegel, between the irrationalism of the Will-to-live and the exaltation of rationality in absolute idealism? This problem was attacked by Eduard von Hartmann.

4. Hartmann's Philosophy of the Unconscious

The many strains in Schopenhauer's philosophy, despite the unity of tragic tone in which they fuse,—world-wail and gospel of redemption alike,—do not achieve logical coherence. The system of thought to which the genius of Schopenhauer gave its distinctive temper could not be expounded by another. It could only be modified, by redistribution of emphasis. Some of the conflicting strains in the philosophy would be toned down or quite silenced, to accentuate others that would express the revised dominant motive. The aftermath of Schopenhauer yields a variety of doctrines, revealing the manifold perplexities of the philosophy of negation.

If the irrationalism and the pessimism of Schopenhauer's metaphysics are emphasized as ultimate and irremediable, a gospel of salvation is ruled out in any sense whatever. So it is in the philosophy of Julius Bahnsen (1830-1881). The world as he sees it is an eternal self-rending chaos of will-activities, a world of congenital perversity. Enlightenment is unavailing; the utmost wisdom of the patient would only show him that his ills are incurable. Art and morality are futile palliatives of that essential evil which can neither be mended nor ended. The first vain dream is the miserable egoist's illusion of well-being; the last dream is equally vain, that there is any way out of the misery of selfish craving. The basic fact remains, the unceasing meaningless strife of each with all, which constitutes the world. The truth of reality is not expressed in Schopenhauer's gospel of disinterested contemplation, compassionate conduct, the quietism of will-renunciation, any more than in the absolute idealist's ethics of progressive and expansive realization

of spiritual character. The real truth is rather in the words of Macbeth: life is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." If there is to be any worthy satisfaction in such a world, it can be only in our explicit disillusion and abandonment of every hope. The world-process is senseless, yields and can yield no positive value whatever. We can at least not delude ourselves regarding any available truth, beauty, goodness. This grim sense of the ultimate futility of it all, according to Bahnsen, is philosophy.[10]

Eduard von Hartmann (1842-1906) undertook a more radical reconstruction. Schopenhauer's ambiguous treatment of the rôle of intelligence in his metaphysics and in his aesthetics and ethics,—as mere tool of the ultimately irrational Will-to-live, and as capable of prevailing over the will in pure aesthetic contemplation and in tragic-compassionate insight and renunciation,—indicated not so much a basic confusion in Schopenhauer's philosophy as the inadequate recognition of the two ultimate cosmic factors. The solution of Schopenhauer's paradoxes led beyond Schopenhauer; it demanded a reconciliation of the antithesis between the irrationalism of the Will-to-live and Absolute Idealism. Hartmann's avowed aim as a philosopher was to achieve this synthesis of Hegel and Schopenhauer. Is the world a spiritual system of steadily expansive and maturing rationality, and history the progressive realization of the idea of freedom?—Or is the world-process blind insatiate striving, and human life a wretched and futile round of desires, and history a succession of 'cat-fights'? Both, yet neither, Hartmann answers. Intelligence may not be regarded as the mere instrument of the irrational Will-to-live, nor contrariwise can the rationality of the Hegelian world account for its own origin, how it comes to be at all. Hegel and Schopenhauer, each in his own way, have mistaken an essential aspect of existence for the ultimate reality. Will and Idea, drive and significance are the two basic attributes of being. Neither can be derived from the other; both are involved in the world-process. The one makes for activity, the other determines the nature of the activity.

Ultimate reality, according to Hartmann, is neither Will nor Reason, but the root and matrix of both. Schelling had perceived this truth vaguely in his conception of the Absolute; Hartmann undertakes to develop it in his *Philosophy of the Unconscious*. The course of nature, bodily and mental existence, points beyond mechanism to teleology, but also beyond conscious to unconscious activity. The fountain-source of all being is in the counteracting will-activities of the Unconscious. Clashing with each other, they are confronted each with the other: this is the matrix of all consciousness. In the very activities of the Unconscious, will and intelligence emerge, but the Unconscious is

neither Intelligence nor Will-act. Moreover it is an incursion or impediment that each will-act counteracts another; consciousness is thus in its very inception 'unhappy,' a disturbed, checked, frustrated activity, a tragic inception. Thus in the first dawn of existence the harvest of pessimism is sown.

Hartmann's philosophical position cannot be defined as pessimistic without qualification. The immediate and growing fame of his first work fixed in the minds of his readers certain conclusions to which he did not adhere strictly in his more mature writings, even though he did not revise them explicitly in the ten subsequent editions of the *Philosophy of the Unconscious.* To grasp Hartmann's view in relation to Schopenhauer's, we should keep in mind the distinction on which he insists, between the evaluation of the world in terms of happiness and in terms of realization of ends. Hartmann regards the pursuit of happiness as futile and a delusion, yet finds that human life can develop its capacities and attain its goal, though the goal be a tragic one. So he describes himself as a eudaemonological pessimist but a teleological-evolutionistic optimist.

Hedonistically, life is a losing enterprise. Hartmann does not agree with Schopenhauer that all pleasure is merely negative, the temporary alleviation of pain. He recognizes positive satisfactions, not only intellectual and aesthetic but even sensual, but he also insists that they are few and far between. Life is far more painful than pleasant. And this dismal over-balance of pain is not likely to be altered by advancing intelligence. If we lift our glance from the indigent and ignorant multitude to the alleged aristocracy of mankind, we note only a change in distress: from the dull hardships and miseries of the masses to the bitter futility of untalented or unrecognized minds, the anguish of genius, the unhappiness of the tender conscience. Pain prolonged is pain intensified, but pleasure is cloyed by extension and often frustrated by critical refinement.

The maturing of intelligence is in fact a progressive disillusion regarding happiness, and in this sense the increase of knowledge is an increase of sorrow. Hartmann traced three stages in this illusion of mankind. In the first, men hope for individual attainment of happiness here and now. Disappointed in this expectation by the facts of life, the individual turns his hopes to the hereafter. This dream of immortality is the second stage of man's illusion; in history it marks the transition from Graeco-Roman-Jewish antiquity to Christianity. Hartmann undertakes to expose the vanity of this hope of personal immortality, and also notes its gradual abandonment by modern minds. But a third illusion replaces the second, the typically modern belief in progress,

the social realization of happiness in the future development of mankind. This hope is also vain, and the spreading pessimistic conviction of our time shows that men are gradually reaching the bitter truth, that life as a quest for happiness is a bitter disappointment.

What is Hartmann's further inference and his final counsel? The climax of his early speculation had a fantastic boldness that produced in his critical readers a shock from which it was difficult to recover. Hartmann advocated the active promotion of the cause of civilization, of enlightenment and the spreading of pessimistic convictions. With increasingly greater unanimity about the infelicity of living, men may finally reach the point where their will-denying power will outweigh the will-affirming power objectified in unenlightened nature. When that point is attained, tragically civilized humanity would be able by one common resolve to vote the world out of being! Hartmann never quite explicitly repudiated this fantastic eschatology, but in his more mature treatment of logical, aesthetic, moral, and religious values, we may note a transition from a preoccupation with the negative character of hedonic values to more concentrated study of the values of spiritual activity, to a growing emphasis on teleological significance and positive worth, and so to a modulation of the earlier philosophy of negation. There is no retreat from his initial conclusion that selfishness and pleasure-seeking are wretched futility; but instead of pointing only to final repudiation of life, Hartmann's later thought accentuates the values that give life, despite its unhappiness, meaning and dignity.

5. *The Tragic Significance of Moral Activity*

Hartmann's moral philosophy was developed in the second of his major treatises, *Phenomenology of the Moral Consciousness*, which with perhaps deliberate Kantian allusion he characterized as "Prolegomena to any Future Ethics." [11] This work is neither a systematic exposition of his own theory of morals nor yet a history of ethics in the more usual sense. It is a most elaborate systematic analysis of all available ethical theories, by means of which he gradually prepares the way for his own account and estimate of morality.

'Pseudo-moral' or spurious ethical theories reveal a consciousness still under the spell of the egoistic delusion, or else seeking moral value in the subservience to some ulterior authority. The hedonistic evaluation of life in terms of selfish indulgence is futile. In the lust for gratification here and now we may experience pleasures of different intensity and duration, but we lack any standard of judging or grading them. Life, moreover, disabuses and rebukes the hedonist: if the good of life is in the attainment of pleasure, then that good is unreliable

and delusive, and there is no real advantage in living. Disappointment in the pursuit of pleasures here and now, or inadequately understood revulsion from earthly enjoyments, may lead to the hope of self-satisfaction in some hereafter. This is Hartmann's so-called second stage of illusion, already noted, the belief in immortality. The progress of thought exposes this hope as unwarranted and unmasks the lurking selfishness which prompts it. Humiliated in its transcendent expectations, self-regard may resort to counsels of negation, asceticism and renunciation. But so long as individualism persists, whether in self-indulgence or in self-redemption, the gospel is unavailing, for it is wrongly motivated. The merit of egoistic ethics is that it gradually discloses its own bankruptcy and turns our glance to over-individual ends and principles.

Feeling the unreality of alleged moral worth in terms of selfish aims, man has sought it beyond himself. The actuality of manifold institutional obligation to which he has been subjected has led him to confuse loyalty to moral principle with submission to authority. This is the second variety of spurious ethics. The genesis of social institutions reveals also the history of man's traditional compliance. The individual's conduct has been moulded by family and clan direction, by communal or state legislation, by the cumulative system of custom and traditional sanction. Seeking more ultimate basis for the system of authority exacting his submission, man has looked beyond men to God, beyond time to eternity. In theological authoritarianism, the actual exaltation of ecclesiastic above secular power has sought its warrant in the doctrine of Divine authority and obedience to God's will as the essence of goodness. But the more mature moral consciousness seeks, beyond the submission of the will to whatever authority, principles of conduct worthy of the individual's devotion. If there is to be any real morality, it cannot be in self-engrossment but in harmony with over-individual principles; nor yet in conformity to imposed sanctions but in the spirit of loyalty controlling and expressive at once, the spirit of the free conscience. So the transition is made from spurious to genuine ethics, from egoism and submission to authority, to the autonomy of the true moral consciousness.

Hartmann's analysis of the ethical consciousness distinguishes the subjective, the objective, and the absolute moral principles; or the motives of morality, its ends, and its ultimate ground. The first of these three systematic surveys engages him in the larger part of his treatise, but it is towards the last that his discussion proceeds. He recognizes three basic motives and accordingly three varieties of subjective moral principles: taste, feeling, reason.

Under the first, ethics of taste, are listed the various moral theories that express an essentially aesthetic evaluation of conduct: the ethics of the beautiful life, of balance, moderation, and the golden mean, of individual and universal harmony, of perfection and the moral idea, of artistic moulding of life. These judgments of taste lay claim to objectivity and seek universal vindication, or else would substantiate themselves as having direct intuitive validity. But only rational judgments can be maintained as objective and universal, while the immediacy of judgments of taste is really one of feeling. Without its deeper roots in feeling, the ethics of taste would be one of vain charm and vaguely motivated formal appeal. Seeking vitality and definiteness in the intimate incentive, we turn to feeling, but in our effort to vindicate what we cherish and espouse, we are led to rational grounds which alone can sustain over-individual and defensible claims and sanctions.

The ethics of sentiment includes theories of moral sense, appeals to honor and shame, or to the feelings of remorse and retribution, gregarious and social consciousness, sympathy and goodness of heart, pity, loyalty, loving devotion, the feeling of duty. The broad scope of ideas which are surveyed here reveals the manifold appeal which the 'ethics of the heart' has had for men in all epochs. Yet it cannot sustain critical probing. It has intimacy and intensity of utterance and insistent plausibility, but it cannot justify itself to others and so remains unconvincing to more deliberate thought.

Rationalistic moral principles are implied in the ethics of taste and of sentiment. From these judgments of unconscious rationality, intelligence proceeds to explicit recognition of rational norms. Hartmann distinguishes and examines the Kantian ethics of Practical Reason, Wollaston's exaltation of truth as sovereign moral principle, the norms of freedom and equality. In the ethical principles of order and justice he recognizes the essential rational need of appropriate recognition of contending demands, not all on a par. Connected with them is the principle of fairness, of equity in dealing with unequals; and here ethics provides basic ideas for the philosophy of law.

Rationalistic ethics point to the recognition of a principle of dominance and order, and towards a prevailingly teleological view of conduct. The teleological principle determines the relating and grading of other principles and the reconciling of contending demands and conflicting duties. In a more profound sense the teleological principle manifests its crucial character: not only does it provide a test and as it were a focus of the various motives or subjective moral principles, but it involves directly the objective view of morals, which is concerned precisely with choice between rival ends. Hartmann explicitly insists

that his ethics rests primarily on teleology as its essential positive principle. Pessimism, in his judgment, does not outline the moral career of man nor indicate the ground of moral obligation; it serves only negatively, to emancipate it from egoism, the chief obstacle to moral activity.[12]

Whether the various moral motives sustain or oppose each other, depends upon the identity or the difference of their objective ends. Moral advance is marked by progressively over-individual outlook and aims. The eudaemonistic motive here assumes social expression, in the utilitarian pursuit of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. In so far as this ideal involves emancipation from selfishness and from its delusions, it is a positive moral gain. But this deliberate promotion of the general happiness is unduly optimistic; it is the mistaken hope of progress in terms of satisfaction. So the concentration on happiness conflicts with the realization of other social-cultural aims. The socialistic program exhibits this inadequate conception of the moral objective.

But the corollary of this train of thought need not be utter despair of life. Morality demands the rejection, not of life but of the lust for happiness. So the moral aim may be conceived as evolutionistic: the development and perfection of civilization. Evolution, however, cannot be here conceived in merely organic-materialistic terms. No merely mechanistic conception of nature by whatever modification of argument can yield a genuinely moral interpretation of human conduct. The recognition of significant teleological character gives the ideas of development and perfection more than merely social-cultural meaning. We perceive the sense in which both eudaemonism and evolutionism find their correctives in the more profound principle of the ethical world-order, revising and completing the ideals of happiness and development. With the recognition of the moral world-order as basic aim, ethics attains a truly objective standard.

The very question of moral obligation raises the problem of the ultimate ground of morality and of the absolute moral principles. To bare individualism, obligation could have no meaning; but the over-individual sanction of moral principles might seek its basis either in the essential identity and communion of all persons or in the essential oneness of all in the Absolute. Neither of these two metaphysics of morality is adequate, in Hartmann's judgment. The validity of ethical ideals must rest on the community of all moral agents with a teleologically active Absolute. Morality achieves the Kingdom of God; this achieving is not merely man's work, but no more is it God's eternal achievement absorbing men. The Absolute end is also the end of man's own being. This 'concrete-monistic' metaphysics is intended to comprehend dis-

tinctively personal endeavor and cosmic-absolute realization and the active identity of the two.

At this crucial point and climax, the pessimistic tone of Hartmann's thought again prevails. The ultimate absolute goal cannot be conceived in terms of positive realization. The world-process is an initial and inevitable tragedy. The dignity of moral insight is that it recognizes the need of salvation; its grim realization is in denial and dissolution. There is no finality of individual redemption any more than there is final individual gratification. Realization-in-redemption can only be universal. God's unblessedness is the deepest truth of the world-process, and men's communion with God is the divine passion, the basic theme of religion. The tragic ideal is the ideal of a final release. Morality is in the common labor, of man with men and of men with God, in the mutual task of redemption, to speed the universal goal of negation and ultimate surcease.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE REALISTIC REACTION IN GERMAN THOUGHT

1. *Herbart's Formalism*

Post-Kantian idealism from Fichte to Hegel represented the resolute effort to go beyond the critical limitation of Kant's theory of knowledge, to achieve a metaphysics of spiritual principles in which moral ideals would receive objective recognition. Against this sublime gesture of self-reliant reason, Schopenhauer's irrationalism of the Will-to-live was the grim protest. It accentuated Kant's doctrine of the metaphysical incompetence of reason, contemptuously dismissed the optimism of the idealists, to teach the essential infelicity and futility of human life and to advocate an ethics of compassion and renunciation.

In distinction from both of these movements in philosophy, there was a realistic tendency which gained headway in the course of the century. Its first leader was Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), who turned against idealism in Fichte's classroom in Jena, and both in Königsberg, where he held Kant's chair, and in Göttingen developed the principles of the Critical philosophy in a realistic direction. He called himself a Kantian, but of the year 1828: a Kantian beyond Kant and after the idealistic aberration. According to Herbart, philosophy begins with the general ideas of tradition and conceptions of science and by subjecting them to critical analysis undertakes to clarify their meaning, reconcile or overcome their inconsistencies, and complete them by evaluation. There are accordingly three main parts of philosophy: logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of values, which Herbart called aesthetics.

His metaphysics is the result of his logical effort to achieve precision of statement and to clear up inconsistencies in the common notions of our thought: plurality of attributes, unity of self-consciousness, change, causality. Herbart opposes the subjective idealism and the pantheistic monism of his contemporaries, revives realism and pluralism. We may not know directly things-in-themselves but only phenomena. That Something exists, however, may not be doubted, else nothing would appear to exist. So some form of existence obtains. But

if it were ultimately one, it could not have all the contradictory attributes which it manifests. So the ultimate is not one but many, many "Reals" which in a variety of combinations disclose the different and discrepant characteristics of our world of experience. In this realistic restatement of Leibniz a way is mapped out for the better recognition of the complexity of nature and the systematic reconciliation of categories.

Of more particular interest to our study is Herbart's treatment of values. Here he develops Kant's ideas in a direction opposite to that taken by the idealists. Kant had distinguished the world of nature from the realm of values and demanded the reconciliation of the two. Idealism undertook the synthesis of them in a metaphysics of Spirit. Herbart rejected the possibility of such a synthesis and accentuated the distinction of existential and value-judgments. Our account of the reality of things and our evaluation of worth must nowise be confused. Value-judgments are not concerned with the existence of things, but with the relations between the qualities of things whether perceived or imagined, between the different attitudes and tendencies of persons.

The basic type of judgment is here the judgment of taste, and Herbart calls the basic science of value Aesthetics. Judgments of taste do not require merely classification or explanation of inconsistencies: they involve an attitude of pleasure or displeasure, an approving or disapproving response on our part. The philosophical elaboration of these judgments consists in the right interpretation of this characteristic response. With aesthetics in the stricter sense, or philosophy of fine art, Herbart is not very closely concerned. The part of general aesthetics or philosophy of value to which he gave his more special attention is practical philosophy or ethics, the science of the morally beautiful, the doctrine of praiseworthy and blameworthy relations between wills, of virtues and duties. The essential quality of the moral is recognized in involuntary response of pleasure or displeasure which certain will-states or relations evoke. The will pursues ends or purposes; our judgment of taste determines values; ethics is concerned with the latter, with worth and not with ends or consequences.

Herbart's ethical method is formalistic. He would distinguish by means of analysis the several fundamental will-relations which evoke the characteristic moral response. He points out five such ethical "Ideas." First is the Idea of Inner Freedom, that is, the harmony of the will with its own judgment of approval. A life in which decision reflects conviction is truly called a free life. When action runs counter to judgment, there is lack of free self-expression; it is not the same person that wills and judges. The full attainment of freedom requires

clarity of conviction and firm energy of the will in conforming to it. This fine insight, vigor, and harmony of soul is expressed in the Idea of Perfection. Relative to the individual and the situation, perfection is also expanded by attainment and is as it were self-propelling, achieved at every step, but in every step lost again, an ever-moving prospect.[1]

The Ideas of Inner Freedom and Perfection express the estimate of the individual person. The will-relations of one person to others evoke judgments of evaluation which Herbart subsumes under three other Ideas. Several persons may be in harmony, in that each one wills the satisfaction of the others. This active choice of another's satisfaction is expressed in the Idea of Benevolence. Yet we also recognize mutual limitation and conflict in the relation of persons to each other. This discord and strife between wills evoke a judgment of disapproval; we commend an interrelation of persons in which each allows the will of another to restrain it. This relation of mutual curb without strife we express in the Idea of Right or Justice. And we also insist that beneficence be rewarded, and evil intent and action come to grief. This approved state of due compensation gives rise to the Idea of Equity or Retribution.

So ethics is concerned with our judgments of approval and disapproval of these five pattern-relations of will. Corresponding to this formal system of moral evaluation is the structure of Herbart's social philosophy. In the basic institutions of society we recognize types of social order conforming to the fundamental Ethical Ideas. In the legal system of society, the Idea of Justice or Right finds its actual recognition: the effective settlement of strife and conflict between persons. The Idea of Retribution or Compensation is realized in the wage system, wherein each person is to receive his due. The Idea of Benevolence, interest of each in the satisfaction of others, finds social embodiment in the administrative system, which undertakes to promote and assure general well-being. The all-round development of judgment and energy of will, our Idea of Perfection, corresponds to the system of culture which we set out to achieve. And these four institutional systems point towards a Community of Persons, wherein the basic ethical Idea of Inner Freedom is socially constituted. So ethics and social philosophy are in accord; the goal of social development is the communion of persons and the harmony of will and judgment in all will-relations to which we accord our approval. In such a community of souls no one owns himself an individual apart, or feels alien, but each is together with all, moved by one spirit.

Such a harmony in personal life and social relations evokes our

appreciation; our moral satisfaction is similar to the delight we experience in beholding beauty. We are also conscious of an impelling necessity to direct our will in conformity to the Ideas. This is our conviction of duty. The achievement of character through the harmony of judgment and will is honored by us as manifold virtue. The adequate statement of the moral ideal, or the Highest Good, would include recognition of dutiful devotion, virtuous performance, and actual well-being.[2] The cultivation of moral loveliness in character and conduct is according to Herbart the main purpose of education. In this field of pedagogy Herbart was an acknowledged master, and his influence has been far-reaching.

2. *Beneke's Emphasis on Psychological Methods*

The renewed influence of British empiricism and the emphasis on psychology instead of dialectics is represented in German philosophy by Friedrich Eduard Beneke (1798-1854). He acknowledged himself a follower of Locke, published a version of Bentham's *Principles of Morals and Legislation,* and explicitly advocated inductive methods. His first ethical treatise, in declared opposition to Kant's *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals,* was entitled *Foundation of the Physics of Morals.* Its publication aroused sharp opposition from the idealistic camp and led to Beneke's dismissal as lecturer at the University of Berlin. It may be recalled that at the same period Schopenhauer also made a vain attempt in Berlin to storm the citadel of Hegelianism. Beneke found some refuge at Göttingen and later, after Hegel's death, returned to Berlin as a stubborn defender of empiricism and psychological methods in philosophy.

By his *Physics of Morals* Beneke did not mean a materialistic ethics, but the naturalistic study of moral experience, its particular data and development, in feeling and in volition. In the further and more systematic version of his doctrine, the *Fundamentals of Ethics,* he undertakes a preliminary canvas of the nature and origin of morality, followed by a psychological survey of the developing forms of practical experience, the morally normal, the anomalous and delinquent, and allied moral-practical relations. This analytical survey is followed by synthesis, an exposition of the general basic forms of morality: virtue, duty, conscience, responsibility, freedom. Then he turns, in the second volume of his work, to a moral estimate and regulation of the various human tendencies, self-regarding and social, treating the various objects of judgment in moral conduct and the different types of character and individuality. An adequate practical philosophy, in Beneke's judgment,

should proceed to the art of morals, to a moral dietetics and prophylactic, to character building and rebuilding. The third volume of his work is devoted to the general philosophy of law.

Beneke would construct his ethics upon evaluation of feelings. The relative value of things or experiences is initially felt and more deliberately judged by us in terms of their heightening or depressing psychical effect. The more enhanced and elevated we are by an experience the higher value it has for us. Similarly we evaluate the acts and experiences of others; social sympathy enables us imaginatively to share their feelings and responses, and so we judge them as we judge ourselves. Upon the development of active sympathy in us depends our purely social-altruistic evaluation; likewise upon the development of range, depth, and complexity of our psychical-emotional life depends the degree of mental enhancement or depression of which we are capable, our inner fineness and subtlety, and so our evaluation.

It should be noted that while Beneke measures value in terms of psychical enhancement or depression, it is not the actual but the judged and estimated effects and influences which distinguish moral valuation. Moral goodness is in the inner disposition of the agent. Because it centers its attention on inner experience, it recognizes the rise of feeling from sensual to more spiritual response, and also its expansion of range from private to social interest. So moral perfection would express itself in intelligent genuine devotion to the general well-being. In these various aspects of his ethics Beneke invites comparison with Hume and with John Stuart Mill.

Among the other results of Beneke's psychological study of moral experience, we can only mention his account of the consciousness of moral obligation and of responsibility. Conscience and the conviction of duty have their source in the deepest and inmost nature of man, revealed to self-scrutiny and ineradicable. "Even when it is not strong enough to deter a man effectively from moral misdirection, it maintains firmly its position, and . . . again and again sounds its charge of admonition." [3] Beneke's treatment of moral freedom and responsibility proceeds from an explicit psychological determinism. Every act and thought and feeling in our experience, just as every bodily state, has its cause and its proximate or remote necessary conditions, and likewise its effects. When we call a man free and responsible for his action, we should mean not that his action is undetermined, but that it is determined by his will and truly expresses and reveals it. Human nature, in its origin neutral morally, proceeds in its development towards intellectual and moral maturity, towards rationality and moral freedom. The recognition of the thoroughly natural process of moral

fruition but also of moral decay does not nullify the meaning or the force of moral judgment. We may investigate and understand *how* a man has become what he is, but nevertheless we judge him for what he is, good or bad. This part of Beneke's ethics expresses clearly his resolution to achieve an explicitly naturalistic account of morality and to rely, alike in analysis and in explanation, on psychological methods.

3. German Positivism: Feuerbach

The collapse of German idealism in the middle of the nineteenth century was due to a twofold negative reaction. The political and social revolution of 1848 and the defeat of it were ironic comments on the optimism of the Hegelian formula, "The Rational is the Real, and the Real is the Rational." To a generation of crushed spirits in the fifties and sixties, Schopenhauer's pessimism was bound to make strong appeal. But likewise the ascendency of naturalism expressed itself in resistance to the idealistic metaphysics. We may note the positivistic strain, turning in Germany increasingly towards materialism. In social and in religious thought the negative reactions combined. Against the Hegelian concessions to the established order and to orthodoxy, Karl Marx (1818-1883) and D. F. Strauss (1808-1874) represent the forces of disintegration and denial, the demand for a new gospel and a new faith. Both of these began as Hegelians. The new radicalism was meant to express the dissolution of the Hegelian Logos. In the world of events the influence of Marxism has proved the more epoch-making, and we shall return to it in a later chapter. But in the world of ideas the leading spirit in this reaction against Hegelian absolutism was Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872). The social insurgents,—Marx, Engels, Lassalle,—recognized his influence; and his treatment of theism espoused not only Strauss' unorthodox thesis but its still more radical corollaries.

Feuerbach has been called "the Prodigal Son of German idealism." [4] In turning from theology to philosophy, he followed good idealistic precedent; but, if this was a descent from divine to human science, then Feuerbach insisted on going down to the end of the path. In his words, God was his first thought, Reason his second, Man his third and last thought. Actually we find his philosophy increasingly materialistic in tone, but in intention it is a positivistic reaction against any metaphysics: "Neither materialism nor idealism, neither physiology nor psychology is truth; truth is only in anthropology." [5]

His thought registers a progressive surrender or dismissal of ultimates, to concentrate on the immediate human scene and on its natural and social background. He comes to regard God as the sublime self-

projection of man's religious consciousness. What concerns him is not God's existence or nature, but the genesis of man's idea of God. Feuerbach is a prophet outside the temple. Religion is not man's knowledge and worship of God, nor, as the Hegelians said, God's self-revelation in man. In the religions of mankind is the self-revelation of man: in man's ideas of the Divine are uttered human needs and ideals; the temple is man's temple.

If God is thus brought down to the human scene, man's nature, rôle, and destiny are conceived in more and more explicitly earthly-materialistic terms. In one of his early treatises he had insisted on recognizing the essentially rational nature of man. Man eats and drinks, but is that his essential vocation, and can we fairly define man as a being that eats and drinks? Now it is this very definition that he was to propose later, in a notorious pun which scandalized his respectable readers: "Man is what he eats: *Der Mensch ist was er isst.*" [6]

As is man's nature, so is his destiny. The product of natural conditions, human nature is bound by the limitations of nature; soul is a function of body, life is of the here and now, death is inevitably the conclusion of each individual's career, and immortality is out of the question. This naturalistic interpretation of man leads to a radical humanizing of religion. The whole range and the meaning of man's career are to be reinterpreted unambiguously in secular, earthly terms. Feuerbach's kinship with Comte is not difficult to perceive, but he is free of Comte's sacerdotalism and mystical leanings. Feuerbach would not replace theism by a Cult of Humanity, but in a more radically positivistic spirit would undertake the satisfaction of human needs individual and social.

Feuerbach's ethics is explicitly social-eudaemonistic. Our task is to be, not half-angels and half-brutes, but men through and through. The first principle in such a morality is man's natural striving after happiness. So the field of ethics is the field of desires and satisfactions, the field of sensation and feeling. This natural and universal pursuit of happiness involves men in moral relations. Where one's desire is countered by another's, in the common life and clash of society, my cognition of others is my recognition of their wants limiting mine. "I will" and "You ought" are the expressions of the same elemental want, in myself and in another. When either of these two is balanced or completed by the recognition of the other, we have duty and virtue. Evil is in the exclusively self-centered egoism that ignores the wants of others. Morality is essentially social, for social community is the condition of realizing human wants and purposes. The very conception,

birth, upbringing of the individual involves his life and wants with the wants and lives of others.

In a similar vein Feuerbach reinterprets the ethical doctrine of conscience. Conscience is not a curb to satisfaction and a negation of the will. It is rather a dominant recognition, in all my desires and decisions, of my life as actively bound up with the lives of others: a socialized awareness of myself. Conscience is con-science, seeing and knowing with others, in our own wants feeling also the wants of all mankind.[7] So on the basis of the natural egoism, the general desire for happiness, we achieve virtue by alliance with others in the promotion of the general welfare.

There can be no doubt of Feuerbach's genuine philanthropy. Humanitarian zeal replaced in his spirit the renounced religious devotion. But his ethical conclusions require premises which are scarcely supplied by his materialistic anthropology. The gradation and the self-criticism of desires and the motivation of social ideals are not clearly perceived and analyzed. Feuerbach's account of morality is embarrassed by the increasingly materialistic cast of the positivism on which he would base his advocacy of social ideals.

4. Materialistic Construction: the Physiology of Morals

Explicit and aggressive materialism, recalling the days of La Mettrie and Holbach, invaded German thought towards the middle of the nineteenth century. It proposed to build a complete philosophy out of chemical-biological materials. Jacob Moleschott (1822-1893) undertook to state the chemistry and physiology of personality. Matching Feuerbach's pun was his epigram, "No thought without phosphorus." In a revised version of it he added fat and water.[8] Human life must be treated as a process of organic reactions.

Even more aggressive and brusque was Karl Vogt (1817-1895), who identified materialism with science and treated the opposite view as superstitious bigotry. With undisguised contempt for traditional principles, Vogt declared that thought was as gall or urine, an organic secretion.

The materialistic work which aroused the widest response during the latter half of the century was *Force and Matter* by Ludwig Büchner (1824-1899). Büchner had the gifts of the popular exhorter and was more emphatic in preaching than in practicing scientific thoroughness and objectivity. He preferred to characterize his doctrine as monism. This is even more explicitly the declaration of his successor, the evolutionist Ernst Haeckel, whose doctrine will be considered in a later

chapter on Ethics and the Theory of Evolution. The actual exposition in Büchner, and in Haeckel also, sets aside the fundamental thesis that the mental and the physical are the two aspects of the ultimately real, and then proceeds to a materialistic account of mind and thought and character. Spinoza and Goethe are invoked, but Holbach directs the procedure.

Büchner would meet the ethical challenge to materialism by describing morality, when stripped of its dogmas, as the natural result of the gregarious development of the human-animal organism. "Morality . . . is evolved from sociability, or the faculty of living in a community, and it changes according as the particular ideas or necessities of any given society change." It does not require supernatural sanctions, nor does it depend on religion, which is rather a dogmatic misapprehension. Materialistic ethics must rest upon the natural principle of reciprocity, which is the basis of social morality. The Confucian precept and the Golden Rule are the negative and positive expressions of the fundamental law of conduct: "the law of an equal mutual respect for general as well as private human rights, which law has for its object to provide the largest amount of human happiness." Recognizing egoism as a natural expression of human nature, and never hoping to suppress it altogether, Büchner would direct it towards the path in which private interests tend to coincide with the social.[9]

5. *Naturalism and Idealism in Lotze's Philosophy*

When Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881) published his *Medical Psychology* in 1852, the materialistic school hailed him as a champion; but Lotze's reply was an unambiguous rejection of the proffered alliance. His argument included physiological premises, but it did not and never was intended to proceed to a materialistic conclusion. His philosophy, which Windelband ranks as one of the two most significant German systems of thought in the nineteenth century,[10] combined a naturalistic outlook with an idealistic prospect. He earned his doctorates in philosophy and in medicine at the age of twenty-one, and within a year was lecturing in both fields at his University of Leipzig before proceeding to his notable career at Göttingen. Throughout his life this combination of interests was reflected in his method and in his cosmic outlook: clinical procedure, philosophical demands, spiritual vision.

His systematic philosophy set out by a resistance to Hegelian-idealistic metaphysical construction. Distrusting the idealist's profession of ultimate spiritual knowledge, yet nowise surrendering the demand for a genuine recognition of the spiritual, Lotze in his own way re-

enacted Kant's rôle. The world-process in detail was to him a mechanism, a causal interconnectedness calling for physical-scientific methods of study. But what was the ultimate reality of nature which was thus manifested to our minds in experience? Like Herbart, Lotze saw the necessity of regarding the course of existence as the active interrelation of persistent centres of being, self-identical yet infinitely various in coöperation. So both Herbart and Lotze revived Leibniz, but Lotze's world of souls is much nearer Leibniz' monadism than Herbart's universe of 'reals.' Lotze's explicitly spiritualistic emphasis assures him also of the Monad of Monads. The philosophy which begins with medicine and clinical analysis ends with the all-pervading and all-embracing Divine Personality.

Is this idealistic construction with realistic materials only the concession of reason to feeling, excusable perhaps but unconvincing? Lotze's entire procedure is meant to resist this imputation. In the Introduction to his *Microcosmus* he expresses his guiding conviction, a dual conviction with which also the second book of his *Metaphysics* concludes: "How absolutely universal is the extent, and at the same time how completely subordinate the significance, of . . . mechanism . . . in the structure of the world." Thought achieves a certain pattern or system of relations which represents but which does not exhaust the nature of reality. "All our analysis of the cosmic order ends in leading our thought back to a consciousness of necessarily valid *truths*, our perception to the intuition of immediately given *facts* of reality, our conscience to the recognition of an absolute standard of all *determinations of worth*." [11] These three fundamentals,—truth, fact, value,—an adequate philosophy must integrate. And of these three, value is dominant and decisive. So Lotze wrote on the last page of his *Metaphysics:* "I still feel certain of being on the right track, when I seek in that which *should* be the ground of that which *is*."

It is this emphasis on the cosmology of value which makes Lotze's thought significant. In his own way he raised the problem of Kant's *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*. His ethical doctrine was not worked out in detail, but the partial treatment that is available reveals the synthesis and balance of judgment that characterize him throughout. Recognizing the inexpugnable reality of moral experience, he demands a philosophy that comprehends value as well as mechanism. Science, art, morality, religion: in them all we express different ways in which we acknowledge and respond to reality. The scientific pattern of uniformities is a more precisely outlined but a less profound and less concrete expression of the nature of things than that yielded in appreciation of worth. Our human life is less adequately

portrayed as a psycho-physical mechanism than as a process of spiritual experience.

Lotze would comprehend moral experience, in both senses of the word. He feels bound to include it, and he is bent on understanding it, what it signifies or reveals. Examining more closely the feeling-response in valuation, he finds its distinctive mark in the experience of pleasure and pain. Pleasure or happiness is the one self-validating end and value: the question, why should I seek happiness, only serves to disclose this self-evidence and finality. What interests Lotze is the connotation and implications of pleasure and pain. We experience and we cherish, not pleasure in itself, pleasure absolutely, but specific states of mind that yield it. Pleasure and pain serve to make manifest the values to which we respond in experience. In the interconnectedness of things in nature its vast range of character is revealed. A rock reacts to pressure and attrition; plants receive and manifest nutritive properties; and so throughout the scale of nature. The experience of happiness discloses valuing souls in a valuable world. Just as nature requires light and vision to manifest its color-character, so in pleasure the life of persons serves to reveal the values of reality. We may note that our range of colors depends upon conditions of illumination and also upon visual endowment. Even so the values revealed in the experience of happiness correspond to the range of a soul's culture and development. *That* pleasure is sensed, is a basic property of a soul and of what it reveals in nature; but *what* pleasure is experienced, depends upon and also indicates the range and stature of the soul. Happiness, the unmistakable index of value, likewise reflects the scale or gradation of worth in the universe.

Value thus revealed in a subject's experience is not 'merely subjective.' Nature which includes valuing souls cannot be ultimately neutral to value. At this point Lotze's naturalistic-clinical account of mental states, that had seemed a materialistic obstacle to all idealism, proves to be an ally. It is just in the natural course of human existence that the progressive capacity for satisfaction is disclosed. The mechanism of material things is the stage of existence, but the drama that is progressively enacted is the drama of spirit and its values, and the stage is suitable to the play.

The teleology of nature, which is revealed in the soul's recognition of value, is immanent and integral. The higher a value is, the more characteristically our appreciation of it expresses wholeness of personality. The progressive realization of this wholeness or integrity in self-consciousness is itself the central characteristic of realized spiritual worth. As Lotze thus contemplates the life of souls, tending to self-

completeness, the essential purposiveness of reality seems to him to demand an eternally realized Divine Personality, whose infinite perfection nature manifests and approximates in detail, by whose supreme worth in love we are blessed, and whose boundless range of spirit we in our finite measure can share. The cosmos is the divinely ordered instrumentality for the finite achievement of spiritual character and its worth.[12] So we may interpret the synthesis of naturalism and idealism in Lotze's philosophy. On the loom of existence, mechanism is the warp through which the Divine weaves the texture of ideal values.

CHAPTER XXVII

REVISION OF IDEALS AFTER THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



1. The Ideologists

To describe the French Revolution as the work of the Encyclopedists would be to oversimplify the historical situation and the forces in the great upheaval. Nevertheless it was truly a revolution in ideas and ideals; the preparation of it was in a real sense philosophical. The particular course which it followed in France was determined by specific factors in French life, political, economic, and racial; but conceived in a larger way, the French Revolution found its dynamic in eighteenth century radicalism. It continued and accentuated the note of social-political reconstruction already struck in England and in republican America. The American Revolution, with the vigor and the vision of the New World, was more specific in its program; the French, uprooting more deeply seated ideas and institutions, became of necessity more radical and extensive. Though the struggle in France was diverted and in a measure nullified by the Napoleonic dictatorship, it came to represent, even to peoples who battled with Napoleon's armies, the ideals of a fairer order of human life, ideals which found expression in literature and philosophy and which also germinated and bore fruit in the political and social life of Europe during the nineteenth century.

Both the leaders of the Revolution and those who were horrified by its course connected it with the radical philosophy of the previous generation. In the revision of beliefs Voltairean ideas contended with the sentiments of Rousseau, the latter for a time prevailing. Marat read the *Social Contract* to the Parisian crowds; Robespierre championed Rousseau's political doctrines. When the Pantheon was secularized during the Revolution, both Voltaire and Rousseau were entombed there as national heroes. The younger generation of philosophers continued the struggle in their own way. Though aghast at the excesses of the Terror, in which some of them perished tragically, their loyalty in the main was to the new ideas and the new order. By the same token, those who viewed the Revolution with abhorrence and those who undertook to negate or overcome it turned against the philosophers.

In faraway Petersburg Empress Catherine had studied Montesquieu, had outlined a codification of the Russian laws which in monarchist France was considered dangerously liberal. But later she drew back in dismay when she saw which way French philosophy was tending and ordered Voltaire's bust removed from her desk to the imperial garret. At headquarters, the progressive assumption of power by Napoleon was marked by growing negligence and then by pronounced scorn for philosophers, whom he had at first courted. In the days of the monarchy, Voltaire, perceiving the support of oppression by the Church, had waged a battle against ecclesiastic bigotry. The Revolution in its turn had trampled upon the sanctities of the Church. The return of the monarchy, Napoleonic or restored Bourbon, reinvested the churchman in his ancient dignities and benefices. The irony of events tended to associate orthodoxy with reactionary and tyrannical policies, and social righteousness with atheism.

The spirit of humanitarianism and ideal aspiration for man, nourished on a materialistic diet and not only disavowing all religion, and in particular Christianity, but opposing it as ruinous to humanity, is illustrated in the work of M. J. A. N. Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794). The religious training of his early youth fired him with a faith which his later thinking transferred from God to man with ardor undiminished. His intellectual keenness and his nobility of character commanded the admiration of his contemporaries, who ranked him with Condillac and Pascal. He combined scientific with philanthropic enthusiasm; science was to him the great instrument of human welfare. Men, he reasoned, suffer through the ignorance and superstition which have made them the victims of despotic and priestly oppression. But history reveals man's boundless capacity for perfection and justifies hope for the future.

Condorcet's devotion to the gospel of progress is eloquently attested by his main work, *Historical Outlines of the Progress of the Human Spirit.* From the earliest beginnings of unrecorded history to his own times, he surveys nine stages of human advance. The first three, through hunting-fishing, pastoral, and agricultural life, achieve increasing range and stability of social organization. The next two stages, from the invention of alphabetic writing which marked the beginning of recorded history, are chiefly distinguished by the Greek and Roman civilizations of antiquity. The sixth and seventh stages, covering medieval life, are in Condorcet's judgment epochs of decay and of subsequent revival of science and progress, and terminate with the invention of printing. The last two, modern periods, are connected by the age of Descartes and the Cartesian method. In a century and a half, by

the right scientific procedure, experimental and theoretical, the human mind has mastered fundamental principles of nature, of human nature, of social order.

Himself in the midst of the most radical upheaval of Western Europe, Condorcet, looking beyond the atrocities of fanatics and demagogues, confidently surveyed the next stage of human perfectibility. The French Revolution, precipitated by wretched rulers, sustained by popular force, was to him essentially a revolution of ideals and principles: philosophy and science applied to the perfection of human life. Spreading enlightenment would establish justice and harmony among nations and remove the causes of war; in each country social and economic justice, ending oppression of the masses by the privileged few, would achieve a really prosperous commonwealth. With self-understanding and with the deliberate application of knowledge to the problems of human and especially of social life, there is no limit to the perfectibility of men. Perfection of virtue may not yield men assured happiness, but it is the surest bulwark against misery, and in the long run it establishes the general welfare on a solid base.[1] The composition of this work by Condorcet in the dark days of the Terror, when his opposition to atrocities had caused him to be denounced as an enemy of the Republic and he had to hide from the police, in daily peril of arrest and of the guillotine, is an immortal record of the intellectual and moral grandeur of the man who represented perhaps the noblest strain of revolutionary France.

The Lockean philosophy of experience, whose fortunes in France we have already traced, through sensationalism to materialism, through Condillac to Helvétius and Holbach, found a later form of expression in the doctrine of the 'ideologists.' This philosophy, dismissing metaphysics, concentrated on the observation of the data of consciousness, the reduction of general ideas to their more elementary components. The ideologists emphasized physiology and the human machine. The loftiest ideas could be traced back to animal responses and bodily reactions.

The headquarters of this school of thought was the Salon of Madame Helvétius at Auteuil. Here Turgot and Condorcet and Benjamin Franklin gave distinction to gatherings eagerly attended by younger wits. Napoleon cultivated this philosophical circle and visited Auteuil; the ideologists took active part in the events of 18 Brumaire; with the assumption of power by Napoleon a number of them were named senators: Cabanis, Tracy, Garat, Volney. Perhaps some of them imagined that Napoleon would become a second Washington. They were disillusioned before long. Napoleon did not find them all pliable, and

with his imperial ascendency he dismissed the ideologists and preferred anointment by an amenable Church.[2]

The tone of the ideologists was meant to be scientific, but the stirring times in which they were living and their own active participation in public affairs served to accentuate their social philosophy. Man is moved by the demand for self-preservation, but he is also a gregarious being. So his normal life must combine self-regard and sympathy. Thus reasoned Destutt de Tracy. But Fraternity was also advocated egoistically, as the most advantageous policy for the individual. Saint-Lambert and Volney recognized nothing in man more basic than his self-regard. Morality is self-preservation, and the virtues are the principal ways of securing it: activity, courage, temperance, cleanliness, knowledge. These prophets revised the Golden Rule: "Live for your fellowmen, so that they may live for you." [3]

A steadier mind, combining clinical method with a political-social outlook, is Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis (1757-1808). He wrote a treatise in physiological psychology. By understanding man's bodily processes we understand his character, for his moral nature is only an aspect of his body. Bodily conditions determine the course of our sensations and so all our experience, our personality and our moral being. Age, sex, temperament, manner of life, as well as climate and other factors of the environment affect the sensations and thoughts of normal people; and any physiological disorder, abnormality or disease, affects the mental life and especially the emotions. Medicine, in perceiving and regulating bodily disorders, can thus be a prime factor in character-formation and in the moulding of human conduct in detail. Cabanis traced also the influence of moral on physical factors, by which he meant the effect of cerebral activity on the rest of the organism.[4] For the brain is a bodily organ and secretes thought as the stomach and intestines digest or as the liver secretes bile. Man thus has his life and character in partial control. Instead of speculating about occult spiritual principles in his nature, we should seek to understand the normal operation and the most satisfactory régime of our organism.

Against any explicitly theological ethics, Cabanis advocated the doctrine of a social morality, to replace theology and play the rôle of a religion. Morality is essentially a practical recognition of the interdependence of men's lives, the art of achieving general happiness by the practice of justice and philanthropy. Cabanis, who denied or at any rate dispensed with God, held fast to the Golden Rule. The natural relations of men, which in the main are abiding, point to a life of active harmony; in the promotion of the general good man finds his own surest advantage.

2. *The Traditionalists*

The French Revolution could not remain French. As the monarchy which it overthrew had set the tone of government and of manners all over Europe, as the radical ideas of the French philosophers had influenced thinking men and women from Paris to Potsdam and to Petersburg, so the course of the Revolution soon crossed the borders of France. In principle and then in fact it became an all-European struggle of ideas and institutions and armed forces. The arguments of the guillotine and the dialectic of the Grand Army cannot be analyzed here; our interest is in understanding the conflict of ideals. Blue blood was to run together with red; in a tragic confusion of issues, the Revolution crushed some of its noblest champions, to yield to fanatics and then to bow to a new master. The Terror that silenced Condorcet was subdued by Bonaparte. Meanwhile the enemies of the Revolution were advocating the principles of traditional authority and were preparing the French mind for the restoration of the old régime. In due course of time, by the logic of events, this resistance was to find a voice in France, after Waterloo had at last confuted the guillotine and the Grand Army together. But the earlier long siege was conducted from abroad. Two of these apologists of submission to authority call for more special mention: Louis Gabriel Ambroise de Bonald (1754-1840) and Joseph Marie de Maistre (1753-1821).

Bonald saw in the French Revolution the disastrous outcome of the whole modern misdirection of basic principles. He found the root of the evil in the Protestant Reformation. Abandon the divine authority of the ages, to follow the lead of the individual conscience; confuse fruition with change, and instead of hoping humbly for the fuller understanding of God's truth eternally declared, make each man the likely vehicle of a new revelation: then in place of stability you have sowed change, and you will reap chaos. Locke, Voltaire, and the Encyclopedists have only a more secular version of this basic Protestant error. If truth was to be woven from the shreds of experience, if all standards and institutions, principles of individual conduct and social order, were relative to empirical conditions and subject to continual revision, then the whole texture would be sure to unravel and become a tangled web. This course led to scepticism and atheism in religion, sentimentality and sensual indulgence in morals, the Terror in politics.

So modern civilization needed a return to the abiding principles of Catholic tradition. Sound thinking, in good scholastic manner, must proceed from initial truths vouchsafed by God, and end in conclusions subject to authoritative judgment. "The authority of evidence must

yield to the evidence of authority." As in theory Bonald would again humble individualism before authority, so in practice the individual is to be subjected to society, social order itself is to be regarded not as forced or as contractual but as rooted in laws of nature eternally ordained by God. Against the modern cult of novelty and of change dignified as progress, Bonald regarded change as evil in principle, and glorified permanence, the eternity of the Divine. "Truth, however forgotten by men, is never new; it is from the beginning, *ab initio*. Error is always a novelty in the world; it is without ancestry and without posterity; but just on that account it flatters men's pride, and everyone that promotes it regards himself as its father." [5]

Thus committed to the principles of Catholic absolutism, Bonald looked forward to the inevitable edict of Divine Authority. "The Revolution began by a declaration of the rights of man. It must finish by the declaration of the rights of God." [6] God's will and power initially established society, and God's will and power ultimately prevail. Of this Bonald had no doubt. His attack on republican pliancy and instability earned him Napoleon's favor, but Bonald resisted Napoleon's overtures. If he yielded in time, was it because Napoleon's overwhelming power seemed to have manifest sanction from on High and papal anointment?

Joseph de Maistre, a native of Savoy and through long years Sardinian minister at the Russian court, was yet French in his cultural orientation, an avowed champion of God's mission for France. His interpretation of this mission made him the unwavering enemy of the French Revolution and the prophet of legitimism and restoration. Bonald was the philosopher and dialectician of traditionalism; Maistre, its theologian and seer. His reflections on the Revolution led him to the larger issues of theodicy and the problem of evil.

He saw in the French Revolution the working of Divine Providence. France, chosen of God to be the leader in faith and Christian devotion, had forsaken her rôle and had become the home of arrogant negation and corruption of ideals. God had permitted France to disrupt and mangle herself, but through carnage and chaos France was being led by God. She would eventually resume her foreordained rôle in the life and thought of Christian Europe. The restoration might be delayed, but it was certain.[7]

Yet why did a just Providence include in its decrees the torments and the ruin of so many innocent and just men and women? This problem of the Book of Job engaged Joseph de Maistre in his symposium in dialogues, *Les Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg:* Why do the righteous suffer, why do wicked men prosper? Maistre answered: God

has established certain necessary relations between the natural and the moral order. Pain and other natural evils are punishments for sin, but punishments for mankind, not specifically for any individual. As soldiers that may not all die in battle yet are all of them there to die, so we are all subject to certain ailments that may not afflict us every one. God is "not a respecter of persons." Could we demand that the just man drink poison with no ill results, or that the wicked man, because wicked, be smitten by the remedy that should normally heal his body? God does reward and punish, but not in such haste as to disrupt the natural order which he has established. Not all prosperity is divine blessing, nor all suffering is punishment for sin; yet Divine Providence does direct the whole system; its justice is everlasting.

3. Revelation and Radicalism

The traditionalist's submission to authority, his ultimate reliance on revelation, and his recourse to mysticism involved hazards for orthodoxy. The prophetic temper might turn the legitimist into a radical. Saint-Martin trusted in the inner divine illumination, not in any formal doctrine or externality. So he demanded a godly spirit in politics; but this godly sovereignty need not be monarchical; God may have chosen and prepared the whole people for righteous self-government. Ballanche regarded the Revolution and the Terror as the people's expiation. But through it all humanity is moving forward, ever closer to God. Lacordaire saw in the chaotic results of the Revolution a vindication of Christianity as the true basis of social order. But just on that account he championed a socialized interpretation of Christianity, with criticism of existing institutions, the advocacy of a church independent of entrenched civil power and itself the living fountain of fuller and truer social justice as visible marks of godliness.

Felicité de Lamennais (1782-1854) was one of the most tragic figures in the French religious revival. In the spirit of Bonald and Maistre, Lamennais began by advocating a return to the Catholic tradition as a condition of restoring society to stable order. Arrogant individualism in religion leads to sectarianism, proceeds to heresy, to deism, to atheism, and ends in the spiritual death of indifference which Lamennais saw all about him. This conviction inspired the beginning of his work, *Essay on Religious Indifference*, which as it proceeded developed into an exposition of the nature of religious truth and of the spirit and social mission of Christianity. Beyond individual reason and beyond sentimental or mystical affirmation, truth demands a universal warrant which only the social mind of abiding tradition can supply. This is the universal reason, God speaking authoritatively through mankind to each

individual. On this basis Lamennais championed Catholicism, universal Christianity, as an expression of divine truth and a bulwark of social well-being. From shifting opinion and dissolution of ideals and social chaos, modern society must return to the steady truths of the ages. This work stirred the Catholic spirit in France and throughout Europe; in Lamennais' words many readers could hear again the mighty tones of Bossuet. Rome approved the *Essay*, and it is reported that Pope Leo XII, on Lamennais' visit to the Vatican, offered him a cardinal's hat, which he declined.

Two basic ideas dominate Lamennais' life: the abiding reason of humanity in thought, the sovereign claims of humanity in action: theoretical and practical humanitarianism. The latter, consecration to the cause of liberty and peace for the weary and heavy laden, was, in the case of Lamennais, the working of the Gospel leaven in a socially sensitive conscience. Toiling to turn the Revolution from its radical misdirection, Lamennais yet shared its philanthropic aims. Championing the restoration of Catholic authority in thought and in conduct, he yet deplored the actual inhumanity of many leaders of the traditional order. On the right Christian foundations he would build the right Christian structure.

His first hope was theocratic. While advocating sovereign papal dominion as the expression of God's will to humanity, Lamennais resisted the cherishing of ecclesiastic and political prerogatives which had corrupted the shepherds of Christ's flock in France. Let Christ speak and act through the Pope, but let priest and bishop be God's priests and ministers to suffering men and women and nothing more. So Lamennais advocated separation of Church and State, freedom of speech, press, association, and instruction. Confronted with the opposition of the French ecclesiastics, he appealed to Rome; but the Pope repudiated this champion of Catholicism who in the name of Christ's supreme authority in the life of humanity was combating established prerogatives and who apparently did not know where to stop.

Lamennais was constrained to submit; but in the very act of submission his open break with Rome was precipitated. With the publication of his gospel of social liberty and justice, *Words of a Believer* (1833), a book which the Pope pronounced "small in volume, but immense in perversity," Lamennais entered more emphatically on his mission, an apostolate of Christ's gospel which Christ's official legates had forsaken. Christ's gospel is also God's universal law for mankind. This law men have forgotten; the true Christian must recognize the great betrayal, must reconsecrate himself to the divine ideals of "justice with love, and peace and liberty."[8]

Lamennais was committed beyond recall, plunged irrevocably into the social struggle, "rebuilding the City of God," and died refusing priestly comfort, unction or burial or a cross over his grave, wishing interment in the common trench with the poor for whom he had labored as their brother in Christ.

4. The Eclectic School

If traditionalism, reacting against the French Revolution, was likely to be affected by the new spirit of freedom and rebellious justice and so to pass, as in the case of Lamennais, from exaltation of orthodox authority to a protest of conscience championing Christ against Pope and King, ideology in its turn was proving unproductive and needed radical revision to satisfy the newly aroused demands of self-consciousness. So Maine de Biran (1766-1824) began as an ideologist, but could not accept the physiological account of mental process as final, and was led beyond ideology and materialism to a philosophy of activism, voluntarism, spiritualism. His practical philosophy manifests a similar range of outlook and an advance from Epicurean hedonism to loftier and more ideal aims. He distinguished three sorts of life that a man can live: an animal life of passive receptivity to impressions from without, of various immediate pleasures and pains; a human life of effort, self-discipline and self-affirmation of will; and finally a divine life of love and pious communion with God.[9]

The most eminent and influential leader of this movement of reconciliation and eclecticism was Victor Cousin (1792-1867). Maine de Biran as well as the Scottish common sense philosophy expounded by his teacher Royer-Collard helped Cousin to make the transition from the philosophy which he came to call sensualism to a philosophy of principles and spiritual values. Then he plunged into the sea of German idealism, visiting Germany twice, studying Kant, turning to Schelling and more closely to Hegel, demanding an idealistic philosophy as the basis of assured ethical and social principles. He had translated Plato, edited Proclus and Descartes and also Abelard and Pascal; in his long career as educational leader in France he convinced himself that the spiritual-liberal philosophy which he advocated was the high note in the thought of humanity, the chief need of his age, the true French-Cartesian tradition, the surest safeguard of the Christian treasures. As a nineteenth century Malebranche, more secular, more erudite, less unbending, he risked the charge of compromise in his endeavor at manifold reconciliation.

Eclecticism, as distinguished from mere syncretism and astute accommodation, was conceived by Cousin as resistance to dogmatic narrow-

ness, depreciation of vain originality, readiness to recognize and incorporate truth wherever found. The true philosophy is not in the future; it is in the philosophies at hand, in their mutual correction of each other. Recognizing no false but only incomplete and onesided philosophical systems, Cousin adopted eclecticism as the only sound philosophical position. Like Molière, he "took his good wherever he found it." With Maine de Biran he agreed that the sensualist philosophy of the French Enlightenment was inadequate, since it yielded no real consciousness or personality, no conviction of spiritual principles. The French Revolution undertook the task of emancipation without a philosophy of life to sustain it. The collapse was inevitable. "Too long," he said, "we have wished to be free with the morals of slaves." [10]

In Thomas Reid and in German idealism Cousin found the recognition of lofty principles which he required as indispensable conclusions in philosophy. Especially in Kant and in Post-Kantian idealism was the new spirit which France sorely needed in her own revision of convictions and ideals. Madame de Staël's book on Germany had engaged the more alert French minds, not only by the vivid accounts of German life but by her *résumés* of German idealistic and romantic doctrines and by her abstracts of German poetry and drama. Here was an important alternative to French sceptical-materialistic ideas, which Cousin resolved to master and to promote in France.

The application of his method in ethics is of especial interest in our study. Cousin's metaphysics would emphasize Plato's Idea of the Good, the sovereign principle of the ideal; so God, beauty, good become dominant ideas in his philosophy. The ground of true morality is in the pure recognition of the good and disinterested loyalty to it. This is the truth of Kant's ethics of duty, and of this ethics Cousin became the champion in France, of *The Critique of Practical Reason,* "a work which we do not hesitate to signalize as the most imposing and most solid monument which philosophical genius has ever erected to true virtue, to disinterested virtue." [11]

A champion of duty, he was opponent of all the ethics of interest and pleasure which characterized eighteenth century French thought. In his criticism of other defective theories, such as the ethics of sentiment, or of the interest of the greatest number, or of God's will as the determinant of moral worth, or of appeal to rewards and punishments in the hereafter, Cousin aimed to emphasize the primary requirement of inherent moral principles. Happiness generally follows virtuous conduct but does not determine its virtue; sympathy is evoked by a good act, but does not qualify it as good; God's will sustains but does not constitute righteousness. The beginning of morality is in the distinction

between virtue and mere prudence. To will the good without regard to consequences, that is the incontestable fact of conscience, simple and irreducible. Morality must start there.

The good is imperative and commands obligation. But, Cousin proceeded, imperativeness and obligation do not constitute goodness. He criticized Kant for grounding moral good on duty. Duty, according to Cousin, follows from goodness. The good, because it is the good, is entitled to dutiful loyalty. In perceiving the good I respect its authority, and I also recognize my own capacity freely to pursue and achieve it. Moral freedom was advanced by Cousin as a plain and undeniable fact of experience, without the Kantian transcendental distinctions. My recognition of the good, of my duty, of my freedom: these are indubitable and observable elements of my self-recognition as a moral personality. So likewise do I yield recognition to personal dignity wherever found, irrespective of rank or station. A person is inviolable as a moral agent, and this is the true basis of all declaration of the rights of man. On the recognition of the moral dignity of free agents, and their duties and corresponding rights, Cousin would establish his doctrines of social order and institutions.

But this popularized version of Kantian-Hegelian ideas did not express, in Cousin's judgment, the whole truth of the ethics that he advocated. To the Kantian emphasis on duty, to the emphasis on moral reason as realized in the social process, he would add the emphasis on sentiment. "The voice of the heart is the voice of God." Moral philosophy requires the quickening influence of Christian love: consuming devotion to the principle of moral perfection which the dutiful will espouses. Loyalty to the good finds its consummation in the love of God. Justice fulfills man's duty and respects all rights, but the full realization of man's destiny requires not only justice but also love. Towards this conclusion Cousin's maturing thought proceeded in the revised version of his *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful and the Good.* In his earlier statement, in 1818, he had traced the progress of the philosophy of life from problems of self-regard and altruism, to the serene-impersonal commitment to virtue, the Stoic resolution; then to a rational-philosophical recognition of God as the consummation of all perfection, Truth, Beauty, Goodness: a Platonic-Hegelian vision; but lastly love quickens reason, heart and mind are one in the Christian worship of God.[12]

Cousin's eclecticism aroused the inevitable opposition of both the camps which he sought to reconcile. The theologians and ecclesiastics regarded his professed support of religious values as insidious undermining of Christianity. The "sensualists" and declared opponents of the

Church considered him as a shallow compromiser. But his eloquent lectures and writings and his direction of French education during a whole generation presented to French thought an eclectic-spiritualistic philosophy of life as an alternative to the doctrines of the eighteenth century. On his expansion of the French horizons of thought, and especially on his promotion of this spiritualism, Cousin laid his claims to posterity. His own work and his influence emphasized the importance of the history of ideas, and out of his school came some of the best products of French historical research, knitting French ideas with the larger thought of mankind.[13]

Cousin's philosophy regained for many of his students a conviction of spiritual values, but to minds of orthodox nurture it proved doubly unsettling by its spirit of reconciliation that yet seemed to reject major articles of faith. Perhaps on that account the Church resisted the disruptive influence of this alleged spiritualism even more than the philosophies of overt negation. Cousin's later thought shows his endeavors at a rapprochement with established religion and traditional formulas, but his earlier teaching inspired radicalism in theology and religious misgivings.

In his novel *Daphné*, Alfred de Vigny portrayed the tragic figure of Julian the Apostate, an intense religious spirit without a religion. There was an element of Julian's spirit in Theodore Simon Jouffroy (1796-1842). He found his faith wrecked by his critical thinking, and before him a spiritual abyss. Only reason was left to him; so he sought to wrest salvation out of philosophy. The record of his struggle is among the most impressive religious documents of the period. "I was unbelieving, but I detested unbelief; it was just that which decided the direction of my life. Unable to endure the uncertainty about the enigma of human destiny, no longer having the light of faith to clear it up; only the lights of reason were left to me for inquiry into it." [14] The analysis and the implications of man's moral experience, revealing man's nature and his prospect, led his mind also to the recognition of the ultimate principles which speculative thought had failed to grasp.

The problem of man's destiny is central in Jouffroy's philosophy. Like the nomadic shepherd on the high plateaus of central Asia, in Leopardi's poem *Night-Song*, so Jouffroy on the slopes of the Jura and the French Alps surveys boundless nature and asks, Why is he put in this world, what is his rôle, his destiny? But he sees more light and final meaning in his life than the Italian pessimist. The Scottish philosophers whom he translated had taught him impregnable verities which he insisted on reading also in Kant: man's direct judgment of good and evil, his recognition of moral imperatives, his conscience which cate-

chisms and codes may sustain or sophistry may confuse but which is primal and fundamental. Man's problems are also his promises: in the very asking of the moral question, our moral capacity is revealed. Here Jouffroy recalls Pascal.

Reason, in showing us more clearly our nature and relations to the rest of existence, is also a judge of satisfactions. Not partial but complete and final satisfaction is judged truly to be happiness, and the opposite, misery. But in this sensible good and evil, reason reveals attainment of order in life. We are truly happy in realizing this order. And the order is not only human; it is an element in a larger, universal order; the absolute good is in the self-realization of this universal order. Deepest truth, perfect beauty, highest good, all point to this absolute order, and religion gives it the name of God. In it we live and move and have our being, and therein is our true happiness and blessedness. Thus from sensible good and evil, reason looks up to the absolute good of the universal divine order of being. But moral good, virtue in the strict sense, is still to be considered. The recognition of the universal order arouses in us the conviction of dutiful reverence and also the assurance of free self-identification with it. This free disinterested devotion to the absolute good is virtue, and this alone is morally good.

We may note here Jouffroy's moral eclecticism which finds expression also in his extended historical-critical survey of ethical theories. In his analysis of the three aspects of man's moral nature he would combine the merits and supplement the shortcomings of the hedonistic, the teleological, and the Kantian ethics. In this synthesis Aristotle seems to provide the initial assurance of a higher naturalism, but Kant prevails in the concluding account of the distinctive moral good or virtue. The essential condition of morality is in acting from a disinterested or impersonal respect for the universal and imperative good.

This endeavor to vindicate in philosophy the verities of a moral-religious faith might move French minds by the intensity and beauty of its expression, but it did not yield lasting conviction. From unqualified orthodoxy, modern French thought turned more characteristically to scepticism or to explicit negation; or it sought realization of values in a more scientific frame of reference, as in the positivist exaltation of humanity and civilization. This latter strain of philosophy will engage us in a later chapter.

In university instruction and in the direction of professional philosophical tone, Cousin's spiritualism continued to exercise its influence for a whole generation. Among the many works to which attention might be called in a more extended special treatment of French eclecticism, two are mentioned here as reflecting the popular and the more

professorial development of ethics by Cousin's disciples, both professors at the Sorbonne: the book on *Duty* by Jules Simon (1814-1896), Cousin's assistant and later minister of public instruction, life senator, and member of the French Academy, and *The Theory of Morals* by Paul Janet (1823-1899), member of the Institut de France.

Simon's *Duty*, written in a designedly popular style, proceeded from the affirmation of human freedom to the two other Kantian postulates of morals, immortality and God. Only on the basis of such a spiritualistic metaphysics can we grade or evaluate passions, justify or even understand self-sacrifice for a principle. The life of moral devotion and the sublimities of religion sustain each other. "The most irrefutable demonstration of the existence of God is the life and death of a just man." [15] Simon emphasized dutiful allegiance to the law of justice as a regulative principle in life. Against the empiricist explanation of rights in terms of interest, he advocated disinterested respect for right as a principle: not my right or your right is to be respected, but always *the* right whether in you or in me. This dutiful life is alone virtuous. When loving consecration possesses the dutiful soul, the life of virtue attains unto blessedness. The truly happy life is in the love of duty.

Paul Janet styled his ethical theory "rational eudaemonism." He maintained that a moral scale of values has its basis in a natural scale of goods and perfections. The pursuit and attainment of these natural goods yield pleasure of various sorts, but they are to be judged according to their worth, and the judging principle must be the supreme and most distinctive principle in man, his rational will. In the very recognition of it, the higher and the more perfect is disclosed as imperative by virtue of its nobility: the obligation to prefer the happiness of rational endeavor to the pleasures of random satisfaction. We may not be always certain of what the best course of action is in any particular situation, but whatever it is, that certainly we ought to do. The recognition of good, of the best, is the acknowledgment of the duty to realize it.

Throughout these discussions of Cousin's disciples we note the idealistic resolution to realize spiritual values in the world of experience, the insistence on the necessity of a metaphysics or cosmology of moral value, together with the confident affirmation of the required premises as intuitive certainties. Keen perception of the implications of the moral problem is thus combined with inadequacy in the analysis and the demonstration.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE GROWTH OF BRITISH LIBERALISM



1. Conservative Reaction and Romantic Protest

The turn of the century, which witnessed the awakening of the German mind to creative activity and gave the world major systems of thought from Kant to Hegel and Schopenhauer, and which in France was reaping the revolutionary harvest of radical ideas, found English philosophy seemingly at a low ebb, yet already new currents were coursing in thought and action. Paley's *Moral and Political Philosophy* and Kant's *Grundlegung* both appeared in 1785: a comparison in ethical insight depressing to English minds; but the next five years saw the third edition of Richard Price's important *Review*, and also Reid's and Bentham's works in morals. The surge of fresh ideas was sweeping through the romantic poetry of the next generation: the promise of a later day when feelings and visions were to be translated into principles and programs of life.

The course of events in the French Revolution aroused various reactions in England. The more radical advocates of democracy saw in the impending Revolution, and later in its bloody course, only the natural travail of social reconstruction. Richard Price, who had defended the uprising of the American colonies against English rule, was ready to champion the French people's struggle for liberty. But to the more conservative British judgment, the upheaval in France seemed to threaten all social order in Europe.

Even Edmund Burke (1729-1797) who had devoted his political genius to the advocacy of more humane British government at home, in Ireland, in India, and who had faced Parliament with his pleas for conciliation with the colonies and for reasonable recognition of American aspirations, was aghast at the prospect of ruin and chaos across the Channel. The champion of liberal justice in 1775 became in 1790 a leader in the conservative reaction. Before the Fourth of July, he had known "no method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people." [1] But after the Fourteenth of July he learned both method and policy of repression. Burke is not plainly inconsistent, as might appear to first judgment. In his American speeches he had sought to sweep

aside futile abstractions of absolute right and social compacts; he would lead England to face the American problem as one of practical justice and expediency. In the French Revolution also he is not impressed by formal professions of freedom and equality; he sees in the popular upheaval a menace to the people's real security and on that account adheres to the cause of 'prescription' and traditional order. In his own way, liberal or conservative, Burke inclines the English mind to a conception of laws as based on long-tested social needs and advantages.

A most radical statement of a social philosophy negating traditional institutions was the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness,* published in 'the terrible year' 1793 by William Godwin (1756-1836). He had been a dissenting minister, but had discarded not only the doctrine of original sin, but also the belief in Divine Providence. Men, he thought, are capable of boundless improvement, but are oppressed and corrupted by established institutions. Any compulsion of man by man is an act of enslavement and misery, and to free men of bonds is to promote human welfare. Even more resistant to tradition than Rousseau, Godwin repudiates the rule of men by any laws and social régime, and advocates a life of free conviction and spontaneity. His work is a system of philosophic anarchism. Penal codes, taxation, economic barriers, private property, marriage bonds, organized religion: these are all to yield to a social order in which every man will be truly and amply himself, and all men thus living rightly together will enjoy the common welfare.

For the realization of his ideal Godwin trusted to reason, but later he gave greater recognition to the emotional factor in human perfection. His anarchism, advocating freedom from compulsion, repudiated the use of force in the reformation of society. Godwin relied only on the persuasive power of mind, on experience and enlightenment to refashion mankind. In other more ardent minds this gospel may find more aggressive forms of expression, though its power may not prove so abiding.

Nowhere was Godwin's influence more potent than in the life and thought of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), but of course we should be missing the full range of Shelley's genius if we saw in him only or mainly a disciple of Godwin. In his Fragment, *Speculations on Morals,* a projected ethical treatise, the reader is reminded more directly of *Political Justice.* Shelley regards moral science as concerned with men's voluntary actions in social relations affecting their happiness. On the just distribution of happiness in society depends its soundness or corruption, and so of every social institution. The individual's disposition to pursue this moral end is his virtue, which thus includes benevolence

and justice as its two principal forms. Virtue is the fruit of enlightenment and a refinement of civilized life; vice, selfishness, is the offspring of ignorance and error. Morality demands the recognition of unique individuality, not the wiping out of living souls in dull institutional uniformity.[2]

All this is only scaffolding in Shelley. Man's longing for happiness and free individual utterance, the rebellion of heart and mind against traditional barriers and shackles, the unquenchable faith in human perfectibility, and the vision of a juster and fairer humanity: these are not mere doctrines in Shelley's intellect but living truths, uttered in the winged speech of creative imagination. Orthodox bigotry and materialistic rigidity are both rejected, hard Zeus and jealous Jehovah as well as callous Nature. In Nature are spiritual energies to which our spirit may respond. Poetry, philosophy and civilization are achieving, despite the blindness and brutality of men, a more perfect and humane world. Shelley is the poet of this mellower and more blessed life; all the protest and the tragedy of his lines are penetrated by this sublime conviction. Evil prevails in fact, but it is not our inevitable destiny. If we could see aright, our will could extinguish all iniquity and all misery; and it shall extinguish them. Until that consummation, Shelley, like his Prometheus, would stand his ground, unyielding and unafraid:

> To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.[3]

This ideal zeal for human perfection which possesses Shelley inspires his conception of his own career as a poet. But with subtle insight he resists moralistic aesthetics. He may criticize some artists, even Michelangelo, as lacking a sense of moral dignity and loveliness, but he does not admit moral edification or specific propaganda in poetry. Unlike ethics, which analyzes principles, sets forth doctrines and codes and measures, poetry "awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought." So he reasons in *A Defense of Poetry* that "the great secret of moral good is love; or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. . . . The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause."[4] If a poet deliberately tries to reform his readers, even while he is thus seeking to produce his effect as a moralist, he fails in his action as a poet. But if he is really a poet and a great poet, he appeals to the inmost nature of men, stirs the imagination to activity, and men are enriched spiritually by his song and can face their own lives more hu-

manely with a larger and more generous outlook. Poetry thus serves forever to redeem mankind from dull narrowness and vulgarity and hardness of heart. And so paradoxically but truly, only if a poet does not moralize is he as a poet a moral force.

The European fame of Lord Byron (1788-1824), in which no English poet but Shakespeare has excelled him, and the more European than English meaning of the term 'Byronic' in the history of modern literature, might invite notice. The English public whom he charmed by his poetic art never quite responded to his bitter and ribald cry of negation and defiance. In Byron, more than in any other of the major pessimistic poets, is a Schopenhauerian portrayal of life as insatiate and futile craving, but without Schopenhauer's gospel of sympathy and resignation. His own life, stirred by glory that ever seemed to come short of greatness and fired by passion which could not rise to love, moved him to contempt for what he cherished and hopeless longing for what he might have adored. Was his misanthropy assumed, or was it forced out of him by the bitterness of his heart? And his last adventure, in the Greek struggle for independence, was it a final gesture towards the ideal, or only his closing scene in the romantic theatre?

The creations of his genius are as perplexing to the reader as his own life and character have been to his biographers. Against the sustaining faith of civilization since Socrates, that man's well-being is in the life of intelligence, Byron's Manfred learns the ashen truth that understanding is but disillusion and misery. Yet this sardonic conviction is challenged by the protest that in the striving of the mind is all our dignity: without it life is not life. An equally tragic contest of ideas provides the thought action in *Cain*. Here is not only the ruinous distrust in spiritual effort, but the more blighting despair of any ultimate principle of righteousness: moral atheism. If there is to be any morality for Cain, it must be in sublime defiance. If he could only join Lucifer and his band of

> Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in
> His everlasting face, and tell him that
> His evil is not good! [5]

But for such a challenging career of avenged indignity, Cain lacks the requisite power. His education in disdain, which Lucifer undertakes, teaches him only his own pettiness which mocks his infinite ambition. Thus actuality humiliates his aspiration: in the boundless cold and cruel universe, his own tragedy of frustrated ideals is null. His last act of moral defiance, to check his brother Abel from offering helpless lambs on the altar to callous Deity, leads him to murder. Thus in black irony,

his only good turns to evil, and he is more odious now in his own sight than the God whom he had defied. Yet despite this ruinous conclusion, the resolution of unyielding defiance prevails, proud and sardonic. It is the bitter passion of Byronic romanticism.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) had very definite convictions as a poet about the significance and duty of his career. The profession of these convictions sometimes mars the full perfection of his poetry, but their power also stamps his lines with immortality. His moral genius is one of spiritual perception of high worth in nature, against the dull materialism of the eighteenth century, and in common life, against the empty arrogance of the philistine aristocrats. What Wordsworth heard in the Revolution and in all history left him neither callous nor indignant, but enlightened and fortified:

> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating; though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue.[6]

As he turned to read the great book of simple lives and to sing the dignity of undistinguished human nature, so nature itself, no longer callous and dead, revealed her inner life and meaning to him, and to his pervasive humanity nature responded, spirit to spirit. Without recourse to decoration, his poetry communicated the inner blessedness of penetrative insight, "joy in widest commonalty spread," emotion and thought uniting man with man and with nature. Wordsworth's philosophy of life cultivated the "emotion recollected in tranquillity" in which he found the source of true poetry. The poet is man's teacher, for poetry imparts and arouses that pervasive sense of the inner spirit of nature and of man in which alone is true enlightenment, real virtue, abiding happiness.

2. *Scottish Common Sense Intuitionism*

Between the radical philosophy of materialism, atheism, and hedonism, which had directed the more extreme currents of the Revolution, and the stubborn reaction of the traditionalists who undertook the restoration of the old orthodoxy in belief and in social order, French critical opinion, as was noted in the last chapter, sought a middle course that might combine freedom and progress with firm loyalty to spiritual principles. This moderate liberalism of the Cousin school was deliberately eclectic; it turned for guidance to Kant and to German idealism, but its initial reliance was on Scottish common sense rationalism. It was in Thomas Reid that Royer-Collard, Cousin's teacher,

found his leading principles for the reëstablishment of social order on liberal but sound foundations.

In British thought also the Scottish common sense philosophy represented a confident reaffirmation of abiding principles, against the alleged subversive influence of Humian empiricism and of the ethics of selfish utility and interest. Some members of the Scottish school, as Beattie, preferred solemn declamation to analysis and reasoned argument, and the edifying tendency was more or less characteristic of them all, custodians of the saving verities of common sense. But where more solid eloquence was sustained by essentially sound ideas, the inconclusive analysis of them did not much weaken their power. Especially true was this in the case of Dugald Stewart (1753-1828), the most eminent of Reid's followers. Among the men in Edinburgh classrooms whose thought and whose career were influenced by Stewart's teaching may be noted Lord Lansdowne and Lord Palmerston, Sir Walter Scott and Sidney Smith, Francis Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review;* but among his students was also James Mill. Stewart's doctrine appealed to minds that combined a liberal outlook with a conservative temper.

In the main Stewart continued Reid's resistance to Humean scepticism, defended religion against materialistic negation, declared for universal principles of right and wrong, against the sensualist ethics of interest and pleasure. He regarded the moral faculty as an original and irreducible principle of human nature, the idea of moral obligation, 'ought,' as unanalysable, and men's capacity for moral perception as a universal and essential endowment.[7] Joined with this conviction of our moral intuitions is an assurance of our power to choose the right, "man's free agency." The distinction between right and wrong is pronounced in the manner of Cudworth and Clarke, as eternal and immutable. To Stewart this moral assurance is evidence of the moral government of God. Like Clarke, Stewart surveys the moral life as the range of fulfillment of our duties to God, to our fellowmen, and to ourselves. Under the second head he examines the claims of benevolence, justice, and veracity; under the third he devotes attention to the place of happiness in the good life. This treatment of veracity combines Hutcheson's view with Kant's. Apart from the clear general advantage of truthfulness, there is in us a sense of distaste for lying; and our reason shows us that the purposes of speech would be frustrated by universal disregard of veracity. He distinguishes benevolence from justice, and rejects the reduction of either of them to initial considerations of self-interest. Sympathy he regards as a morally coöperative principle, but for basic decision in social matters, he relies rather on

the inherent fair-mindedness of uncorrupted human nature to yield other men their due and to recognize men's claim on each other's good will and generosity. The spontaneity of charitable sentiment nowise invalidates the rational recognition of it as our duty. Stewart conceives of happiness as man's general welfare, follows Butler in espousing reasonable self-love while criticizing the selfish pursuit of pleasure, and elaborates Aristotle's account of the influence of habits on happiness and on virtue. All along he relies for his convictions on the sustaining judgment of mankind, the common sense of tradition. While he requires, for absolutely right conduct, action suitable in every respect to the circumstances, relatively right conduct demands only the agent's sincere intention and devotion to right principle.

We should take note here of William Whewell (1794-1866). His *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, useful in their day, lacked the solidity of preparation to assure their lasting worth. But in his *Elements of Morality, Including Polity*, Whewell undertook an elaborate statement of rationalistic ethics, combining Scottish intuitionism with Kantian ideas, in firm resistance to utilitarian or other empiricist morals. He led the opposition to the use of Paley's *Moral Philosophy* as chief ethical manual at the University of Cambridge and was instrumental in revising philosophical teaching in England on broader lines.[8]

Whewell excludes considerations of pleasurable consequences from the moral motive. His ethics, proceeding on an intuitional basis, espouses five supreme principles of conduct as evident to reason: Benevolence, Justice, Truth, Purity, Order. These, according to him, correspond to the five essential rights and obligations: of personal safety, property, contract, marriage, government. The detailed examination of these virtues and institutions gives substance to Whewell's treatise, but the substantiation leaves much to be desired. In practice these intuitive principles are not absolute but subject to qualification. What remains absolute is the formal authority of right principles. It was of his teacher Whewell that Henry Sidgwick was thinking when he observed that moral intuitions seem plausible until we try to state them clearly and precisely. But Whewell did significant work in resisting hedonism, in restoring Butler to his rightful position in British ethics, in turning the ethical thought of his day from interest and utility to duty and imperative principles.

3. Platonic and Modern Idealism: Coleridge

The leading pioneer in arousing English thought to the reality of spirit and spiritual values, against the 'sensualism' of the eighteenth cen-

tury empiricists, was Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834). In his speculative writings, the Platonic tradition that had been a living power in English philosophy and theology was reaffirmed, and English minds were inspired to look from the empirical scene to boundless vistas of reality and perfection. Loyal to old truths, he needed new answers to the new critics of idealism, and this guidance he found in Kant and in Schelling. His devotion to the basic Christian values was decisive, but in order to retain his possession of them he was prepared for radical revisions in orthodoxy. Was he putting old wine in new bottles; was he the more insidious enemy, sapping the saintly walls from within; was he but a visionary, vainly seeking to plant new life in the deserts of dead tradition? The extravagant praise and the condescending or contemptuous dismissal which Coleridge received in his time, as compared with the later more measured appreciation and criticisms of his thought, indicate the radical significance of his position and the importance of the new direction of ideas which he served to inaugurate.

We may recognize in Coleridge that historical sense which Herder was cultivating, a condition of tolerant and critical insight in dealing with the beliefs of the past. Ruthless levelling of the ancient sanctities might leave only a desolate waste and chaos in the lives of men, as Coleridge observed in the course of the French Revolution, which had aroused in him first enthusiasm, then misgiving, and finally despair. You must replace what you have destroyed, and this reconstruction demands insight, to perceive within the husks of error in the old tradition the kernel of truth which made it a living power to past generations. This insight into strength and weakness alike was a condition of mastery in dealing with any system of ideas, old or new. "Until you understand a writer's ignorance, presume yourself ignorant of his understanding." [9]

To Coleridge this principle of loyal or tolerant reconstruction was not only philosophically sound but also essential to social welfare. The more ruthless radicals were appealing to new loyalties which had to be the firmer if they were to face the unprobed hazards of the new program. But where men had learned wholesale contempt for all that they and their forbears had held sacred, what ground was left in their souls, swept clean, where the new ideals could take root? Why should one be unflinching in his devotion to the latest gospel, when he had so readily dismissed all the others? So, between bigoted advocacy and disdainful rejection of the old convictions, Coleridge undertook the task of critical restatement.

We should not so exalt this lofty vision as to ignore the shortcomings

of Coleridge's personal character. In his actual procedure, a headlong spirit of revolt and utopian zeal were followed by perplexity. His practical uncertainty found escape in speculative abandon, but also in increasingly recalcitrant Toryism, and in accommodating ambiguity concerning orthodoxy. Critics have charged him even with "conscious insincerity." All this is of real interest to Coleridge's biographers, nor may it be overlooked by any student of his thought. But the important point for criticism is to recognize his basic principle of significant reconstruction through tolerant understanding. This principle should enable us to do better justice alike to the radical and to the conservative strains in Coleridge's thought.

It should be remembered that we are dealing here with a highly speculative but not with a systematic mind. Coleridge takes his ideas from others as he needs them, revising and fitting them into a structure that is held together not by logical coherence but by dynamic adequacy, as satisfying certain imperious demands of his soul. The initial tenor of his thought was Platonic and Neoplatonic; then for several years he came under the strong influence of the philosophy of Hartley, whose name he gave to his son. But the conflict of empiricism and associationism with the Platonic tradition could not be overcome. Berkeley and Spinoza engaged his thought and led it back to Plato. And together with this reaffirmation of idealism in philosophy came new emphasis on the finalities of religion. He resisted all thinking which failed to recognize and exalt spirit: associationism, because it leaves the reality of persons ambiguous, and pantheism, because it ignores the personal reality of God.

This idealistic direction of Coleridge's thought explains alike his study of Kant and the sort of use he made of Kantian and Post-Kantian ideas. He honored Kant's reply to Hume and the Primacy of Practical Reason, but he resisted Kant's inconclusiveness in metaphysics and was not satisfied with the ethics of duty. He was suspicious of the pantheistic leanings of the Post-Kantians, disdained Fichte, and gave no acknowledgment to Schelling commensurate with his own actual obligation to him.[10] The organization, or rather the assembling, of all his gathered ideas was guided by a prevailingly Christian motivation: a positive conviction and demonstrable knowledge of God as the absolute creative Will, and of spirit in our nature as active with and dependent on the Divine. Plato and Plotinus, Kant or Schelling may supply the ideas, but St. Paul and St. John set the tone.

In ethics, Coleridge reacts sharply against any empiricism and hedonism, against the doctrine of mere prudence and pleasure. True virtue may yield happiness, but it is not motivated by the desire for pleasure.

Virtue and self-interest tend *to*, but they do not proceed *from*, the same point.[11] Coleridge both relates and also sharply distinguishes morality from mere prudence, and both of these from religion. He lists four kinds of prudence: evil prudence, selfishness, resisting the higher moral life; commendable prudence, a neutral or innocent self-regard; wise prudence, valuing present utility and yet perceiving higher superseding worth; and lastly holy prudence, itself an organ of the higher devotion. As the soul may rise from mere prudence to goodness, so can it ascend still higher, to godliness. This is the advance from morality to religion. So the spirit of duty or inward rectitude, the heart of morality, is itself an earnest of the divine in man. But though morality is thus revealed as the base or the threshold of religion, it is nowise a substitute for it. Saintliness both demands and transcends virtue: it is the fulfillment of man's communion with the divine.

4. The Contest of Authority and Critical Methods

Coleridge's reinterpretation of established tradition pointed two ways. It might, and actually it did lead him to resist explicit institutional reforms as stubbornly as any Tory, but it also expressed a new basic conception of spiritual institutional life. Coleridge championed the principle of an established church, but it was to be more than a priestly institution. In his vision it was to be the organized spiritual activity of the state, safeguarding the treasury of culture, promoting and diffusing knowledge, refining taste, and deepening loyalty in all the realms of spiritual life, in science and law, in medicine and morals, in poesy and piety. He would exalt the Church, by expanding its range and transforming its program in society.

The issue between authority and criticism, not only in religious doctrine but in the relation of the Church to intellectual, moral, and social-political activity, engrossed the English minds of this period and stirred partisan conflicts. The intense piety and moral earnestness of Thomas Arnold of Rugby (1795-1842) enabled him to reconcile active devotion to the Established Church with a decidedly critical treatment of Scripture and dogma and with a lofty toleration of sectarian formulas. Dr. Arnold, proving all things, was assured throughout of holding fast that which is good. But others, and some of them Arnold's own pupils, could not see St. Paul's double precept as single wisdom. Either the Church, holy guardian of divine truths and of all good, must reaffirm its authority in the lives of men; or else the proving mind was to have its own way, with such eventual conclusions and loyalties as the available evidence warranted. Traditionalist and critical intelligence both had their aggressive and their more tolerant advocates.

European upholders of Catholic orthodoxy had sought the roots of the French Revolution and of the general dissolution of social principles and order in the Protestant defiance of the divinely ordained ecclesiastic authority. Among those who feared the menace of invading criticism in England, a devout and aggressive group sought to dissociate the Anglican hostility to Rome from the tendency towards a Protestant conception of dogma or of church-order. The Tractarian or Oxford Movement was marked by this reaffirmed conviction that the Church of England is itself a Catholic Church, one with the saintly Patristic tradition. This group of Anglican defenders of the citadel of orthodoxy included men of various temper: godly poets like John Keble, aggressive critics of the Protestant Reformation like Hurrell Froude, blunt logicians of orthodoxy like William George Ward, arguing that any Anglo-Catholic resistance to Protestant laxity led to a finally Roman-Catholic commitment, and learned lofty theologians like Edward B. Pusey, hostile to liberalism but staid and conservative Anglicans in the end.

The leading spirit of the Oxford movement was John Henry Newman (1801-1890). His resistance to Protestant sectarian argument and his commitment to an authoritative catholic church, which ultimately led him into the Roman Catholic fold, expressed his essential conception of religion and spiritual life. For him the fundamental principle of religion was certain belief and conviction: not mere sentiment of any kind, but dogma. Hence his opposition to liberalism, as anti-dogmatic and critical. Absolute truth is ever beyond the self-reliant reason. It is not achieved by the mind, not ever, but vouchsafed to man by God in faith. What we really hold is not reasoning but the truth: the conclusion alone matters, not the concluding. We need the truth for the real business of our life which is action: "After all, man is *not* a reasoning animal; he is a seeing, feeling, contemplating, acting animal." [12] Reasoning points to likelihood, but our soul requires finality. Finality is the end-point of converging lines of thought and spiritual demands; our whole nature responds to this cumulative conviction. The decisive assent is not a logical inference: it is an act of faith. This finality is also the original and basic ground. The wisdom of the world never yields what man requires above all: the peace of absolute assurance, a rock under his feet. So morality as an inference from the facts of nature or social experience is a tentative and precarious matter. Real virtue and a real moral career are in the life of redemption and Divine grace.

Against this highway authoritarianism that led to Rome, the proving mind followed new paths on the plains of evidence, into the thickets of confusion and the swamps of unbelief, or over the rough course of

moral and social reform, or else slowly built on new tested ground a new road to truth and human ideals. These minds did not always prefer criticism and its negations. More often they were forced to doubt by the facts, despite initial orthodox loyalty. So Cardinal Newman's brother Francis, ready to die as a missionary of the true faith, was compelled to yield his belief under disintegrating argument. And Hurrell Froude's brother, the historian J. A. Froude (1818-1894) learned from Spinoza the law of necessity in nature and in human life and thought: that belief or unbelief are not godliness or sin but depend on the reactions of specific minds to specific facts. Genuine unforced belief guides normally the heart and will in sane morality; but the straining of the spirit of man by dogmatic fiat, in scorn of disturbing evidence or reasonable scruples, may rouse honest human nature to utter revolt. This is "the Nemesis of Faith."

Grim defiance of dogmatic presumption alternates with a tragic sense of spiritual desolation but also with new hope that would not be denied, in the poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861). A voyager of truth, he has left dead tradition far behind, but the living land to which he is proceeding is ever far ahead. His is the piety of the inevitable:

Let fact be fact, and life the thing it can.

Here devotion surrenders faith. His truth may perish, but Truth, never. It is the religion of the questioning spirit. We know not: what next step, then, shall we take, what hope is ours in this uncertainty? Neither relaxing in dreams, nor yielding to pleasure is Clough's choice; nor yet mere thinking, nor routine or conventional living, nor even love. The moral devotion is final and prevails:

I know not, I will do my duty, said the last.[13]

More equable minds, as Benjamin Jowett (1817-1893) the translator of Plato and Master of Balliol, recognized the invasion of criticism, made concessions to evidence, faced dogmatism with logic, but not with revolt. Those minds would not and did not break with the Established Church. They were the Puseys of liberalism. Outside the theological camp were laymen speaking their minds with a freedom that was limited only by what, in their judgment, the British public was prepared to hear. Here also radical thinking sought persuasiveness of statement by a reconciling and constructive appeal.

One of the most active rebuilders was Matthew Arnold (1822-1888). Arnold's poems and his essays expressed his profound conviction that poetry, literature is a criticism of life. Culture demands the estab-

lishment of an order of ideas, as a clear mapping-out of man's course to greater and more perfect attainment. "The best that has been thought and said in the world" should become our assured possession. To Hellenic insight and balance, he would add Hebraic righteousness and the "sweet reasonableness" of Jesus. Spiritual growth demands cultivation of critical power and a tolerant spirit, the cherishing of beauty and intelligence, "sweetness and light." Arnold would expose confused and baseless traditions, but he seeks to strengthen order. He rejects the unstable props, to confirm the solid foundations. "Empedocles on Etna" uttered the desolate notes in Arnold's chant of shaken and lost faith, and the closing lines of "Dover Beach" express a despair of negation. Arnold saw his age bewildered,

> . . . As on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.

But there was a sure basis of reliance in all this confusion. It was the inherent and prevailing reality of moral values. Moral endeavor is finally reliable, for it is man's gesture towards the living center of reality. This ultimate necessity and supremacy of righteousness is the final conviction of religion. Religion "lights up" morality; it is "ethics heightened, enkindled, . . . morality touched by emotion." In religion is the conviction of "the Eternal Power, not ourselves, that makes for *righteousness*." " 'Live as you were meant to live!' is morality. 'Lay hold on eternal life!' is religion." Not dogmatic fiat but the moral career of man sustains religious conviction and reveals the divine ideal. And the inconclusiveness of spiritual effort is but the obverse of its boundless reach. So, in particular, the infinite character of the religion of Jesus is "its immense capacity for ceaseless progress and farther development." [14]

5. Radical Thought and Social Reconstruction

Not only poetry and literary criticism showed the spreading influence of religious liberalism. Those for whom the old dogmas had lost their sanctity, sought to lay hold on the Lord by doing his work among men. The social gospel came to combine theological with social criticism. Among the leaders in the movement that called itself "Christian Socialism," two men require especial notice: Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872) and Charles Kingsley (1819-1875). Maurice has been ranked by both Benn and Dean Stubbs as perhaps the greatest English theologian in the nineteenth century.[15] In the generation following Coleridge, he led the movement for a liberal reinterpretation of the Bible and of traditional dogmas. His more critical followers

found him inconclusive; some agreed with Ruskin that he disposed of scriptural problems by turning them over, like railroad-cushions. But his influence was constructive on the whole and far-reaching. We can only note here his resolution to translate his Christianity into a more Christian social order. He saw established orthodoxy negligent of crying economic and political abuses; he saw the laboring classes led by godless men. Maurice and Kingsley undertook to show the working man that Law and Christianity were "not the supports and agents of Capital, . . . but the only protectors of all classes from the selfishness which is the destruction of all." [16] When Maurice lost his chair in King's College, London, because of his 'disreputable' associations, he established the Working Men's College, in which he was soon joined by many of the leading liberals of England, some teaching history and economics, some like him seeking to translate Christian truth into a living social gospel.

Unlike Maurice, for whom social reform was only one expression of a rich and deep religious personality, reaching toward the eternal in critical speculation and mystical vision and active piety, Kingsley was inclined to turn from the theological settlement, of which he saw no prospect, to concentrate on the practical tasks of Christian ministration. This program confused issues and postponed decisions, but it also brought together men of different shades of religious opinion in the work of social regeneration, and it served to emphasize the supreme importance of moral values in religion, the social fruits of living Christian righteousness.

As liberal religion thus gained a prevailing moral and social tone, so the humanitarian ideal and a passion for the social redemption of England came to possess prophetic souls outside the Church. One thinks directly of John Ruskin (1819-1900), and before him of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881).

Goethe's prophecy for Carlyle, that he would become a new moral force in Europe, did not fail of fulfillment, but the character of his moral influence does not admit of ready analysis. It is difficult, impossible to comprise Carlyle in a formula. The stripping of formulas was his method; he would pierce through all formal trappings to the naked human reality. This is his philosophy of clothes, in *Sartor Resartus*. He rejected the traditional supernaturalism with scorn; no miracle ever had been or could be; incense and anathemas were both futile; superstition was in its death-lair. But, in repudiating the forms and doctrines of orthodoxy, Carlyle did not discard the kernel of faith. It was because orthodoxy neglected the kernel for the shell that he cast it aside. His theological negations nowise committed him to alliance with the

naturalists of whatever stripe. Orthodoxy had neglected the kernel, the better part, but these new schemes and gospels lacked it altogether. Carlyle set himself in inflexible resistance to all the philosophizing Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, to empiricism and rationalism alike. Vain was mere concept-spinning, pedantic and sterile; vain the Lockean surface reflections, unequal to the real problems of the mind and pointing finally to scepticism. Vain and stark also were the mechanical puppets that the professed scientists mistook for living men and women. All the moral and political inferences from these basic blunders were futile.

These two, materialism and the philosophy of interest and pleasure, were the modern idolatries of Moloch and Astarte. Carlyle's warfare against them did not show reasonable discrimination; it set him in opposition to some constructive social reforms of the utilitarians, and it even ranged him on the side of obscurantism, as in his hostility to Darwin. Tolerance and moderation were not Carlyle's virtues; he who championed the living spirit often confused the spirit and the letter, substance and vesture, in his own gospel.

Against both orthodox bigotry and materialistic negation or scepticism, Carlyle preached idealistic faith. This was the higher and deeper reason which he, in the manner of Jacobi, saw in Kant's philosophy, yielding conviction of the ultimate divine truths. Belief is sovereign; it rules our life not by the consent of the logical intellect but by the imperious affirmation of the heart. There is a Pascalian strain in Carlyle, exalting the heart's reasons which reason does not know. He cites it as old wisdom that "the heart sees farther than the head." [17] Kant's Primacy of Practical Reason is adopted by Carlyle as a moral-activist estimate of truth. Truth is for action. Unlike Kant's searching rational analysis of the nature and the implications of morality, Carlyle was content with his moral challenge. Significant is his version of Kant's famous declaration: "Two things strike me dumb: the infinite Starry Heaven; and the Sense of Right and Wrong in Man." [18] Kant had written not of being "struck dumb" but of "ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them." Carlyle's moral fervor renounced analysis of his ideals, which could sustain and stabilize them.

To Carlyle theory is gray and barren, and the egoistic "ravenous greed of money, of pleasure, of applause" is despicable; man does not seek mere success nor the favor of "the goose-goddess, . . . Fame." His true career has another meaning and goal. He finds it in duty. Piercing our ignorance and our bewilderment is the clear gleam of conscience. In man is a deeper insight than science; it is the recognition

of right and of wrong; and something higher than pleasure or happiness is in man, the blessedness of affirmation in work and in achievement. Action is a test of truth and solvent of doubt: "'*Do the duty which lies nearest thee,*' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer." [19] This self-affirmation, this satisfaction of our deepest nature is our real interest and advantage: this is the true conception of utility, not the mere provisioning of man but his active realization.

Carlyle's gospel of work is the social and more practical expression of his ethics of duty. Not know thyself, but know thy work and do it: in thy labor is thy self-perfection and endless significance, thy active meaning to thyself. Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. All true work is religion, worship. Carlyle's rhapsody of labor is not a eulogy of laborers. He sees the moral salvation of man in wholehearted productive achievement. "Doubt, desire, sorrow, remorse, indignation, despair itself—all these like hell-hounds lie beleaguering the souls of the poor day worker as of every man; but he bends himself with free valour against his task, and all these are stifled—all these shrink murmuring far off in their caves." [20] Work is not a mere means but self-justifying, not a curse but man's blessing. It is what a man wants if he knows his real want and need: his life in his work. This does not signify equality, nor freedom, much less democratic unrestraint; but it does signify justice in appropriate activity, expression, subordination. Carlyle abhorred alike the oppressive aristocracy that denies to men their life's work and the fruits of it, and the confused democracy that wipes out standards,—"Quashee Nigger to Socrates or Shakespeare,"—that gives men simply freedom instead of *their* distinctive work to do. Not drifting equality but right mastery and direction is what humanity needs: self-mastery in loyal subjection to duty and the direction of men by the heroic man of supreme worth. For if work is one principle of worship and of social order, reverence, recognition of mastery and of supreme perfection, is the other.

Carlyle's heroic ethics, stern and arduous, lacks the note of charity: we hear the voice of Sinai rather than that of Galilee. His mother had said "the world is a lie, but God is truth"; [21] so Carlyle judges men meanly but has boundless expectations of Man. England is inhabited by so many millions, "mostly fools," yet in England and everywhere Carlyle would earn for men the liberation of distinctive energies that need the discipline of justice, in order to yield their utmost. But first of all he combats the enemy within us, lazy and craven inertia, and the spirit of doubt and negation. So he censured Coleridge for his lack of *will*. "He has no resolution. . . . He never straightens his knee-joints." [22]

Carlyle championed energy of will, to prevail over the craven reluctance that checks achievement. The ideal and the impediment are both in us; nor is the great opportunity, the decisive trial in some remote future, but directly before us. In Goethe's words, "America is here or nowhere." Against Mephistopheles, the spirit that denies, blind to excellence and checking all achievement, Carlyle heard the divine, the creative voice in man, 'the Everlasting Yea': "Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name!" [23]

In the characteristic temper of John Ruskin, stern Biblical upbringing gave an earnest tone to the medieval-romantic enthusiasm in which his imagination expressed itself, and a passion for social reform fused his aesthetic and his moral-religious strains during the latter half of his life. In his *Modern Painters* and in *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin had maintained that great art was the imaginative utterance of faith and moral devotion. He eulogized Gothic art for its very human-unfinished perfection. In it the workman was not mechanized, a mere tool; instead of engine-turned precision, Gothic art yielded humane expression. This supreme function of art, spiritual self-expression, Ruskin in principle demanded for all work, for all human activity. So the brutalizing effects of modern industrial life were bound to arouse his opposition. The ugliness of it, the iniquity, the human ignominy were denounced by him in words of prophetic fervor.

The initial motivation of this protest was artistic. Ruskin denounced the social injustice of the modern system first of all because it destroyed the beauty of the world and the loveliness of human life. The cult for medievalism, which sent some theologians to seek peace from the modern unrest and doubts in the cloisters of old orthodoxy, sent untheological spirits, like William Morris, to worship at the shrines of the beauty of holiness. And the raucous world outside drew some of them forth to combat.

Carlyle had preached the gospel of work, the salvation of man by productive activity. Ruskin proclaimed that this is God's gospel and plan for one and for all. True work is the fruition, not the blighting of our common humanity. Ruskin was possessed by the basic moral truth of the Gospels, to which modern idealism gave a philosophical expression: the induplicable worth and dignity of man's soul, of life and personality. As a modern knight of St. George attacking the dragon of materialism, Ruskin pierced the basic delusion of a social order based on merely economic principles of selfish interest and profit. You cannot separate wealth from well-being, nor work from life. "*There is no Wealth but Life*. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of

admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings." [24] *Unto This Last* and *The Crown of Wild Olive* are varied sermons on this basic text. Ruskin applied it to all the relations and fields of modern social life. Just as in his youth he had resisted mere aestheticism, so now he would safeguard the integrity of human life and character from economic or political straitjackets and distortions. The wages, the fees, are important, but the work must come first, and first of all the worker, be he high or low. Soldier, parson, physician, lawyer, all are primarily workers, primarily find their own life's meaning in contributing their share to the common life and welfare. Brotherhood in trade and industry is not a fanciful but an inescapable alternative, if mankind is to reach towards its true destiny.

Ruskin's social-economic program was only one part of his larger gospel of more abundant humanity. For all its modern negations, it is essentially positive in tone. He advocated generosity, and practiced it by distributing his own inheritance in manifold charities and social projects, but he set no value on insistent 'self-sacrifice.' He did not incline towards mere denunciation of the rich, for he saw capacity in the mansion and in the hovel, and in both the need of moral enlightenment. Nor did he put his trust in mere legislation, but in the inner change of heart and mind from which alone genuine social reforms could be expected. As he had sought to capture the imagination of his age for a vision of noble and honest beauty, so he endeavored by burning words to fire English souls with a passion for social justice. To love what deserves love, true loveliness, is the essence of good taste; and it is one with cherishing and realizing what deserves to be cherished and realized, human life and worth: the essence of virtue and godliness. Ruskin's detailed proposals and projects were not always judicious, nor was it *his* disgrace and a credit to our modern society that some of his schemes fell through. But the fundamental note in his call to social justice and a more thoroughgoing humanity was unmistakable. His works, read by hundreds of thousands, still remain major documents in the modern arousal of the social conscience, perhaps the more effective because it was not the protest of the disinherited but of one who could not endure his own rich inheritance in a "rattling, growling, smoking, stinking" world.[25] Across the smoking stretch of industrial Europe, the greater voice from Yasnaya Polyana was declaring to Russia and to the world the same saving truths of justice and love and brotherhood and joy in the day's work. Tolstoy comes to mind repeatedly as one reads the social writings of Ruskin.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE MORAL OUTLOOK OF NEW ENGLAND AND THE SPREADING AMERICAN SCENE



1. Ingredients and Fusion

The rise of America to a position of importance and then of dominance in world-affairs is surely one of the outstanding facts of the last hundred years, and even more decisive than the economic and political vitality of the new world-power has been its characteristic outlook on life, our American temper. This temper reveals the influence of various social and cultural strains, but it is too complex to be treated as a simple blend, and he is a bold analyst who would undertake to write its formula. In explaining the American mind, what arrived over the Atlantic was not more important than what it became after arrival. Even in the case of New England, we should not subordinate the adjective to the noun; and New England and Virginia were not merely reproduced, but grew into the rest of America. In the colonial period, but even more during the last hundred years of the 'melting-pot,' the elements that were fused left their impression on the character of American national life; but after all, it was the fusing and the tempering that mattered most.

The American moral and social outlook has not sought or found primarily an intellectual expression in doctrine, and the exposition of important treatises would not include many American works. But the virtual negligence with which Old World historians of ideas have treated American thought is not at all justified. No study of the moral ideals of our civilization may ignore America. Our discussion will note the early colonial venture in New England and also the larger and widespreading scene of American life and thought: Puritan and pioneer, blazing new paths of progress.

2. The Puritan Kingdom of God in New England

It is not without significance that Sir Thomas More chose for his narrator of Utopia a fellow-voyager of Amerigo Vespucci. The sixteenth century European lived on an expanding earth, and his vaster

horizons aroused a corresponding breadth of utopian outlook. What seemed a hopeless task in deep-furrowed Europe might well be essayed on the unplowed stretches of the New World. In the year when Savonarola's rule of Christ vanished in smoke and ashes in Florence, Columbus was sailing on his third voyage to America; and Spanish galleons followed after him in quest of gold and silver. But within a century after Columbus, men were sailing across the Atlantic and landing on bleak northern shores in quest of the Kingdom of God.

New England was not a Utopia, even though it did fire the imagination of harassed Puritans. Crossing the ocean taxed their resolution and stirred boundless hope, a hope expecting realization. With God's will impelling their course, what was beyond the reach of these men on the other side of the Atlantic? "How much more shall Christ who createth all power, call over this 900 league Ocean at his pleasure, such instruments as he thinks meete to make use of in this place. . . . Know this is the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven, and a New Earth in new Churches, and a new Common-wealth together." [1]

On American shores the Puritan had full sway but also full responsibility. His conscience could dictate its entire program without compromises, but by the same token itself had to meet the problems which in the Old World had been mismanaged, but still managed, by an unregenerate society. Even when the new stern conscience did have its way in England, it did not have it fully nor for long. It undertook to rebuild England on the old site, with the old materials. But in New England the Puritan was himself building, on new foundations, a new heaven and a new earth, and here his characteristic social architecture was displayed and tested and subjected to self-revision.

The New England theocracy was not characterized so much by fertility of ideas as by intensity of convictions. Here were men of no outstanding distinction and nowise vain, but in their personal humility deeply convinced that they were instruments of a Divine purpose, and therefore inflexible. Not their own worth but God's choice of them, that alone had carried them across the ocean into a strange wilderness, and that was sure to withstand all obstacles and to prevail. The reaffirmation of iron will in the face of terrible odds was a Calvinist reaffirmation of faith in God. It was God's work, not theirs, and God's the praise. With all this pious resolution, there was bound to be considerable difference of judgment regarding God's will. Appealing to the Bible only intensified disputes when interpretations clashed, each man regarding his view as the plain meaning of the word of God. Where disagreements concerned not human but Divine counsel, the

conflict did not admit of compromise. It was God against the devil. Hence the solemnity in much of early New England literature, which now appears to us so strange and pathetic.

To this intensity and aggressiveness of conviction correspond energy and earnestness in daily activity. The exigencies confronting the Puritan fathers imposed unremitting toil as a condition of survival, and work itself thus gained in dignity as a major element in the accomplishment of God's purpose in their lives. Idleness was ungodly; the activities of ungodly idlers were forbidden or at least subjected to censure: dancing and card-playing, or any feasting or revel. The condemnation of the sportive Merry Mount, related in one of Hawthorne's tales, was an emphatic instance of Puritan conscience in action. There were to be no festival days for these workers in the Lord's vineyard. Sunday was a day of worship.

The stern Puritan fathers could deal with flagrant worldliness, even with stubborn Merry Mount. But they found themselves, by the logic of events, by the very success of their strenuous enterprise, in a country of increasing security and prosperity, and therefore of growing preoccupation with secular affairs. At the outset the intense devotees, though scarcely in the majority, were dominant and set the tone in the Commonwealth. Where every daily task was seen in a religious light, and even one's courting had a pious version, the theological note prevailed. So long as all were on the forest's edge, challenged by bleak nature and harassed by lurking Indians, there was a certain democracy of the frontier. But when toil and thrift had carved an outwardly secure country from the New England wilderness, though the holy passions of the more devout or more bigoted might still be roused by heresy or witchcraft and the works of the devil, the alert and critical minds would turn more objectively to the political and social issues of the new commonwealth, while to growing multitudes, who in the blessed theocracy had found themselves again unblessed as their fathers had been in old England, the problems of daily livelihood might gain the ascendent over the problem of life eternal.

Prosperity itself, if it did not harden the hearts of the prosperous, yet softened their muscles. In place of thrift and frugality and stern solemn godliness, the Puritan temper, came leisure and luxury, culture along with piety, genial urbane ways of life and thought, the ways of the Boston aristocrat. The sons and daughters of those who had fled from England to seek perfection in Massachusetts now hoped above all that they might be or become as fine gentlemen and ladies as the English. In place of the initial sublimity of a pioneering conscience, there supervened the emulating and a little uneasy consciousness that

characterizes colonial culture. In the course of time this spreading New England was bound to clash with the old, but when the clash did come it disclosed the radical change that had taken place in outlook and dominant motives: not "a new Heaven and a new Earth," but "no taxation without representation."

3. Moral Philosophy in the Colonial Period

Puritanism was a theological version of a way of life involving severe individual discipline but also pointing towards political and social democracy. American thinking, orthodox or radical, sought by preference a religious or a political expression. Only the later days of professional philosophy have evidenced any very general interest in problems of knowledge or philosophical method. The characteristic American contribution to contemporary speculation, pragmatism, manifests significantly the prevailing trend of thought. But we should err if we disposed of this trend simply by calling it 'practical' or, in its later expressions, philistine-materialistic. As Josiah Royce pointed out, there is a strain of idealism in American thought which cannot be ascribed to foreign infiltration British or German: "Idealism goes, side by side with interest in material prosperity, throughout the whole of our national life, is present and prominent in all the phases of our civilization, appears amongst us in evil as well as in good forms, and is responsible for very much in our national life besides philosophy." [2]

As we should expect, the American philosophy in the Colonial period was mainly the philosophy of clergymen. The visit of George Berkeley to Rhode Island and his influence on American speculation manifested this clerical tone. On the borderland of theodicy and ethics, American divines pursued the true doctrines of virtue and grace; the initial motive and the final reflection were religious. Certain names familiar to the student of colonial America can only be mentioned in this study, as significant in the history of morals on these shores even if scarcely noteworthy in the development of ethics. The "priestly stewardship" of John Cotton, "first of New Englanders," was distrustful of democracy and regarded liberty and the exercise of authority as conditioned by godliness and church-membership. Against this theocracy uprose Roger Williams, whom Cotton Mather called the "first rebel against the divine church-order established in the wilderness." Williams conceived of government not as a Divine discipline of men but as the natural progressive discovery by society of the fittest instruments of the common welfare. Here was a pioneer of popular rights and initiative, of individual freedom of conscience, the promise of vigorous liberalism in thought and action. The Mathers, Increase and

Cotton, followed mainly the theocratic ideal. Cotton Mather (1663-1728) in particular combined morbid intensity of emotions with learned divinity and manifold erudition, scientific and historical. Demonology engrossed him, the witchcraft delusion, and the 'horrible buffeting' of Satan was a major fact in his moral and religious experience. But he also undertook to read God's marvelous Volume of design in nature, and could then rise to great heights of cosmic optimism.[3] It was in this setting of theological and churchly disputation, of stout doctrine and morbid fears, but also of lofty visions religious and social, that the moral philosophy of New England was to find more developed expression.

In 1765 Thomas Clap, rector of Yale College, published *An Essay on the Nature and Foundation of Moral Virtue and Obligation,* in which he resisted the claims of secular ethics whether based on expediency or intuition or reason. Only God's will revealed to man can provide a true basis of virtue and duty. More learned than Clap and of broader intellectual reach was America's Dr. Samuel Johnson, (1696-1772) Yale tutor and later President of King's College, New York. Johnson's ethics combined regard for happiness as intrinsically good with an ultimately religious sanction and reliance, a variety of theological utilitarianism with rationalistic provisions. God has given man a moral capacity to attain well-being and enjoy a happiness suitable to his nature: not only sensual and animal gratification but chiefly rational, active, and social happiness. As is our divinely endowed nature, so are our duties: to God, to others, and to ourselves.

The most that can be said of these and other mid-century thinkers is that they were contemporaries of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). Edwards is beyond comparison the outstanding theologian and philosopher of colonial America. He has been usually summarized as a ruthless prophet of God's avenging justice; but the gripping power of his sermons is matched by the systematic grasp of his philosophical works. His penetration in analysis is rivalled by his mystical intimacy.

In his religious and philosophical development Calvin's influence was followed, not negated, by John Locke's. To both of these influences his reaction was reconstructive. He gave a somewhat Berkeleyan reinterpretation to Locke, and undertook a more adequate philosophical version of Calvinism. His struggles with the doctrine of eternal damnation came to an early climax during his last year at Yale, when he reached the comforting conviction that, rightly thought out, it was not a horrible doctrine but "exceedingly pleasant, bright and sweet." That in this Calvinistic acquiescence the severity of the doctrine was not

mitigated, was to be shown abundantly in Edwards' sermons. These charges of doom, admonitions and imprecations have supplied the general reader's idea and estimate of Edwards. Their titles are blazoned warnings of God's avenging justice: "Men Naturally are God's Enemies"—"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"—"Wrath upon the Wicked to the Uttermost"—"The End of the Wicked Contemplated by the Righteous."

This message of damning retribution, to be sure, is neither exclusive nor original with Edwards. The doctrine that the plenitude of the saints' blessedness requires their contemplation of the sinners' agonies is as old as Tertullian. Thomas à Kempis and Bossuet found holy satisfaction in portraying God's vengeance on the wicked. Edwards was not without models for his maledictions, but in his repeated harrowing utterance of them he has no peers. "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. . . ." [4] It is not the consuming horror of an isolated passage but the cumulative effect of scores and hundreds that overwhelms the reader of Edwards. His execration knows no limits. He is unrelenting even with the little ones: "As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet, if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God's sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition. . . ." It is not surprising that both American and English editors of Edwards' *Works* were reluctant to retain this passage. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who in his essay on Edwards quoted it from the 1832 edition of the *Thoughts on the Revivals of Religion in New England*, is moved to conjecture whether Edwards "read the text mothers loves so well, 'Suffer little *vipers* to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.' " [5]

The irony of Holmes' comment just cited suggests the hazard of excessive Calvinism. As from the sublime to the ridiculous, so there is only one step from the awesome to the absurd. Were Jonathan Edwards only the preacher of eternal damnation, his claims on our attention here would be slight. This aspect of his thought cannot be ignored, for it is essential, yet it is generally familiar and need not be further elaborated. More significant for us is Edwards' correlation of his ruthless admonitions with his general view of God's nature and man's

career, his theodicy and his ethics. How does he succeed in thinking together divine creative perfection, infinite love, human native depravity, and just damnation?

Three of Edwards' systematic works, as three parts of his main argument, concern us especially here. His treatise on *The Freedom of Will* maintains the necessary determination of our choices and actions by our nature. In his *Dissertation on the Nature of True Virtue* he argues that moral right and wrong depend not on the cause of choice, its spontaneity or necessity, but on the nature of what is chosen. Determinism thus being squared with moral character, with good or evil, the common wickedness of men and the inevitable retribution raise the question of the creative perfection that has manifested itself in such a world as ours. This problem had engaged Edwards from the outset; it is especially treated in his *Dissertation On the End for which God Created the World.* So we may consider Edwards' treatment of the capacity, the character, and the cosmic status of moral agents.

In Edwards' account of the Will, his study of Locke serves to sustain but also to reinterpret Calvinistic doctrine. He defines Will as that by which the mind chooses anything. Freedom of the will would thus mean freedom of choice. But in our choices the determination is by motives, and the decision of the will reveals the necessarily prevailing motive in the mind. Our choices reveal our character; we are bound to act according to our constitution. Moral character, human or divine, is not affected by necessity. God's moral excellence is necessary, yet virtuous and praiseworthy. Indeed liberty of indifference would be inconsistent with virtue; for then no consequences of our acts can be either good or evil, but only the alleged free choosing. This view would rule out the recognition of a moral fabric of our life, a virtuous or vicious character. Only the doctrine of moral necessity allows of discipline of mind and heart, moral effort. Morality is in character, and the virtue of an act is in the nature of what is chosen.

So we are prepared for an ethical theory which, in its theological version, is deterministic and 'naturalistic.' Edwards conceives of virtue as consisting essentially in beauty or excellence. Moral excellence or virtue is pure appreciation of infinite perfection, "love of God, the being of beings, infinitely the greatest and best." [6] Morality is here fused with religion; it is not mainly concerned with the achievement of mature and harmonious personality in individual conduct and in social institutions, much less with the promotion of the general happiness. It includes essentially the loveliness of piety, man's due response to God's will. To be sure there is beauty in the principle of justice and a natural disposition in us to recognize reciprocity of obligations; but

all this may well be grounded in a private and limited affection of self-love. Only when we respond, not privately but in union of heart to the great system and to God the head of it, do we tend toward the divine principle of virtue. Virtue as moral beauty thus defined is sentiment of love and utter devotion, but it is grounded in the necessary nature of things; it is not from mere reasoning about perfection that virtue is derived, but it is rational that supreme perfection should evoke supreme love.

Illumined by divine beauty, the whole world reveals concordant beauty and harmony. Yet how is this view to be squared with the spectacle of sin and damnation? Edwards grapples with the problem of ultimate teleology. What is the goal of creation? God's excellence involves God's infinite love of himself, his perfectly holy self-recognition. Creation is not for man's sake, nowise man-centered, but the expression of divine plenitude. As there is infinite fullness of all possible good in God, Edwards supposes that the last end of creation is "a disposition in God, as an original property of his nature, to an emanation of his own infinite fullness." Divine creation is manifested perfection, is God's perfect self-enjoyment. Infinite love is only of infinite excellence; finite creatures are loved by God in so far as they manifest the divine. "As God delights in his own beauty, he must necessarily delight in the creature's holiness." [7] Man that should find his own blessedness in love of God, supreme devotion to perfect being, may go astray and follow the lure of sin. Perfection involves the due working out of sinfulness in punishment. Hell no less than Heaven reveals the perfection of the divine order. Eternal damnation, seen in only human perspective as intolerable and horrible, is in the infinite divine comprehension unspeakably grand and sublime. Our growth in virtue is a rise from private affections, hope of rewards or fear of punishment, to the pure love of God for his perfect beauty. In this pious loving recognition of the divine order, the blessedness and the tragedy of existence are seen and felt as elements in the perfect divine order, and God is all in all. So the true Calvinist's aim in life was not to save his soul. That was God's concern; but man's, to know and to glorify God.

It is not only in his use of the term 'emanation' that Jonathan Edwards reminds us of Plotinus. His theodicy and his ethics have Neoplatonic overtones, but in a strictly theistic expression. The persisting influence of this grim conviction of actual evil and this sublime vision of divine radiating beauty modified by an energetic optimism or by the pantheistic strain of modern idealism may reveal the varieties of transcendentalism in New England. One must not forget Edwards if one is to understand Emerson.

4. Radicalism and Revolution

The conditions of expanding American life called forth various initiative and, in presenting continually shifting problems, kept alive or strengthened the spirit of non-conformity in thought and in social process. Conservatism itself was confronted with radical changes in the traditional models, British or French. Instead of listing a roster of names in passing mention, we shall consider two representative liberals of the period: Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826).

If we may adapt to our purpose a Cartesian quip of John Adams about Franklin's Philadelphia, we may say that Franklin was the 'pineal gland' of American life: in him the growing body of America and her soul found union. This combination of naturalism and bold ideals, the prose of experiment and the poetry of humane aspiration, characterized Franklin's thought, just as rustic plainness and inherent personal distinction marked his life and career.

His mind turned to Deism in adolescence, and for a decade he adventured in philosophy, but after the age of twenty-five gave up metaphysics as inconclusive. Practical philosophy of life, however, never ceased to engage his lively interest. If we ignore an early impetuous writing, which he suppressed,[8] we find his attitude to be one of tolerant moderate radicalism. The immediate scene always held his main attention: more physics than metaphysics, and morality rather than religion. In his *Autobiography* he describes his disappointment with the preaching of piety: Sabbath-keeping, Bible-reading, church-attendance, partaking of the sacrament, and due respect for God's ministers. Different was Jesus' emphasis, and likewise St. Paul's: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report. . . ." Conceiving "the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection," Franklin compiled out of the various lists of virtues in ethical literature a table of his own, including thirteen virtues with appropriate precepts positive and negative, devised for guiding his daily conduct: Temperance, Silence, Order, Resolution, Frugality, Industry, Sincerity, Justice, Moderation, Cleanliness, Tranquility, Chastity, Humility: "Imitate Jesus and Socrates."[9] With shrewd prosaic devotion he applied himself to systematic cultivation of these virtues, at the rate of one per week for thirteen weeks, four times a year, keeping accurate daily account of his moral progress in a specially prepared notebook.

There was nothing inspired as there was nothing morbid in these 'spiritual exercises'; they reflected a conception of virtue as a quality of character that resolution could acquire and steady practice could

make a habitual possession. This thoroughly secular and homely view of morality finds expression in Franklin's other books of practical wisdom, especially the *Poor Richard Almanack*, probably the most popular and widespread American book, which has been printed over four hundred times in fifteen or more languages. While Franklin's scientific researches gained him recognition abroad and social dignity at home, and his sterling good sense and personal integrity made him an unrivalled counsellor, his genius for shrewd proverb has made his Poor Richard a household word.

Of especial interest as a venture in ethics are Franklin's two dialogues *Concerning Virtue and Pleasure*, a Philadelphia version of Athenian wisdom. His two characters, Horatio and Philocles, represent the impulsive vigorous pursuer of pleasure and the more sober and astute connoisseur of abiding happiness. Our life is a venture in which prudence may enable us to reduce our risks and increase our returns. Pleasure, certainly, cannot be our chief good; we are miserable without it, yet sometimes miserable also with it; it is not reliable assurance of our well-being. Sure and abiding happiness can only be in men's "acting up to their chief faculty, . . . in reasonable action. . . . The foundation of all virtue and happiness is thinking rightly. He who sees an action is right, that is, naturally tending to good, and does it because of that tendency, he only is a moral man." [10]

The Revolution in which Franklin took so distinguished a part was, of course, more than a revolt of the colonies against taxation and direction from London. Some of its leaders were moved only by considerations of expediency, but to others it came to represent the fulfillment of a social and spiritual ideal, a New Heaven on a New Earth. How far apart the directing minds were in their political and economic program, may be judged if one contrasts the worship of crown dignities by a native New England Tory like Thomas Hutchinson with the blazoned contempt for vested authority and the proclamation of the progressive will of the people as the sole warrant of law and government by the Englishman Thomas Paine who landed on American shores in December 1774. Or we might consider Alexander Hamilton's advocacy of a centralized government in which "the power which holds the purse-strings" absolutely rules the "great beast," that is, the people, as opposed in Washington's cabinet by Thomas Jefferson, democrat on principle, counting people above property, disdainful of traditional prestige, trusting in realized freedom to produce on these shores a higher civilization and a nobler common humanity.

Jefferson's selected epitaph,—"Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and

father of the University of Virginia,"—describes not only his main achievements, but also principal aspects of his radical mind. Two truths he had learned about men in his wide reading and his long observation and reflection: men's essential dignity irrespective of status and the changing conditions of their life. These two convictions pointed to a form of government adapted to a growing social order: institutions expressing not repressing men. He valued, not stability or uniformity in political or social organization but progressive appropriateness: does it reflect the growing life and needs of society, does it promote the general welfare? To afford men a richer and more mature life through the exercise of responsible initiative, whether in the larger sphere of government or in the more intimate and personal life of beliefs and convictions, was the large hope of democracy to which Jefferson was committed: the education of man.

Because he looked to the future and would not be bound by tradition, all the past was for him possible wisdom for critical choice. He would prove all things, to find and to hold whatever was good. This side of Jefferson's thinking distinguishes him from the mere iconoclasts. To carry over into a larger life the best of past experience, in searching, self-reliant, and tolerant selection: that is man's privilege in a well-ordered society, his privilege and his right. Both the conservative and the radical strains in Jefferson's democracy find expression here.

What he demands for others he seeks to realize himself. Jefferson is not marked by creative originality: original and significant is his genius for selection. He allows the great ideas of the past and of his day to play on his mind, and in his response to them reveals breadth of outlook and penetration. It is in this field that he interests the student of moral ideals. When he turns from the Gospels to read the moral teachings of pagan antiquity, he leaves the Gospels open before him, and turns back to read again and compare. He avoids both partisanship and dull neutrality. A systematic moral philosopher he is not, and whether we consider earlier or later statements, his conclusions leave much to be desired. But whether he speak with Jesus and Marcus Aurelius or with Epicurus and with the modern ideologists, what he tries to say is always motivated by the democratic conviction, not so much of what men are but of what men are fit to be, the realization of freedom and social justice as conditions of a more abundant humanity.

5. The Spreading American Scene: Emerson

The years following the American Revolution saw no evidence of intellectual vigor in New England. Emerson's remark about Massa-

chusetts is blunt: "From 1790 to 1820, there was not a book, a speech, a conversation, or a thought, in the State." [11] But a new generation of cultural vitality was growing up, alert and liberal; with expanding vista and vision, a new world of the spirit was in sight. Transcendentalism was its expression; as a certain accomplished Mrs. B., with a wave of her hand, said, it meant "a little beyond": beyond Puritan grim piety and the stern doctrine of Jonathan Edwards, to be sure, but also beyond the stunting negations of the English and the French Enlightenment. This new aspiring age rejected the old theology, but refused to surrender its conviction of spiritual realities and sought to revindicate them. It would not settle back and regard the Revolution as accomplished and past, but sought its fuller realization in a more humane commonwealth. It is in this larger and deeper setting that Transcendentalism should be viewed. We fail to do it justice if we regard it merely as a lofty and somewhat incompetent venture in foreign metaphysics.

In religion, in morals, in politics, the new liberalism chafed at the unyielding grip of old forms, orthodoxy and legalism; it was a contest of the spirit with the letter. The rise of the Supreme Court to power under John Marshall, in a new traditionalism, with the Constitution as its charter of authority; Daniel Webster's service in the exaltation of property rights and in the constitutional interpretation of contracts as inviolable and unaffected by subsequent legislation; the upsurge of levelling democracy and untutored social justice with Andrew Jackson; Horace Greeley's deliberate resistance to traditional forms and his cult of free discussion that swelled the sheets of his *Tribune* with every wind of Utopian doctrine; the establishment of a social economy in the South on slave-labor, and the manifold social and political ramifications of the abolition movement: these are only a few instances of the clashing principles in American life. A religious or an intellectual survey would reveal similar contests of ideals.

The student of the liberal forces in this age of conflict naturally concentrates on New England: certainly not because traditionalism was least entrenched there, but rather because all stripes of thought, conservative and radical, were vigorous in Boston, the cultural capital of America. More windows were open in New England, and more doors were at least ajar. Emerson's *Journals* record the variety of genius and temperament that gave the American landscape color and emphatic character. One feels the embarrassment of complexity and abundance; here selection is imperative, yet likely prejudicial.

Certain representative personalities dominated the field and compel passing notice. William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), reluctant to be

damned for the glory of God, mounted to new vantage-ground in religion, from which he saw and revealed to his congregations a God of moral perfection and boundless love, whose true worship by men is in lives of enlightenment and social justice and sympathy, sweetness and loveliness of spirit. His conviction of man's moral dignity before God taught him the iniquity and irreligion of any exploitation of man by man. Bronson Alcott (1799-1888), a seer of Brahmanic visions, a dreamer of utopian dreams, and a persuasive deviser of Platonic heavenly patterns, educational and communistic, made his whole life one spontaneous self-utterance. His boundless conversations were largely confessional; the charm of his individualism excused his hopeless impracticality.

The cult of individuality which characterized the period might express itself in outlandish departures, in cynical disdain for conventional forms, in bold espousal of exotic notions, Oriental, pantheistic; or in plain eccentricity. We ourselves need balance if we are not to misjudge oddity. Jones Very the poet considered it an honor to wash his face, the shrine of his soul, but Emerson thought him less insane than men who hold themselves cheap. Henry Thoreau (1817-1862) preached and practiced self-reliance, candor, resistance to any compulsion, "a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust." [12] Shaking off ecclesiastic and social conventions and preferring intense conviction of living to assurance of a livelihood, Thoreau sought to preserve the kernels of civilization while casting aside the shells. The same with Christianity. Living the simple life close to nature, gathering nuts and berries, his mind enjoyed freely the treasures of classical literature. This hermit of Walden had in him some of the sweet nature-piety of St. Francis, Tolstoy's resolution in bold conviction, and the stripping radicalism of them both. In her own way Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) was as resolute and radical. A mind of power most compelling in conversation, consumed with aspiration without the genius for lasting achievement, she, a woman, by her initiative in thought and action not only served to win for her sex a larger scope in modern life, but became to some of the best men in New England a symbol of a new grace abounding.

Among these various prophets and visionaries Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) remained critically analytic. His individualism was less voluble and his solitude less public than theirs. One utopian chapter of a year's duration, at Brook Farm, confirmed his distrust in general schemes. The pioneering zeal and sublime optimism of the Transcendentalists and the Unitarians aroused no response in him. Their sunny serenity impressed him as blind to the dark abysses in human nature.

In Salem or among the mosses of the old Concord Manse brooding on the tortuous ways of sin, Hawthorne found the Puritan outlook congenial, if not to his intelligence yet to his imagination. Calvinist theology had left him unconvinced, but there was a kernel in John Calvin and in St. Augustine that held him spellbound in the poetry of his thought: man's propensity to evil. This desolate theme had engrossed the Puritan. Not sharing the Puritan's doctrines of sin, Hawthorne yet shared his persistent scrutiny of it, and there in the dark depths of the soul pursued some of his greatest romances. He did not feel bound, like Augustine or Calvin, to exculpate Deity for the evils in creation, and so had more leisure to probe and inspect them. But his probing was never coldly clinical; it was not the beast in man, it was man his brother whom he sought to understand. A saving remnant of Puritanism was in Hawthorne, the austere empire of conscience, and an Augustinian awe of sin. So in his art there is an expansion of the Puritan outlook and deeper imaginative insight through emancipation from the Puritan formulae.

It would be scarcely sober judgment to regard all these currents of thought, and more especially Thoreau's or Hawthorne's, as merely tributary to Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882). Yet in a real sense he is the main stream of liberal creative New England, and in the expanding sweep of his mind and expression the young nation was passing from colonial tutelage to wide and versatile cultural participation, and so to self-reliance and self-conscious maturity.

When one compares the range of reading and the corresponding spiritual interests of Emerson's generation of New Englanders with those of their forebears, one feels justified in speaking of 'the spreading American scene.' Like the Italians of the Renaissance, the Transcendentalists were thrilling to new wisdom, new to them, though some of it most ancient and so doubly enchanting. The Vedas, the Upanishads, Manu, the Bhagavadgita, the Zendavesta fascinated them; no longer just the Bible, but the *Bibles* of mankind, and western profundities old and modern, the Neoplatonists, 'Behmen,' Swedenborg. Concord minds, as the ships of Salem, were now sailing to new and distant oceans. And there were Montaigne's Essays, to sober too rash mysticism or confidence, and Goethe's fifty-five volumes for mellow culture, and for all-human perception always Shakespeare. New winds of doctrine were blowing through open American windows. To be sure, the vagaries and the irresponsibility of dilettantism were here, inevitable, but also a more critical alert responsiveness. New voices in England, Carlyle's, Robert Browning's, were heard across the Atlantic before they had their audience at home.

What marked Emerson from many of his associates was a redeeming sanity and serenity of vision. The ranker growths of New England speculation, as they were reflected in the pools and currents of his thought, retained their outlines, but transformed as in a picture by the medium. Sectaries, dissenters, visionaries of all sorts, squirrel-minds and rat-tap spiritualists, he took them all in, listened for the chord of truth in their clang of confusion, responsive, but not rash. The utopians of Fruitlands, of Brook Farm pursued lives of spiritual venture that seemed to be practical applications of principles which he shared; but Emerson was intent on the principle and on the main essential venture. Why should he seek an escape from the shackles of society in Brook Farm? The real shackles would still be there, for they are not in the external structure but in the self within. He must achieve his freedom at home. "I wish to break all prisons. I have not yet conquered my own house." [18]

In this concentration on the inner life, on spirit and principle rather than on scheme or program or scaffolding, Emerson expressed the deeper note of the Transcendentalists, the philosophy of life that motivated their idealistic negligence of the material, the external, the formally rigid, the sensual, the utilitarian. That was all circumference: he was bound for the Center. And the way to the Center is through the radius. It is only a question of direction, whether one is straying abroad or headed homeward. Upon the measure of self-understanding depends the supreme attainment; the real self is one with the divine, and its genuine career, a communion and a union with the Infinite. Hence the pantheistic finale of this intent individualism, the Platonic or Neoplatonic and Brahmanic enchantment.

We may thus recognize two convictions dominating Emerson's thought. Fullness of knowledge and living is in inwardness; plenitude of truth and reality is through the self in the Over-soul. The latter conviction marks Emerson's metaphysics and philosophy of religion; it is the former that is decisive in his ethics. Yet the use of these terms in reference to Emerson's thought requires a warning. We are not dealing with the exposition of a systematic thinker, nor of one who relies mainly on argument or puts his trust in "foolish consistency," for him "the hobgoblin of little minds." Emerson does not reason with us, he imparts his conclusions or rather his insights and intuitions. The character of his writings reveals his philosophy: all of them, poems, essays, lectures, are in reality intimate communications, pages from his Journals. Even so his manifold reading is an indirect communion with himself. Be it the book of Nature that he reads with Thoreau, or the book of Social Life with abolitionist or Western pioneer at home or

with Carlyle abroad, or the books in his rich library, his way with them all is Montaigne's way: in whatsoever language they might speak to him, he always speaks to them in his own. His reading is part of his own reflection. Active mind is then most universal when most individual; it absorbs all and makes all its own. The most original minds, like Shakespeare's, possess the minds which they pluck; plagiaries of genius, all wit is their wit. Is this thought of mine stolen, you say, from Montaigne, or Plutarch? No matter: I should have said the same myself: or saying it after them, I say it for myself.

This self-reliance and self-utterance are not expressions of conceit, but a challenge. The genius and the hero is a 'representative man'; in and through him I can find my own fuller self, if I come to him valiantly and possess him, make him my own experience. But I can make him mine only if, hearing him, I yet listen for myself. Erudition is nothing, understanding is all, self-understanding. This is the true career of man, that he can make the past his present, and all lives his own by being himself throughout. "The Past has baked my loaf, and in the strength of its bread I break up the old oven." [14] Here is radicalism pious towards the past, its past, but not passive. In this absorbing and creative realization of self, "in self-trust all the virtues are comprehended." The main thing is spiritual initiative. "Jesus was Jesus because he refused to listen to another, and listened at home." [15] So to us, as to him, God is *our* Father; so he may reveal to us our own dignity and infinite worth. The empire of our spirit projects to infinity, and all roads lead to our Rome.

Do we have here docile and optimistic egotism, the uncritical antithesis to Calvinism? In his more rhapsodic utterances Emerson might occasionally leave this impression. Some readers have thought him unresponsive to grief or to the grim and tragic notes of life. If by this is meant that "he never ate his bread with tears," his letters and his journals prove the opposite.[16] But if it is intended that Emerson's thought does not manifest a real grapple with the problem of evil, the charge is not unwarranted. His face lacks Carlyle's black furrows, as is evident to the least inspection. Yet was it not perhaps a keen sense of the unavailing in human life, blighting to achievement and thus intolerable, which led him so resolutely to the gleam of Carlyle's "Everlasting Yea"? In his essay on Napoleon Emerson speaks of his tactics in knowing how and when to check incipient panic by a resolute trumpet-call. One feels this strategy in many a page of Emerson: nowise inglorious.

That he was not immune to scepticism, his essay on Montaigne clearly shows. Yet to all doubt and negation Emerson has one final

answer: the reality of the moral sentiment which never forfeits its supremacy. It is the reflection of the divine in man, and he who has once recognized it clearly in human nature can perceive its congruity with the natural order. As from clear writing to dim tracing, the perfection of the Infinite may be read from mind to matter, continuous and pervading throughout. It was for good, it is to good that all works. If we look within, above, below, this is the sovereign indubitable fact. "My creed is very simple, that Goodness is the only Reality. . . . Itself is gate and road and leader and march. Only trust it, be of it, be it, and it shall be well with us forever." [17] A moral act is no mere outward event, alien to other men; it is the devout commitment of the will to universal end. In this high all-contemplative vision, the sense of Right and Wrong, we recognize the Divine wherein we are one.

> So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
> The youth replies, *I can*.

This is the excellence of Jesus, to reveal us to ourselves, to affirm the Divinity in him and in us. "Alone in all history," Jesus "estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me." In a lesser measure this is true of other sages and saints, of every righteous soul. So virtue is unique self-expression and universal bond. "If a man dissemble, deceive, he deceives himself, and goes out of acquaintance with his own being." Evil is actual, but it is privative, negation of true being: positive reality is in goodness alone. We must not prejudge things; much that is repulsive has its rôle and place; even Voltaire "did his work as the bustard and tarantula do theirs." The vitality of the moral sentiment is the final test of a man; no other genius or power can make up for it. So Napoleon's career, power of intellect without conscience, is in the end null and naught. So even Goethe comes short of the highest, for he is incapable of utter moral self-surrender.

In this moral self-recognition man rises above conceit and achieves dignity. He can keep things under his feet, for he now knows his true reality and worth. His ideal is above him but it is not alien to him. So Emerson championed spontaneous virtue, natural and joyous in aspiration, against the Calvinist sour virtue of "Crump . . . with his grunting resistance to all his native devils." It is this basic naturalness of virtue, adherence in action to the nature of things, which makes and will make it prevail. This truth is crystal-clear to moral vision. Nature is dull and leaden only to dull minds, as to blind men the streets of Rome are dark; so young Emerson reflects, echoing a great saying of Plotinus.

This moral idealism motivates Emerson's advocacy of forward-looking democracy as a gospel for America. The principle of self-reliance, challenge, not conceit,—he applies to American society and culture. The greater truth and the more abundant humanity are yet in prospect. The clear democratic insight reaches the all-human center of worth. It is not deceived by traditional trappings; but neither by the lack of them, in bare novelty. He saw America on both sides of the Mississippi, "America, . . . the ungirt, the diffuse, the profuse, procumbent. . . ." But he also saw in all its clamor a response to the note which he was sounding: the worth and rights of common humanity, "the infinitude of the private man." This faith in man was boundless promise. "I am ready to die out of nature," Emerson said, "and be born again into this new yet unapproachable America I have found in the West." [18] This greater life he would reveal to himself and others. He would be "an opener of doors."

Even this brief paraphrase of Emerson's teaching may reveal the limitations of his idealism: unsystematic, rhapsodic, docile, often irresponsible and cavalier with facts. Nevertheless for half a century, from Concord to Kalamazoo and across the Mississippi, Emerson brought his aspiring message, pleading for tolerance, for serenity and self-reliance, an apostle of the divine possibilities of men. He concentrated on the high essentials, yet did not avoid the burning issues of the day, intense in his convictions but not partisan. No specific reform may be ascribed to him; yet in city and country the influence of his ideas helped to confirm men in democratic idealism and in liberal thought. For thirty years after his "Divinity School Address" Harvard spurned him; her recall of him to her honors and dignities was itself a symbol of the change he had wrought in American thought and outlook.

6. The Spreading American Scene: Walt Whitman

Emerson and the Transcendentalists were pioneers in a radical idealism which charmed adventurous minds clerical and lay, but which was slow in penetrating church or college cloisters. Ramified sectarianism manifested little if any creative philosophical insight. Even where it departed from Calvinistic rigor it was apt to seek some other saving frame of doctrinal or ecclesiastic reliance. But practical problems and issues were sure to engage religious partisanship: Protestant 'nativism,' against the growing political power of Roman Catholic immigrants, the question of slavery and the abolition movement, the more recent struggle over the saloon and prohibition. The church colleges which sprouted all over the broad expanse of the West, if they reached beyond "Christian Evidences" and a moral philosophy on

Biblical lines, might turn to Paley or Butler or to Scottish realism. The last in particular was influential owing to its commonsense certitude, its cleancut doctrine readily inculcating lofty principles, secure provisions for the private happiness and the general welfare, and definitely orthodox theological sanctions. In the spread of this teaching in American colleges no one was more influential than James McCosh of Princeton (1811-1894).

Meanwhile the demands which expanding America was making on inventive genius and technological skill stimulated a steady advance of pure and applied science. The naturalistic temper which this growing emphasis on scientific work induced in American minds was bound to involve clashes with traditional orthodoxy: causal determinism versus the doctrine of miracles, and evolution versus Mosaic creationism. The materialistic bent of scientific naturalism seemed to provide a ready warrant for the practical materialism of industrial dominion in American life. The threat of the incipient moral atheism to the vitality of religious experience and of humane democratic convictions aroused a demand for a philosophy of ideals which is still a prime requirement of American civilization. The influence of Emerson's thought, the spread of interest in modern idealism, in the Hegelianism of the St. Louis school, and in the more competent and deeper thought of Josiah Royce and others, the endeavor to achieve a vindication of moral and spiritual values outside the technical idealistic doctrine: all these are significant philosophical expressions of the religious and social transition in the ever more complex American life. To some of them we shall return in later chapters.

Social problems demanding solution involved religious and political controversy. The Bible and the Declaration of Independence were at stake in the fiery debates over slavery. More recently, the struggle of capitalism with the growing forces of industrial democracy has been complicated and often obscured by constitutional issues, or by the injection of religion in the contest. Here, as formerly in the slavery conflict, two opposing conceptions of the relation of religion to public life and morals strive to prevail: the view of religion as nourishing piety and the spiritual life, without partisan entanglement in controversial social matters, and the view that religion, Christianity, are sterile unless bearing fruits in social righteousness and in a more humane commonwealth.

The social history of America discloses the striving and the strife of moral forces which are not the less important because they have not found expression in ethical treatises. As a moral power Abraham Lincoln doubtless expresses the American spirit no less significantly

than Jonathan Edwards or Emerson. But the logic of events translated Lincoln's ideas into action where this history cannot follow him any length. Lincoln saw, beyond party conflicts and professions, certain basic convictions at war, and fundamentally the issue between property and personal rights, and on that issue he took his stand with Jefferson on the side of the inalienable dignity and liberty of man. To him this meant a flexible social and economic system, with free range for personal initiative. In the institution of slavery he saw not only a defiance of essential democratic principles but a menace to the self-reliant economy of the plain man, the plainsman disinclined to oppress but also refusing to be oppressed or exploited. The many ramifications of the struggle which led to the Civil War transcended as they also in part confused the moral issues. As various motives thus entered in the drawing of the embattled lines, so the conflict itself on a spreading field grew in tragic significance.

We now turn from Abraham Lincoln to one who came to worship him, Walt Whitman (1819-1892). Nothing so impresses the student of America as the rich and vigorous but also confused strain of its democratic chorus. Of this strain Whitman was the self-proclaimed rhapsode.

As a poet of America's destiny Whitman is antiphonal to Emerson: contrast and completion. "What has (a man) to do with hope and fear? In himself is his might. Let him regard no good as solid, but that which is in his nature, and which must grow out of him as long as he exists." Such a passage as this from Emerson's essay on "Spiritual Laws" makes us understand Whitman's words: "I was simmering, simmering; Emerson brought me to boil." Whitman's is a boiling flood of poetry that, stirring the whole range and depth of him, brings all to the surface in hot utterance. No poet ever used the first personal pronoun as profusely as Whitman; but we should not misapprehend this apparent egotism. Its larger intention is the lyric of democracy itself.

I celebrate myself,

the poet sings, in the poem bearing his own name as a title, but he also motivates his chant,

For every atom belonging to me, as good belongs to you.

He would select neither himself nor another. Not "The wrath of Achilles" nor "Arms and the Man"; against the aristocratic distinctions of bygone epics, his is the democratic song of the self, not of the class or caste, but of the man one with mankind. So he shouts his challenge on page one:

> One's-Self I sing—a simple, separate Person;
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the word *En-masse.*

He swears he would accept nothing in which others may not share on the same terms. His own lyrical introspection is his absorption in the plain man, any man, plain yet inexhaustibly abundant, not contained between his hat and boots. If he were buttressed by social rank or privilege, he would be precarious; but he is rooted in humanity, one with all in the cosmos. Unlike the romantic egotists who writing of others are forever engrossed with themselves, Whitman's songs of himself are democratic chants of Man: all-inclusive not exclusive individualism.

In this rhapsody of Man exuberance and intimacy with nature are emphasized. Whitman is singing in "a strange, unloosen'd, wondrous time," but more swathings and bonds must be loosened before it can grow to free maturity. He rejects the antithesis of the flesh and the spirit and would be poet of body and soul alike. The ascetic condemnation of the carnal he regards as itself a cause of sensual corruption. Against Puritanical repression and against snickering or shameless pruriency, Whitman openly adopts sexual love and procreation as poetic themes. By facing them unblushingly he would ennoble them and integrate them with the rest of life, body and soul together. It was all an essential part of his all-human rhapsody.

His zest for the uttermost may be reckoned among his merits but also among his defects. He gloried in the courage of his ample candor, but he lacked the other courage of intimate reticence. A generous exuberance leads him to embrace all that he considers in his universal paean. He bids welcome to everything in creation as to everything in his own nature; naught shall be excluded and naught shall be exalted or humbled, but all are to be on a par, each in its place. Does he really reject the gradation of values? He protests against the "Jesus-and-Judas-equalizing." And in his own equalitarianism, the caste-barriers, the shackles, and the smug pretenses are cast out. Yet "the blurt of virtue and vice" leaves him indifferent; he can use good and evil alike, and stands untainted by sin. Preoccupation with sin and evil repels him as devitalizing; he would sweep through it all on the floodtide of more abundant living. His chant of a life according to nature springs from the conviction that nature divinely sustains the larger life. So he would "arouse and set flowing in men's and women's hearts, young and old, endless streams of living, pulsating love and friendship." [19] Men have not been half devout enough, nor yet adored or worshiped half enough. With greater freedom and greater unrestricted range, more

adventurous souls will spend and realize themselves in more complete bestowal. Not less but more loyal and more religious is the free soul of Democracy. This is Whitman's hope for America, the hope of democracy: a friendly, happy, free, religious people: "a nationality not only the richest, most inventive, most productive and materialistic the world has yet known, but compacted indissolubly, and out of whose ample and solid bulk, and giving purpose and finish to it, conscience, morals, and all the spiritual attributes shall surely rise, like spires above some group of edifices, firm-footed on the earth, yet scaling space and heaven." [20]

Whitman's thousand-voiced chants of nature, with all their extravagances of catalogue and gazetteer, are instinct with the conviction of a divine rhythm in all existence which in marvelous wise is uttering an ever more abundant and more spiritual song. One with nature he felt himself, and felt also nature one in principle with his highest thought and aspiration. This piety of nature is a first article of his democratic faith, and in his judgment the first principle of true philosophy. In the spirit of confident naturalness and generous aspiration Whitman conceives his democratic poetry. Democracy itself is to him the great poem. Whitman is reluctant but not unable to see the pitfalls of democracy: its vulgarity and its shallowness and its reeking corruptions. Never was more hollowness at heart than in America, he writes, and again:

> Democracy—the destin'd conqueror—
> yet treacherous lip-smiles everywhere,
> And Death and infidelity at every step.[21]

Amidst them all, "Democracy waits the coming of its bards in silence and in twilight—but 'tis the twilight of the dawn." [22] His book is launched as a lone bark cleaving the ether, yet not alone, "full of faith, consort to every ship that sails." He fears only fear, the irresolute thought; the democratic life is to him a venture of free souls, a Passage to more than India:

> Away, O soul! hoist instantly the anchor! . . .
> Sail forth, sail for the deep waters only!
> Reckless, O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me;
> For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
> And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.
>
> O my brave soul!
> O farther, farther sail!
> O daring joy, but safe! Are they not all the seas of God?
> O farther, farther, farther sail! [23]

CHAPTER XXX

FRENCH POSITIVISM IN MORALS



1. The Precursors of French Positivism and Socialism

We have already noted the manifold revision of ideals following the French Revolution. Though aghast by the excesses of the Terror, yet in the main loyal to the revolutionary program and resisting the return of monarchical and ecclesiastic authority, the Ideologists pursued the path of eighteenth century radicalism. In uncompromising hostility to all that the French Revolution represented, the Traditionalists saw only one way out of the dissolution of standards and institutions: through the rejection of the Protestant-revolutionary heresy and the utter submission to Divine standards, to Catholic orthodoxy and monarchical restoration. Cousin and his Eclectic school undertook manifold reconciliation of aims and principles. Liberal and secular in the main and set against Jesuit or any other clerical ascendency in life and thought, the Eclectics yet combatted the 'sensualism' of the Ideologists and the eighteenth century philosophy as spiritually barren. The demand for metaphysics and the study of Platonic and German idealism expressed the felt need of fundamental principles of moral and social order.

Positivism represented a fourth alternative. With the traditionalist and the eclectic, the positivist condemned the dissolution of standards and exacted directive ideals, but he explicitly repudiated supernaturalism and disavowed any metaphysics. Within the empirical and naturalistic range of eighteenth century radicalism he would seek new principles and a new gospel for the new age. He dismissed theology but required religion and would build the City of God on earth. The initial main articles of the positivistic program are social reorganization in view of the new industrial economy, the emphatic rejection of individualism in thought and of private profit and exploitation, the subordination of each man to the larger needs and purposes of society. An ardent conviction of progress and human perfectibility possessed these men. Their new social gospel was to be infused with the pious devotion that had been wrested from the old faith, their new Christianity of social justice, the Religion of Humanity.

The first of these social evangelists was Claude Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825). From his youth his life was marked by adventure, ambition, and schemes of reform. He rebelled against the Church, refused to attend his first communion, crossed the Atlantic at nineteen as a volunteer in the American War of Independence, then returned to France, not to take part in the Revolution, but to engage in land-speculation, in order to raise funds for his future social projects. So likewise he plunged into many adventures, some of them unsavory, presumably to expand his outlook on life and by the steps of vice to rise to higher virtue. He dreamt of a rebellion in India, to complete the work of the American Revolution in humbling Britain. He promoted grandiose schemes, some of which were later realized: the Panama Canal, Suez. Meanwhile his wealth was dissipated and he was reduced to live on bread and water, to accept charity from a former servant, to beg for a small pension. But his conviction of his great mission remained unshaken. In the more affluent days his valet had been instructed to wake him every morning with the words: "Arise, Monsieur le Comte, you have great things to accomplish today." His family, he believed, had given France a great emperor, Charlemagne; it would give the world a great philosopher.

The political alignment of the new philosophy was unsteady. Saint-Simon successively renounced and reassumed his title of nobility, resisted the Revolution, dedicated one of his books to Napoleon in 1813, and two years later denounced the tyrant, solicited Louis XVIII's favor for his plans. But his socialistic program was steadily defined and in his last work, *The New Christianity*, was given a religious version. True religion in life on earth, real belief in God, means doing the divine work of reclaiming man's destiny in a social order of justice and love. The essence of Christianity is the gospel of brotherhood. Men should treat each other as brothers. To make this divine morality the only one in individual life and in all social relations, became Saint-Simon's program.

In the advocacy of his ideas Saint-Simon professed to be clearing the simple Christian teaching of later corruption and heresies, Catholic and Protestant. Traditional Christianity had turned men's eyes to God, had professed holy neglect of earthly affairs, while at the same time allowing ecclesiastic aggrandisement and toleration of exploiter and oppressor. The new religion would concentrate men's energies, in social equity and coöperation, on the exploitation of the earth for man's fuller well-being. Society must direct the efforts of all individuals towards the improvement of the living conditions of the largest class. Society should undertake definitely to abolish poverty. In place of

work for private advantage, the industrial exploitation of the many by the few and the aristocratic glorification of exclusiveness and luxury and ease, the new society should dignify work and industry for social use, rejecting private profit as the alleged spur to individual initiative and repudiating private inheritance of property. In place of the social heresy, Every one for himself, men should come to recognize the social truth, Work in universal association. From every one according to his capacity to everyone according to his work and service! The motto of Saint-Simon was: "Love and succor one another." In thus applying the divine moral law, Saint-Simon regarded himself as the best theologian and God's vicar on earth. After his death he became the object of religious veneration. For several years, before and after the revolution of 1830, the new gospel was preached in France and in Belgium. It gained and also suffered from the rapt enthusiasm of its apostles. Men heard the glad tidings: "Earth, rejoice, Saint-Simon has appeared." His revelation was proclaimed as vaster than that of Christ, even as the Gospel had been above and beyond the Mosaic law. The members of the cult were addressed as children of Saint-Simon. "The Man-God of the Christians has become in Saint-Simon the Man-People." [1] The Apostolic fervor of some of the leaders, especially of 'Father' Enfantin, carried them to sacerdotal arrogance and also to the preaching if not to the practice of free love and the glorification of sensuality, which alienated the saner members of the inner circle and which in the end caused the new cult to wind up in the courts as a public indecency.

This sensual strain in Saint-Simonism seems to show the influence of Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and may explain why so many of the Saint-Simonians, after the dispersion of their sect, joined Fourier's ranks. The turn from Saint-Simon to Fourier was in fact a change in basic principle: on the one side, reform through social control; on the other, salvation through relaxing of institutional bonds and released individuality. There cannot be any question of system or unity in Fourier's thought; it may be stated bluntly that both the substance of his teaching and its form, his oracular and often incomprehensible style, the unmitigated drivel and unquotable pruriency which his pages contain, indicate some mental derangement. But his mind also had contagious ardor and a certain genius for utopian propaganda.

Fourier's basic doctrine recalls Rabelais' Abbey of Theleme: "Do what thou wilt, *Fay ce que vouldras.*" His study of the existing social order convinced him that most evils are due to the repression of the individual by other individuals and by institutional régime. Fourier

proposed a double plan of salvation: social coöperation instead of individual competition, and spontaneity in all personal relations instead of social control. Both reforms were intended to emancipate the mass of humanity from its unnatural shackles. What mankind needs, according to Fourier, is to stop all institutional interference with the natural course of human desires. Let man follow his own bent in manifold indulgence, but in a system of social coöperation which rules out *his* oppression of others. In the versatile spontaneity of passion the fullness of human nature will find its normal expression, and general blessedness will be the result.

The utopian appeal of Fourier's writings was largely due to his ingenious schemes; in all departments he had a definite plan that would redeem the world. He had appealed publicly for someone to supply the capital needed to put his project in operation, and for ten years, each day at noon as announced by him, he waited for his eventual capitalist. The plan was that of establishing small communities or *phalanges*, of about 1800 souls, to live coöperatively in 'phalansteries,' varying their work, their diet, and their mates freely, finding fullness of life in spontaneity and continual change, like butterflies, *papillons*. This utopia was to have its practical aspects: work was to be paid at a rate inversely to its attractiveness, and after assuring all members a comfortable sustenance, the net profit was to be divided, say, five-twelfths to labor, three-twelfths to talent, and the remaining third to capital. The fanciful elaboration of details, which need not be noted further here, stimulated utopian zeal to try it out, and also utopian ingenuity to vary and perfect the scheme. On both sides of the Atlantic a number of communities, two score perhaps, tried to realize this paradise on earth; the most distinguished of them by far was Brook Farm, mentioned in the previous chapter.[2]

Other followers of Saint-Simon, resisting Fourier's influence and Enfantin's excesses, combined religious and social radicalism with a more convincing purity of personal outlook and character. One of them, Jean Raynaud, was engrossed by the problem of evil, and portrayed the life of humanity as a tragic struggle, yet refused to admit the final defeat of the good. In the end the love of God and justice and brotherhood among men will redeem this sorry world. Another Saint-Simonian, Pierre Leroux, combined his socialistic gospel with theosophical speculations. On the one hand he outlined the growing perfection of man through social solidarity in the ever-richer life of civilization; on the other, he entertained his occult notions of the individual's rise to glory through a plurality of incarnations.

2. *Comte's Positive Philosophy*

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) was associated with Saint-Simon as secretary in 1817 and later as collaborator. Saint-Simon treated him as a disciple, and Comte acknowledged publicly his dependence even while he was turning aside to develop his ideas in his own way. This acknowledgment might have been intended as only a parting gesture of complaisance, but the Saint-Simonians regarded it as only just, and abhorred Comte's later disparagement of their master's gospel as the treason of a plagiary. Actually, though Comte might declare himself a follower of Saint-Simon, or as a 'spiritual son' of Condorcet, he was not by temperament a disciple. What Saint-Simon did was to confirm Comte's interest in social reorganization, but in their method of approach and in their goal the two men differed. The difference was noted by the elder man who, welcoming Comte's scientific contribution, deplored his too intellectual emphasis and his neglect of sentiment and religion. Precisely the distaste for the evangelical and sacerdotal alienated the younger Comte from the Saint-Simonian cult. Later in life, to be sure, Comte was to have his own pontifical chapter.

Genuine and stable social order, in Comte's judgment, requires universal acknowledgment of true fundamental principles. The existing disorder of the age was to be explained by the conflicting influence of incompatible philosophies of life. His analysis revealed them as belonging to different stages in the intellectual progress of humanity. In a man's advance towards truth his thought may be a contest between stubborn beliefs which he is in fact outgrowing and more critical ideas to which he has not yet attained. One can see his own way more clearly by surveying the long course of maturing human intelligence.

As a first principle in the intellectual analysis on which his social construction was to rest, Comte formulated the Law of the Three Stages of Thought: the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive-Scientific. At a primitive level of mental development, the childhood of the race, men ascribe the course of existence to the activity and direction of various divinities. But more critical thought is leading some minds beyond mythology and theology to metaphysics. In place of the old myths of the gods, doctrines of ultimate principles and entities are now entertained, "the Nature of Things" mysteriously operating in place of God's will. Gradually in one field after another, the mind advances to less ambitious but more reliable and fertile inquiry: not speculation about first beginnings and ultimate reality, but critical examination of specific orders of events, yielding tested knowledge experimental and theoretical. This positive-scientific stage of

mature thinking is reached by some minds and peoples earlier than by others, and earlier in some fields of inquiry than in others. The hierarchy of the sciences,—Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Biology,—exhibits progressive growth of complexity, each science in the list serving as foundation for the less general and more complex science above it. A society or an individual may grasp scientific method in one type of problem, entertain metaphysical abstractions in other fields, and on some topics still hold fast to incongruous theological notions. But the history of thought is marked by this advance towards positive science, and so warrants the further program of critical intelligence. The summit of this scientific advance would be "Social Physics," the positive science of man. It is thus as the champion of sociology that Comte views his rôle in civilization.

The basic idea of the Law of the Three Stages was advanced by Turgot; it was reflected in Condorcet's survey of human progress; it influenced Saint-Simon's plans of social reorganization.[3] But Comte need not have been concerned about his originality; the real claim he had to the idea of the Three Stages of Thought was that he developed its meaning and especially its implications for a positive science of human nature.

3. The Social Nature of Man and the Ethics of Altruism

The proposed positive-scientific account of man was in deliberate opposition to any metaphysical speculation. In particular, Comte disdained the introspection and the intuitions of Cousin and his school. He would not recognize mind as pure intelligence conscious of itself, and his list of sciences does not include psychology. The first thing, though not the last, to realize about man is his natural basis, his biological roots. Against Cousin, Comte would have sided with Cabanis: man's experience is physiological activity. But though it is physiological, physiology does not exhaust or explain it. So Comte would do justice to an objective-scientific account of man while resisting materialism. Intelligence and moral activity have a cerebral-physical basis, but no merely cerebral-biological account of human thought and conduct is sufficient. Man reveals his distinctively human character in social relations. Man is essentially a social being. Man is a living organism, but the full meaning of the term 'human' is 'social.' Comte's avowed aim was thus to lead the way out of the fundamental crisis in modern life, due to an inability of squaring human ideals with scientific facts.

Confused doctrine has emphasized individual self-consciousness as prime certainty. Against the egoistic implications of this error, Comte was tireless in expounding the essentially social character of all signifi-

cant human activity. Strictly and adequately speaking, the *human* individual is an abstraction; whenever and however we consider man we find him in one way or another a member, heir or forebear of society. Aside from Humanity, a man is not man. Society is not rightly conceived as a collection or even a system of individuals. Against this atomism, Comte proposed human society as the real unity. Every aspect of our human character reveals us as active in a society which constitutes us, and the interrelation of these aspects, in which our own fuller personality is disclosed, is also social. Humanity is a society of societies: of families, classes, states, and the more perfect meaning of each type of society is expressed again in the social communion and correlation of all in the life of Humanity.

There is a theoretical and a practical gain in this recognition of the sovereign importance of the social. It yields a philosophical synthesis and also a program of life. Without the category of the social, the resources of science could not yield a comprehensive view of history and civilization or a thorough grasp of the meaning of any human life. In man social nature attains and can express its range and reach. But in this social realization we can also recognize the directive principle of our human career. If social science reveals to us that we live *in* humanity, morality has and can have only one sovereign principle: live *for* humanity. All that we have and are belongs to mankind. The supreme fact imposes the supreme duty.

Morality, for Comte, is thus in the active and conscious socializing of our life and thought. Accordingly he rejected hedonism and all other essentially egoistic ethics as unworthy and as strictly speaking unscientific, for they ignore the characteristically social character of man. Moral sense intuitionism, though it emphasizes benevolence, does not rest on adequate scientific analysis. The ethics of duty has a nobler note, but it is too loftily negligent of the facts of human life and too coldly rational. True morality requires not only social insight but also social sentiment. This spiritual dynamic of love, in which the heart sustains and perfects the intellect, received growing emphasis in Comte's moral and social philosophy. He ascribed his own fuller recognition of it, in which his character and outlook on life expanded and mellowed, to the love and inspiration of Madame Clotilde de Vaux, whom he worshiped as 'Saint' Clotilde. This note of utter devotion, which the reader of the four volumes of the *Système de politique positive* is never allowed to forget, leads Comte to expressions of mystical exaltation.

While rejecting the dogmas of Christian theology, Comte extolled

the Christian ethics of love. Indeed he regarded it as tragic that, in the inevitable dissolution of Catholic doctrine by the advance of modern critical intelligence, men have also turned away from the sound Catholic principles of love and devotion. Rampant individualism and the loosening of institutional bonds were reflected in chaotic and pernicious thinking on all-important subjects: dismissal of economic order, political confusion, lax notions in personal and domestic relations. The new morality, unless it was to be one of ruinous negation, required not the note of emancipation but that of consecration. Comte had a high mission for man but not a very high estimate of men. In both of these respects he shared basic Catholic ideas, despite his rejection of the traditional orthodoxy. The Gospel teaching, Love God and thy neighbor as thyself, was translated in the ethics of Humanity in the formula, *Vivre pour autrui*, which means to Comte, Live for mankind. Exalting altruism as the essence of morality and without any doctrines of original sin, Comte yet saw misguided selfishness only too stubborn in most men. We all need discipline, education, social order and régime to direct our conduct, to enlighten us and expand our social outlook and deepen our social consciousness. In his later writings he supplements his statement of the hierarchy of the sciences by adding, after Sociology, Morals. The closing years of his life were consecrated to the establishment of the Religion of Humanity, in which instruction and ritual and systematic devotion were to confirm men's love of mankind.

In line with his consistent opposition to individualism, Comte explicitly rejected the idea of rights, to emphasize duties. The idea of rights is false and immoral, because it assumes the standpoint of the individual; the idea of duty is the true and right one, for it emphasizes the primacy of the social. Comte's blend of love and duty characterizes his treatment of institutional ethics. The cultivation of social devotion that is to bloom in all-human love involves in actuality manifold discipline. In the 'positive state' that is to come (sociocracy), with the replacement of rights by duties, all privilege of class and status was to disappear, and all subjection of one individual to another. Comte had noted the degrading influence of slavery on the masters. Human character requires respect for the moral dignity of others. But the effacement of privilege and individual mastery means in fact the devotion of each to the social weal. The moral dignity is a 'dignity of submission.' This follows from the replacement of rights by duties. The only right which the individual may claim is that of always performing his duty.

Comte's basic ideas are brought together in his formula, "Love as a

principle, order as basis, progress as aim." He trusts to the active social sentiment in his proposed social reconstruction. The choice and pursuit of one's career, the system of economic relations and manifold enterprise, political structure, national and international, all are transfigured as soon as the individual begins to think of his life in terms of social duty and devotion and not in terms of private claims. Comte would concentrate on the social good, but would not take too meagre and mean a view of it. So, after the events of 1848, he criticized the Communists for their narrow preoccupation with the economic problem and with the distribution of material goods. Man cannot live by bread alone. Despite his own vast scientific outlook and his great zeal for intellectual activity, Comte contemplated a subordination of scientific research to distinctively human purposes and was prepared for limitation of socially indifferent inquiry. So he advocated a socialized conception of the province and the function of art in human life. Likewise the most intimate personal relations of men were to be infused with the spirit of social conviction and devotion. Against the romantic loose notions of the family and the glorification of self-indulgence as freedom of self-expression, Comte, despite his own unhappy marriage, declared the family-bond indissoluble.

The reorganization of society on positivistic principles was for Comte not only an ideal. With sublime confidence he announced and prepared for the immediate realization of his 'Sociocracy,' or the *Republique Occidentale* as he styled it officially on his title-pages. France was to be divided into seventeen republics, which he listed: the other western countries were also to be reduced to a number of smaller commonwealths. Paris was to become the metropolis of civilization, and there a council of delegates from the various nations of the West was to administer the affairs of enlightened humanity, directed by the High Pontiff of Positivism. All this Comte expected to be realized within his own lifetime, if he only was to attain the age of Fontenelle!

4. The Religion of Humanity

The moral life of man, in and for Humanity, reveals to Comte also man's future destiny. This is the Positivistic Immortality of the individual in the larger life and thought of others; survival in Humanity.[4] It is only as a man's work is taken up in the immemorial treasury of mankind that its lasting significance is tested. The man who lives humanely is already treasured in the lives of others; death only seals his abiding worth in Humanity. This positivistic ideal has inspired lofty utterances in the Temple of Humanity, none loftier than George Eliot's lines:

Oh may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues. . . .

To perfect this spirit of humanistic piety, Comte proposed an elaborate cult in which he utilized traditional ideas of ancestor-worship and the devotional manuals of Catholicism, especially the *Imitation of Christ*, which he read daily, substituting 'Humanity' for 'God,' and addressing to his beloved 'Saint' Clotilde the words of adoration which Christians addressed to the Savior. Thrice daily in private devotion the positivist worshiper was to renew in commemoration his communion with his beloved dead. For the public worship of the new Religion of Humanity, Comte devised a Positivistic Calendar, in which the various months are consecrated to the memory of the great fields of achievement in human history and bear the names of the most illustrious men of the past, and each day is dedicated to some great hero of civilization. The Pantheon of Paris was to become the First Temple of Humanity, to which men would come from all over the world to revere the spirit of all-human achievement.

The criticism of this view of human destiny and of this proposed Religion of Humanity would be in the main also a criticism of the positivistic basis of morality. Comte recognizes a character in social activity and appeals to motives in individual conduct which on his own admission the categories of physical and biological science cannot comprehend. But while he thus contemplates spiritual values and rises to heights of moral exaltation, his dismissal of metaphysics leaves him without a really cosmic synthesis, and disturbs his reader with the lurking doubt that the whole pageant of Humanity and civilization may after all be only a terrestrial episode. In the emphasis on the social he has not recognized adequately the cosmic significance of individual persons capable of ideal social devotion, their unique integrity in all their relations, not a mere multiplicity of social relations here and now, and not merely a diffusion of social memories in the hereafter. The social career of persons does not preclude the essentially personal character of their self-realization. Even in terms of strict empiricism and without metaphysical commitments, as John Stuart Mill pointed out, Comte's insistence on the absorption of the individual in humanity,

on the submission of the individual to society, is only half the truth; the other half is recognition of individuality and emphasis on individual initiative. Unless men are genuinely individuals, persons, they could not form a real human society.

Furthermore, Comte rejected theism; but, without recognition of a basic and prevailing spiritual Reality in the world-process, whether the God of Catholicism or Plato's Idea of the Good, he records prevailing spiritual factors in detail, and on terrestrial sands would erect his Temple of Humanity. In the last volume of his *Système de Politique Positive* he quotes with approval Madame de Staël's words, "Nothing is real in the world but love," and despite their apparent exaggeration would have them consecrated by the positivistic religion. But unless these words are mere romancing, their more ultimate significance should be recognized, the revelation of spiritual character in the world, the significance of Dante's last line in the *Divine Comedy*, of Plato's great words in the *Symposium*, and of St. John's word, "God is love." They all reveal the more thorough grasp of the really scientific method: "By their fruits you shall know *them*."

As Comte himself, while sharing Saint-Simon's demand for social reconstruction, refused to follow his master's ecstatic revelations, and as the more sober Saint-Simonians were repelled by the sacerdotal excesses of 'Father' Enfantin, so some of the most eminent adherents of Comte's positive philosophy deplored the Cult of Humanity, to the elaboration and propagation of which Comte devoted his closing years. The concluding part of John Stuart Mill's work, *Auguste Comte and Positivism* is the more eloquent testimony because, in his unflinching exposure of Comte's later vagaries, Mill is only bewailing the "melancholy decadence of a great intellect," which he ranked with that of Descartes and Leibniz. In France the most eminent positivist who finally refused to follow Comte into the Temple of Humanity was Émile Littré (1801-1881). Positivism, according to him, demands an atheistic conclusion and does not warrant the serious entertainment of any substitute-cults. Sentiment, devotion, love are after all cerebral-physiological processes; we may investigate them, but they should not direct our thinking to mystical fancies. There is nothing mystical about love and altruism nor anything degrading in selfishness. These two have their roots in basic instincts of the organism. According to Littré, the demand for nourishment develops into a variety of egoistic impulses and desires, while the sexual instinct gradually prepares the individual for love and an altruistic life. Thus organic and physiological in their origin, our emotions are later subjected to rational judgment; we undertake in a disinterested logical way to justify or to judge

them. So emotional-organic demands tend to assume the character of duties.[5]

5. *Proudhon*

Among the theoretical and practical reformers of the nineteenth century, Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) occupied a unique position. Perhaps, lacking as he did any extended formal education, he was led in his wide and random reading to a strange eclecticism of his own. A merciless critic of the economics of competition and one of the early leaders of French socialism, he resisted the economic and political exaltation of government and state control, and his ideal was free development of man with a minimum of compulsion, social order aiming at anarchy. While thus advocating freedom of self-realization, he was nevertheless a severe critic of the gospel of indulgence. His personal life was one of austerity and purity of motives and action. Under no conditions would he allow sensuality or personal laxity of any sort to have their way with him in the guise of social emancipation. He opposed systems, not persons, and his confidence was in principles, not in schemes. His moral and social philosophy is permeated by his reverence for the spiritual worth of men; but while sharing this kernel-idea with Cousin and his school, he scornfully refused to follow them to their theological corollaries and maintained a firm and disdainful atheism. "God is the shadow of conscience projected on the field of imagination." [6]

Against the Christian church which, in its doctrines and symbols, had emphasized the essential depravity and the submission of men, Proudhon reaffirmed Christ's gospel of man's fundamental worth and dignity. This first principle and the basic "law of charity" derived from it govern all individual and social ethics. All morality rests on man's self-recognition as a person, on the mutual recognition of men as persons, and on the recognition of their relations and claims to what is not personal: purely moral values, individual and social, and economic values. All our claims and our rights are rooted in our very existence as persons of worth. The true solution of the economic problem must be in terms of objective conditions of use or possession of material goods required for man's full realization of personal character. The true solution of the political problem and of the more specifically moral problem involves acknowledgment of the rights and claims of individuals, especially in relation to each other. A person's claim on a person cannot be the same as a person's claim to a thing. The latter allows exploitation within certain limits determined by the claims of other persons; the former explicitly demands *respect*, my recognition

of your dignity as a person equal and bound up with my conviction of my own dignity. Thus personal worth and dignity, equality, respect for human rights and corresponding duties, all find their expression in the principle of justice. Involved in the essential relations of persons to each other and to things, justice is real and absolute; it is not derived from mere custom nor does its validity depend on any Divine pronouncement. The achievement of a more equitable and generous social order is the realization of this ideal in the life of humanity. In Proudhon's ethics, idealistic principles of personal dignity and duty are combined with a positivistic confidence in a human synthesis and in human progress. "My masters," he said, "are Auguste Comte and Kant." [7]

6. The Spread of Comte's Influence

In France and abroad Comte's positivism continued to influence the thought and direct the lives of many who, divorced from traditional religious beliefs and finding idealistic philosophy uncongenial, yet felt the need of moral and social ideals and of something to take the place of the old faith. The positivistic trend in German thought, as developed especially by Ludwig Feuerbach, has been considered in our twenty-sixth chapter. In Italy, working on radical minds whose enthusiasm for the French Revolution had found expression in a rejection of all orthodoxy and in emphatic but not coherently thought out negations, the positivistic philosophy, especially in its most notable representative, Roberto Ardigò (1828-1920) sought a philosophical and an ethical-social synthesis in a union of empiricist and materialistic ideas.

Across the Channel, John Stuart Mill's promotion of the positivist method and his resistance to Comte's sacerdotalism, already mentioned, were the most important early reactions. George Henry Lewes' advocacy of non-metaphysical philosophy, and George Eliot's championship of the humanistic ideal, as expressed in her "Choir Invisible" and also in her translation of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* showed the spreading influence of positivistic ideas. Harriet Martineau's abridged and better organized English version of Comte's *Positive Philosophy* was so competently done that it gained adherents to the doctrine, not only in England but also abroad, in the French re-translation which was prepared. Matthew Arnold cheered the work, and its author:

> Hail to the courage which gave
> Voice to its creed, ere the creed
> Won consecration from time! [8]

Harriet Martineau's work helped to win for the positivist movement in England its most active leader after Richard Congreve, Frederic

Harrison (1831-1923). Harrison's works, *The Philosophy of Common Sense* and *The Creed of a Layman,* while expounding in a popular vein basic positivistic ideas, seek kinship and alliance also with other strains in the thought of the past.[9]

In our own day, against a somewhat new background of ideas and motives, a religious and social movement which calls itself the New Humanism manifests in America the persistent influence of the religion of Humanity. It dismisses theistic metaphysics, seeks its foundations in positive science, and emphasizes social values in religion.

CHAPTER XXXI

UTILITARIANISM AND SOCIAL REFORM



1. Bentham's Quantitative Hedonism

The earlier English utilitarianism had combined characteristic features of English thought: a preference for inductive methods and a commonsense practicality, a frank recognition of personal satisfaction combined with philanthropic concern for the common weal, a pious reliance on Divine Providence, to admonish excessively selfish or sensual men and to assure everlasting happiness to the Good Samaritans. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), continuing in the main the inductive-hedonistic tradition, represents the contact of British and French ideas in his age. The turn which Locke's philosophy received in French thought and the wide-spreading influence which it exerted prior to the Revolution have already been noted. Bentham's method, ideas, and philosophic temper reveal the counter influence of French empiricism, of Condillac and La Mettrie and Helvétius. Unlike the English insularity of many of his predecessors, Bentham, like the French, thought and wrote consciously for the world.

He shared with the encyclopedists and radicals the readiness for thorough reform, even though his initial attitude towards the democratic formulae was one of distrust and opposition. Without lofty pretensions regarding the rank and file of men, he was confident that their lot could be improved by the correction of administrative abuses and especially by the reform of laws, law-courts, prison conditions. The American Revolution did not at first arouse his sympathies, and he distrusted the general principles of the French Revolution; but he approved the practical reforms inaugurated in the United States and commended them to the French. It was after long years of seemingly futile promotion of needed reforms that he adopted more explicitly democratic principles. But always his main trust was in better laws and in more honest administration: not on the basis of professed rights but for the sake of attainable general happiness. And because the hedonistic motive was universal, so Bentham was confident of achieving his legal and social reforms anywhere: in Spain or Russia as well as in England. Ethics is intended by him as an instrument of social-political recon-

struction. His major ambition was to revise jurisprudence and to write the code of laws of a modern nation. The title of his best known work is significant: *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780, 1789); he calls it in his preface "an introduction to a penal code."

In his *Fragment on Government* (1776) written against the abstract legalism of Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Bentham maintained that the justification of government and the authority of law rest on the people's advantage, *utility*. Stability of governments and validity of laws depend on their contributing to the increase of the common weal. This utilitarian criterion involves an explicit utilitarian aim: the *end* of the law is to augment happiness. Politics and jurisprudence should be accordingly revised, especially penology, which is not concerned with the vindication of Divine majesty or with any other solemn abstraction, but with the prudential infliction of pain by public authority as a means of safeguarding and promoting the general happiness. To be sure, there are motives and actions which no court of law can reach, and those are the subjects of specifically moral as distinguished from legal judgment, but the basic principle of utility or appeal to pleasure abides. On that principle Bentham would erect his ethics.

The sanctions of morality, which assure one's performance of certain acts, are classified by Bentham variously. In his *Fragment on Government* he distinguishes the political, the moral, the religious sanction; to these he adds in *Principles of Morals and Legislation* the physical sanction; and in his posthumously published *Deontology*, a fifth sanction is subjoined, the social or sympathetic. Briefly, Bentham is referring to the various hopes or fears, factors in motivation determining a person's choice and act, by considering its likely consequences, the ensuing favor or disfavor, reward or punishment here or in some hereafter.

So in matters of conduct we are moved by consideration of the consequences of our acts: the end of desire is pleasure; an intelligent choice aims at the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain in the circumstances, the greatest available balance of happiness. These terms maximum and balance imply reckoning, and this quantitative calculating method is plainly adopted by Bentham in his ethics. This is Bentham's well-known hedonistic calculus. As far as a person's own choice of an action is concerned, the resulting pleasure or pain may be measured according to its intensity, its duration, its certainty or uncertainty, and its nearness or remoteness. To the four factors mentioned Bentham adds two others: its fecundity (the likelihood of its pleasure to be followed by other pleasures or its pain by other pains) and its purity (whether its pleasure leads to later pain or its pain to later

pleasure). To the individual considering only his own happiness these six factors are sufficient for hedonistic calculation: intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity. But in society the individual and the legislator must consider also a seventh factor which Bentham calls extent: how many persons are affected by the pleasures or pains resulting from the contemplated act?

As a general description of the hedonistic aspects of acts and the corresponding factors to be considered in choosing between alternatives, the 'calculus' is not without value. But Bentham intended his arithmetic to yield precise conclusions in deciding specific cases of conduct. In deliberating between acts A and B, we are to reckon, in positive and negative amounts, the pleasures and pains yielded by the two under each of the seven heads aforementioned, and by adding and striking a balance, decide and act. Thus considered, the proposed calculation is far from reliable.

How is a single accurate entry to be made in this balance-sheet of hedonistic bookkeeping? Perfection of experimental technique might perhaps inform us what intensity or duration of pleasure or pain our past acts have yielded, not what other unperformed acts might have yielded, nor what future acts would yield. This difficulty would be especially serious with regard to such factors as fecundity or purity. Furthermore, even if I could calculate precisely how much more or less intense is the pleasure or pain of one act as compared with another, would this be more than an accurate statement of my personal susceptibility, what pleases me, but what may not please you at all? If you and I are to judge each in our own way as we go along, then would not Bentham's ethics be an elaborate instruction to each of us to do as we please? But, if either of us is to be asked to accept another and a wiser man's reckoning, what would justify such a proposal on hedonistic grounds? Are the glutton or the libertine to be condemned because their own pleasures sway the balance with them, not those of the philosopher? The libertine and his like may live to rue their choices, but so might also a Faust at the close of a studious life? Would these different rueful judgments warrant criticism of the respective choices at the time they were made?

The hedonistic calculus, difficult enough in taking account of only one factor, intensity or duration, becomes increasingly confused when we consider the several factors together. Am I warranted in putting all the factors on a par, so that double intensity of a pleasure would be just balanced by half as long duration? Guyau wittily compares Bentham's calculator to a banker who, adding up his receipts and disbursements, treats all his various foreign moneys as if they were equally

francs. Is the thrifty pleasure-seeker wiser, who prizes duration, or the spendthrift enjoyer staking all on supreme intensity? How is Bentham to decide between them, how affirm the parity of all factors, or their graded valuation on a hedonistic basis?

The seventh factor, that of extent, is especially perplexing in Bentham's theory. Why should I subordinate my pleasure to that of others, no matter how many? Bentham found inspiration in the formula "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." But the problem of a man's self-sacrifice for the general good is for Bentham as for other hedonists a baffling one. Indeed Bentham does not admit the moral worth of self-sacrifice, but insists on the final individual advantage of all philanthropy. He boldly and optimistically denies any real conflict between one's own genuine interest and that of others: so promoting the general welfare is the surest way of attaining one's own happiness. Society enforces this agreement of social-mindedness and personal advantage by punishing the exorbitant or callous egoist. In general, sympathy for Bentham is enlightened prudence. At the close of his life he wrote: "I am a selfish man, as selfish as any man can be. But in me somehow or other, so it happens, selfishness has taken the form of benevolence." [1]

Particular attention in this statement of Bentham's doctrine has been given to his hedonistic calculus which most impressed his generation. His disciple and editor Dumont of Geneva compared it to Aristotle's Syllogism and Bacon's *Novum Organum.* We shall note presently the radical revision to which it was subjected by John Stuart Mill. Consideration of some other aspects of Bentham's doctrine has been postponed, for their significance in utilitarian ethics is best brought out by examining John Stuart Mill's critical reformulation of them. So both the merits and the limitations of Bentham's ethics may be noted by tracing its development and transformation in Mill's utilitarianism.

2. *Qualitative Standards and Genuine Altruism in John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism*

The career of John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) in many ways paralleled Bentham's. In each case parental ambition had determined upon an intellectual career for the child and imposed a régime of the most intensive early training. Bentham's precocity is the less striking only by comparison with Mill's; at the age of three little Jeremy was reading history and beginning his Latin; at four or five he spoke French and played the violin; at fifteen he was an Oxford graduate. James Mill was even more exacting, or his son more responsive to premature mental discipline. Beginning Greek at three, this boy had read during his kindergarten years many of the Greek classics including six of Plato's dia-

logues, also a shelf of English histories. At eight he turned to Latin and to geometry and algebra. Before his teens he had read the classical library from Homer to Virgil and Lucretius, begun the calculus, at fourteen started logic and political economy, and the following year learned French. This amazingly precocious education, always under the direct discipline of his father, put John Stuart Mill twenty years ahead of his fellows. But one result was that he had no fellows; he read the Greek plays instead of simply playing, "never had a boyhood, never a game of cricket." The intellect of this prematurely adult scholar developed at the expense of the rest of his nature. His strong physique and systematic exercise, all on schedule, kept him in good health, but he was starved emotionally. Intense early mental exertion left him with a certain nervousness which combined with his lack of whole-hearted spontaneity to produce a crisis in his early twenties. He felt himself a cold speculator, a reliable logical machine, lacking enthusiasm and plain human stimulus and response.

The depression which for a while made him dubious about the worth of living, happily was mastered; by 1831 he was turning with new zest and spirit to his work;—his thought gained as a result in human warmth. Was it partly by way of reaction to his own intensive but one-sided training that he emphasized in his philosophy respect for the integrity of human character? The problem of man's rebuilding and perfection became to him more than the devising of a proper code or régime; in all his utilitarian calculations he had the sense of the human incalculable. In place of the Benthamite sectarian contempt for all other doctrines, we find Mill developing a response to other men and other thought, a spirit of fairness and a candor which do not quite enable him to transcend the narrow frame of his chosen doctrine but which, as will be seen, expand and deepen and transform his moral and social outlook. His writings mark him as a thoroughgoing but a fair-minded advocate of reform: in logic, in political economy, in morals, and in social order. As a member of Parliament and writer raising the tone of political debate, he advocated advanced measures of social reconstruction, a champion of economic justice, of women's rights domestic and political. He stands out in the nineteenth century as one of the soldiers of humanity.

In his own way Mill realized but also revised his father's plans for his career. Even so Bentham had fulfilled his father's intentions for him by becoming, not a great English judge, but one of the noted critics of English law and justice. If John Stuart Mill filled the elder Mill's shoes in the East India Office, it cannot be said that he wore them long in philosophy. James Mill (1773-1836), never optimistic about human

welfare, was resolute in advocating its promotion, especially by opposing political oppression, bigotry of any sort, a champion of liberal thought and policy. He stimulated Bentham to more systematic production; his own ethics followed closely Bentham's quantitative hedonism. He classified the virtues on a utilitarian basis: prudence and bravery are advantageous to ourselves; justice and benevolence are useful to others; we cherish them all because we find them advantageous. Parental and social praise and blame, rewards and punishments are all parts of the education and discipline whereby society secures for its members the maximum of available happiness.

Needless to point out, not only filial loyalty but also a characteristically generous spirit led the younger Mill to save a high place in his mind for his father, whose *Analysis* he edited and whose fame he nourished. For Bentham also he retained a gratitude which, while tempering the early ardent enthusiasm, yet preserved a spirit of solidarity beyond the required. On first reading, Bentham's writings had provided him with a point of view, a method, a platform, a creed. But his very zeal in expounding Bentham's ideas led his keen and candid mind to perceive their defects and their narrowness. He could not be a mere Benthamite, yet his father's immediate influence tempered the vigor of his criticisms. It is perhaps significant that the first thoroughly critical statement of Mill's philosophy, his essay on Bentham (1838) appeared two years after the elder Mill's death. It is by outstripping his father, by penetrating and transcending Bentham that John Stuart Mill gives the utilitarian ethics and social philosophy its critical revised expression, so that in the very disclosure of its limitations, its range and significance are also revealed as never before. It is against this background of personal and theoretical development that we can best understand and evaluate Mill's brilliant essay *Utilitarianism* (1861), one of the shortest and the most significant treatises in the whole history of ethical thought. Loyalty to his chosen doctrine and confidence in the soundness of its basic principles combine or contend in Mill's mind with the keenness to perceive defects in analysis or plain error of statement and the candor to recognize the better truth irrespective of doctrine. So he is firm in defending the utilitarian position, while remapping and rebuilding it fundamentally. The fairminded reader does not know whether to admire the sanity and penetration of Mill's account of human character and conduct and worth, or to wonder at Mill's failure to realize fully his own transcendence of the doctrine which he in good faith continued to avow.

Human conduct, as Mill examines it, is a constant striving after pleasure or happiness. Appeal to happiness is indispensable even to those

who dismiss it as a sovereign principle. Even Kant, in the demonstration of his maxim, finds it necessary to invoke consequences. The utilitarian openly acknowledges as his standard the Greatest Happiness Principle and measures the moral worth of acts in terms of their contribution to this goal of human conduct. This utilitarian principle has been variously misjudged: men have confused it with the ideal of the libertine and with the ideal of cold practicality or calculating efficiency, or else the pursuit of the Greatest Happiness has been called too high and exacting, or again it has been regarded as unavailable for the purposes of specific deliberation and decision. Mill undertakes to dispose of these objections. He refuses to assume the general difficulties with which the practical use of any ethical principle is confronted as vitiating the utilitarian principle in particular. Especially does he resist the imputation that hedonism entertains a degrading view and goal of human conduct, that it is a 'pig-morality.' Not the utilitarian but his opponent is here slandering human character. A beast's pleasures are degrading to man, but this does not mean that men are limited to a beast's pleasures, and that the pursuit of satisfaction is itself unworthy. The recognition of the range or scale of pleasures and man's moral ascent in happiness is precisely the great merit of utilitarian ethics.

So we see at the outset the emergence of Mill's qualitative criterion: his ethics, in espousing happiness, undertakes to grade pleasures. But the reader has already perceived two sorts of statement here, which raise two problems. They are familiar hedonistic doctrines. Professing to base his ethics on the actual facts of human conduct, the utilitarian describes pleasure as the actual goal of desire: men do strive after pleasure. This doctrine of Psychological Hedonism has been criticized by British moralists, most thoroughly by Bishop Butler and, after Mill, by T. H. Green. Pleasure is felt in the experienced or remembered or anticipated satisfaction of desire, but it is the emotional accompaniment or tone of satisfied desire, not its goal. The goal itself is always some objective state: bread for the hungry and drink for the thirsty, and a boat for the shipwrecked mariner. The sort of objects which stimulate a man's desire and in the attaining of which he experiences pleasure, indicate the sort of man he is. Mill utilizes the logic of this criticism by urging men to fix their minds on some objective other than their own happiness.

The utilitarian interposes here to advance a doctrine of evaluation, Ethical Hedonism: a man not only strives after pleasure, but in his promotion of happiness finds the moral value of his existence. This is Mill's definition of Utilitarianism: "The creed which accepts as the founda-

tion of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness." [2] On the one hand the utilitarian reports man's general pursuit of pleasures; on the other hand, he undertakes a moral evaluation of pleasure-attainment and would measure the worth of men's lives in terms of the promotion of the general happiness.

Moving in the same general territory with Bentham, we may find Mill in his more specific explorations reaching towards new ground. In his utilitarian judgment of an act according to its consequences, Bentham had distinguished between the intention of the act, what I desire or will to do, and its motive, why I desire or will it. According to Bentham, intention alone determines moral worth; only confusion results when we try to evaluate acts according to their motives. No motives are either constantly good or constantly bad. The same motive may lead to acts good, bad, or indifferent. The intention, the willed act, its consequence is alone morally decisive. Mill qualifies this Benthamite doctrine by saying that the motive makes a difference in the morality where it makes a difference in the act. But this qualification reaches all the way through: the motive always makes a difference, unless we consider the motive, we do not recognize the act adequately, say St. Crispin's act of stealing leather to make shoes for the poor. Mill's revision of Bentham here, going beyond abstract distinctions, recognizes the wholeness and integrity of subjective and objective factors in the concrete act. What we will to do is always bound up with why we will to do it. In place of the routine calculation of consequences, Mill acknowledges the moral importance of character and state of mind; conversely, we shall find him, in his utilitarian evaluation of consequences, recognizing as a sovereign consequence the attainment of a certain nobility of character, itself the surest guarantee of promoting the general happiness.

Hedonism has been charged with its incapacity to recognize the moral worth of self-sacrifice. We may note in Mill a twofold demand for this recognition. In an ethics traditionally emphasizing pursuit and attainment of satisfaction, how are we to justify the sacrifice of certain pleasures to others ('higher') that may in fact be unattained or even unattainable? And second, How is the initial self-indulgence to be shown as naturally developing, or as rightly directed into a promotion of the common weal involving subordination or even sacrifice of self? These two requirements of utilitarian ethics Mill undertakes to realize: the explicit testing and grading of pleasures as higher and lower, and

the espousal of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, not as an article in the diplomacy of interest, but in a spirit of genuine altruism. In both of these respects he goes against Bentham.

In advocating respect for the kind of pleasure, Mill not only supplements but quite upsets the hedonistic calculus. Bentham had been content to calculate amounts; Mill would assay quality. According to Bentham, "quantity of pleasure being equal, pushpin is as good as poetry." [3] But Mill declares confidently that in its whole tradition hedonism has ranked "the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments" above those of mere sensation. The usual reasons given for this preference have been circumstantial, that mental pleasures are more permanent, safer, less costly than the bodily. Mill, reaffirming these quantitative claims, seeks "higher ground." It would be absurd in estimating pleasures to neglect the normal regard for quality and depend on quantity alone. In this claim for qualitative distinctions, Mill feels sustained by the general judgment of intelligent men. It is only a narrow range of experience that leads so many men to be content with mere sensual pleasures. Those who have tasted the satisfactions of the mind invariably prefer them as the more desirable. "No intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. . . . It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides." [4]

This last passage, the most familiar in Mill's essay, expresses the ambiguity and indeed the confusion in which Mill's argument is involved. Grant the nobility of the rhetoric and the truth that it expresses: what exactly is Mill's position here, and does it sustain his utilitarian doctrine? We have first of all an explanation of what Mill means by 'higher' pleasures: of two pleasures, the more desirable is the one which men who have had experience of both decidedly prefer. Thus intelligent men universally set mental above bodily pleasures. So far we have only hedonistic comparisons: one pleasure rather than another pleasure. One might perhaps question Mill's analysis: are those who prefer the joys of the mind any better versed in sensual pleasures than the sensualists are competent in mental satisfactions? Without ignoring eloquent examples to the contrary, is not the very choice of one type

of satisfaction over another usually due to a livelier intimacy with whatever is chosen?

But aside from its adequacy as an empirical report, Mill's statement is meant to be more than a statement of what men do or do not prefer. He declares certain pleasures as preferable whether actually preferred or not: that is his judgment of the sensualist and the fool. But in thus grading satisfactions, are we any longer on hedonistic ground? How can we on the basis of pleasure pronounce some pleasures higher and others lower? Do we not have, in this emphasis of mental over bodily pleasures, really the exaltation of higher over lower principles in our nature, and so the appeal to a non-hedonistic criterion of evaluation? Moreover, still pursuing the utilitarian lead, even if we insisted on the intelligent man's wisdom in choosing his higher pleasures, what hedonistic warrant would we have for thinking the less of those who, knowing only their own sensual pleasures, choose them? In fact, is Mill's aristocratic note in harmony with the hedonistic democratic insistence on the universality of men's demand for happiness, as distinguished from the exclusiveness of rational perfectionism and other similar ethics for the self-proclaimed *élite?* Mill's perplexity is not merely that of grading pleasures on a hedonistic basis. He is really questioning the final moral worth of satisfaction; and so the basic principle of Utilitarianism. He states not only that intelligent men prefer, or that it is better to prefer, certain 'higher' satisfactions to other 'lower' ones. Admitting that "it is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied";[5] he yet applauds the intelligent man for preferring his life of high endeavor even *without* satisfaction. Be it repeated, to the life of the fool, despite its satisfaction, Mill prefers the life of Socrates unsatisfied. This is not the only passage in which we find Mill expressing, and with emphasis, convictions which find an echo in the unpartisan moral judgment of men, but which scarcely fit the utilitarian frame of doctrine.

Turning now to the second of the questions stated above, we find that in the treatment of altruistic conduct Mill's theory is as radical a departure from Bentham's as in the insistence on qualitative distinctions in pleasures. For Bentham, sympathy, amity, and reputation are sources of individual satisfaction; as has been noted, Bentham was convinced that in promoting the happiness of others we are most prudently assuring our own. The basic motive for him, as for Helvétius, remained egoistic. Mill undertakes a radical reinterpretation; it involves him in ambiguities and plain logical fallacies. The declared criterion of utilitarianism is the principle of the Greatest Happiness for the Greatest

Number. Mill has found "the complete spirit of the ethics of utility" in the Golden Rule: "To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality." [6] But why should the ethics of happiness be committed to altruism? Mill writes: "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness." [7] The logician Mill points out that we regard things as visible or audible because people see and hear them. The adequacy of this analogy calls for no comment. Aside from his confusion in identifying the desirable with the desired, a confusion the more embarrassing in view of all we had read about Socrates and the fool, is the problem of advancing from the psychological statement that all of us desire our own happiness to the ethical demand that each one of us should desire and promote the happiness of all: from the general desire for happiness to the desire for the general happiness!

In explaining sympathy, Mill points out that the whole course of social experience tends to develop it. In the excellent closing chapter of *Utilitarianism*, on Justice, he shows how an initially selfish desire for retributive punishment, reinforced and expanded by the sentiment for similar punishment of all offenders, becomes gradually a general resistance to all that jeopardizes the common weal and so a regulative factor in man's espousal of the principle of the general happiness. Mill finds that our developed social nature becomes in itself a moral asset: we cherish our solidarity with our fellows, not as a means to our own happiness but as an essential element of it. Bentham had seen in legislation only the organized social discipline enforcing our prudent regard for the happiness of others. But Mill regards the social order as character-building; it develops in us social capacity and tendency which become integral in our own constitution. Society itself is based on man's moral needs which it also realizes. The supreme work of man, individual and social, is man himself. Utilitarianism here reaches towards the ethics of self-realization.

There is a spirit of optimism in this social philosophy, characteristic of the utilitarians. In Mill, this confidence in the progressive socializing of the individual, the removal of suffering, the tempering of conflict, and the humanizing of man is a confidence contending with the grim sense of a basically callous and evil nature. Mill, like his father, finds theodicy baffling. In all his humanitarian zeal and struggle for progress there is no suggestion of complacent assurance. Like Comte, he demands a positivistic, purely human achievement of the blessed life. He remains unconvinced by theism, uncertain about God and immortality, but their dynamic value in the spiritual lives of men impresses him

more deeply in his later years. He contemplates the idea of a finite God, of an arduous struggle for prevailing good in the world, which requires man's heroic co-warriorship with the Divine; but the Grand Perhaps never becomes for him more than a bold conjecture. Of this agnosticism, unyielding, but also less aggressive and perhaps more sympathetic to religious values in their moral bearing, Mill's essays on religion are a revealing, if also a perplexing record.

3. Later Criticism: Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics

Mill's emphasis on qualitative grading of pleasures and his conception of happiness as requiring development of character rather than a mere accumulation of pleasures were endeavors to incorporate in utilitarian theory essential aspects of the morally esteemed life which had been traditionally upheld by perfectionist ethics. His candid recognition of the claims of conscience and moral obligation, for all their derivation from an initial sense of advantage or compulsion, marked a receptiveness to intuitional principles, which was to become more generally characteristic of utilitarian writers. Bentham's impatient dismissal of non-hedonistic ethics was being replaced by a more competent and constructive analysis, while the earlier random empiricism in reporting the course of experience was disciplined by broader and more reliable historical and sociological outlook, and more especially by a systematic use of genetic methods, following the establishment of the principle of evolution by Darwin and his successors.

This latter evolutionistic stream of thought diverted a number of currents from their traditional direction towards new goals with more scientific prospects. The survey of this development in its ethical bearing will be the topic of our next chapter. The outstanding popular exponent of hedonism, reinterpreted in evolutionistic terms, was Herbert Spencer, the development of whose ethics traverses, with some straggling as we shall see, utilitarianism and a sort of biological perfectionism. But the influence of genetic ideas may be noted in other writers whom we should scarcely characterize as evolutionists. So Alexander Bain (1818-1903), who wrote a biography of James Mill, coöperated with John Stuart Mill in publishing an annotated edition of the *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, and continued in somewhat critical terms the tradition of Bentham and the Mills, points out the genesis of moral obligation and 'conscience.' Not only fear of external compulsion and passive submission to authority, but also imitative and active partisanship on our part tends to identify us with the prevailing demand, ourselves protagonists of the tradition or principle with which we comply.

The positive treatment of non-hedonistic ethics by the later utili-

tarians, itself a mark of more competent grasp of the problems treated, finds its adequate version in the work of Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900), *The Methods of Ethics*. Sidgwick himself has given us the best account of the development of his ethical ideas. He had begun as a follower of Mill, and had been confirmed in his Utilitarianism by the confused dogmatism of some of its critics, such as Whewell. But his mind was impressed by the hard problem which the relation of interest and duty present to utilitarianism and by the place of self-criticism and self-sacrifice in morality. So considering imperative principles, he turned to intuitionism. He read Kant; Kant's maxim, he concluded, threw the 'golden rule' of the Gospel into a form that commended itself to his reason. He sought as it were a reconciliation of Kant and Mill, and found a guide in Butler, and later inspiration in Aristotle. Aristotle had given consistent systematic expression to the common sense morality of Greece. Sidgwick resolved to do the same for the morality of his day. So the first part of his book that was written included the first thirteen chapters of Part III, on Intuitionism: a topical and detailed review of the settled principles of common sense morality. In his reflection on the moral convictions which he in his less critical thinking shared with others, he observed that even while respecting them, he could test and also outline their validity in terms of the fundamental principle of Utilitarianism and the formal Kantian principle of essential Justice, "treat similar cases similarly." So Sidgwick was then a Utilitarian again, but on an Intuitionist basis.

Men's judgment of what ought to be done has depended on what they have considered as rational ultimate ends. Sidgwick recognized three such objectives of action: one's own pleasure and interest, inherent excellence or perfection, and the general happiness and well-being of society. So he distinguishes three basic methods of ethics—Egoism, Intuitionism, and Utilitarianism. Intuitionism is deliberately interpolated between the two varieties of hedonism; it is Sidgwick's purpose to show that the Greatest Happiness principle is more fundamentally opposed to the ethics of self-gratification than to the intuitional morality of unconditional conformity to 'right' principles.

By Egoism Sidgwick meant the ethics that adopts as the ultimate end of each man's actions his own greatest amount of happiness. Mill's proposal to judge pleasures according to quality transgresses the basic hedonistic formula; for if we define the 'pleasant' as the desirable, then how can the 'less pleasant' be ever preferable to the 'more pleasant'? In the choice of the 'higher' pleasure, not pleasantness but 'refinement' or 'elevation' is adopted as the truly desirable end. So Egoistic Hedonism if consistent is bound to measure pleasures quantitatively. Bentham is

logical in what he undertakes to do. But he cannot achieve his calculus in egoistic terms despite his consideration of "extent." Even actually experienced sensual gratifications do not admit of precise measure and comparison. Our estimate of past pleasures and pains is subject to a fluctuating error; with every added complexity or variety of experience, the calculation becomes more confused. Egoistic hedonism is an inadequate ethical theory; it takes a view of human conduct which precludes qualitative or other critical evaluation in its emphasis on the greatest amount of one's own pleasure, and which is incapable of reaching the precise comparisons and measurements required for its chosen test and standard.

The basic defect of egoistic hedonism is not that it affords no satisfactory test, but that it provides no moral standard. Beyond the observable accumulation of this or that man's pleasures, the moral life somehow includes principles of general worth, sanctions evoking acknowledgment and not merely exacting submission. Without this appeal to universality, the moral judgment lacks its essential meaning, for it is not descriptive or explanatory judgment but evaluative, a verdict. Where one is engaged in promoting one's own interests or reckoning one's pleasures, what room could there be for the call of duty or virtue, for approval or admonition? Was it not the recognition of this basic defectiveness that led Sidgwick, while examining the perplexities of the traditional hedonism and its incapacity to yield an over-individual standard, to designate the method he criticizes as 'Egoism'?

In quest of this note of universal validity and 'rightness' in the moral judgment, Sidgwick turned to Intuitionism, the doctrine that "we have the power of seeing clearly that certain kinds of actions are right and reasonable in themselves, apart from their consequences." [8] The judgment of acts in terms of inherent merit or perfection has expressed from antiquity the intended meaning of 'Virtue' or 'Excellence.' Can this judgment sustain itself in precise and explicit terms, and to what resource must it appeal if challenged? Sidgwick proceeded, in the longest part of his book, to examine in great detail men's traditional convictions on the subject of right and virtuous conduct. So this proposed study of Intuitionism became in fact an elaborate and very searching investigation of Common Sense Morality. Considering initially the tone or spirit of moral action, Sidgwick refused to yield, in a sharp issue between motive and intention, to the advocates of right motive as the essential of moral goodness. Certainly no act is 'right' if believed by the agent to be wrong, but aside from the formal quality of the will, the more adequate moral evaluation of any action is also concerned with what the agent intended and meant to accomplish.

Sidgwick's treatment of Common Sense Morality aimed at overcoming the vagueness and error in our moral intuitions. When we try to apply the currently accepted moral axioms, we find them to be plausible but inexact and fluctuating principles. Can we find an objective principle in terms of which these intuitions may gain precision and substance in practice, while recognizing all along their vague validity which has secured them the general respect of mankind? It is scarcely necessary to indicate at this point the broad strategy of Sidgwick's argument. The normal contribution of 'right conduct' to General Happiness is to supply this sustaining basis, and so Intuitionism is to find its objective support in Utilitarianism, to which it is to supply the note of authority.

It would be out of the question here to rehearse in however broad summary Sidgwick's analysis of the various virtues and duties in Common Sense Morality. The characteristic merit of this analysis is its careful and detailed probing; especially patient is the examination of Benevolence and Justice, in this order; but the intellectual virtues, Wisdom and Self-Control, receive careful study, and likewise Veracity, Courage, and Humility, the commonly recognized social duties and virtues, as well as Prudence and the self-regarding virtues. Again and again Sidgwick reached the same general conclusion regarding the moral maxims of common sense. We assent to them unquestioningly as vague statements of general wisdom, but they cannot sustain critical analysis or adequate definition. Benevolence, in all the various relations of life, involves an obligation fluctuating and indefinite, and even conflict of duties. We resent for instance a merely dutiful performance of kind services to which we may yet claim to be entitled. Justice, again, is a conformity to Law, but also a criticism and a refinement of it. Conscience exalts the maxims of Veracity, but in special circumstances absolute and unqualified truthfulness seems to conflict with the very aims, respect for which is essential to the validity of the maxim.

But Sidgwick would not take his criticism in too sweeping a sense. For common people in common circumstances, Common Sense offers good practical guidance. The more critical probing of its maxims, however, serves to point out the need of a more objective test; but, as Sidgwick proceeds to show, it also indicates this test and sustaining basis. So intuitionism, self-criticized, is to lead us to a critically revised and a more authoritative utilitarianism. The fundamental first principle which Sidgwick recognized may be stated as follows: Whatever I rightly judge to be universally desirable, I judge in the same circumstances, to be desirable for you as well as for me. My good, merely as mine, is not to be preferred to yours. This principle of basic fairness, or

shall we call it moral democracy, does not ignore individual differences, but it resists and rejects the special privilege of egoism. However true specific maxims may be, such as 'I ought to speak the truth' or 'I ought to keep my promises,' they are not self-evident. But Sidgwick maintained that there are such basic principles of Justice and Benevolence and likewise of rational Prudence. The propositions, "I ought not to prefer a present lesser good to a future greater good," and "I ought not to prefer my own lesser good to the greater good of another," are to him as self-evident as the axioms of mathematics.[9]

Just and generous impartiality in the concern for the common good characterized universal hedonism, but the universal and fairly desirable good was described by it as happiness. Sidgwick made the transition from Intuitionism to Utilitarianism by identifying ultimate or universal good with universal happiness. The last part of *The Methods of Ethics* is an exposition of Utilitarianism treated explicitly as Universalistic Hedonism, "the ethical theory, that the conduct which, under any given circumstances, is objectively right, is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness on the whole; that is, taking into account all whose happiness is affected by the conduct." [10] To avoid repetition of ideas already discussed in this chapter, we shall content ourselves with mentioning the more distinct aspects of the theory as revised by Sidgwick, especially as some of his criticisms of the traditional hedonism have already been pointed out. Sidgwick advocated universal happiness as the ultimate *standard* of conduct, but explicitly admitted that universal benevolence need not always be the best *motive* of action. Universal happiness, always the final test of conduct, may be more satisfactorily attained if men act from other motives, and then these motives would be preferable on utilitarian principles. In considering the conflict of egoism and universal hedonism, he counters the egoist's challenge, "Why should I sacrifice my own happiness for the greater happiness of another?" with the rejoinder, "Why should I sacrifice a present pleasure for a greater one in the future?" The fair examination of human experience should reveal the harmony between rational Prudence and Benevolence. But this rational Benevolence need not be an enjoyable indulgence of kind affections; it may involve relief of distress that is itself no relief but a distressing experience. It may express itself in lonely work for distant ends of social betterment, or in improving the lot of persons whose society one may find unpleasant, or in the numberless other ways of promoting the general happiness of the individual which may not in themselves be enjoyable. Thus "the inseparable connection between Utilitarian Duty and the greatest happiness of the individual who conforms to it cannot be satisfactorily

demonstrated on empirical grounds." [11] The theological appeal to Divine Providence and rewards and punishments in the hereafter was considered but not adopted by Sidgwick, and in his concluding paragraph, while resisting moral scepticism, he yet resigns and postpones the task of reconciling duty and self-interest.

This inconclusive note on which *The Methods of Ethics* ends is an expression of Sidgwick's candor in argument rather than of any wavering in his devotion to Universalistic Hedonism. A spirit of generous fairmindedness and social solidarity dominates his thought. John Stuart Mill had written: "The true virtue of human beings is fitness to live together as equals," [12] and the basic truth inspiring this noble utterance is a first principle in Sidgwick's ethics. Yet for all his criticism of hedonistic measuring of amounts of pleasure, Sidgwick still considered good, the moral value of life, quantitatively, as somehow goods, in greater or lesser amounts available for you and for me, calling for prudence, justice, and benevolence in distribution. Despite his critical advance in the formulation of utilitarian theory, which in some respects brings him beyond Mill, Sidgwick did not realize the full implications of Mill's insistence on the integrity of human nature as the central concern of ethics: man himself the first in importance.

It is remarkable that Sidgwick's high regard for Butler's ethics did not move him to consider the sovereignty of man's character and constitution as directive principles in conduct; the more remarkable, that his careful examination and use of Kant did not lead him to pursue the development of Kantian ethics in later idealism, especially in the thoroughly social-minded spirituality of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. In the successive editions of his book Sidgwick took pains to meet even minor comments and criticisms, yet he failed to do justice to the claims of the Doctrine of Self-Realization, although Green's championship of it made it a major alternative in British ethics precisely in the quarter-century during which Sidgwick was perfecting his work. To have given adequate recognition to Self-Realization in his treatise would have required a radical change in his entire procedure. Sidgwick's very classification of the fundamental Methods of Ethics indicates his unresponsiveness to Perfection as an ethical alternative. But in a separate essay he did proceed to examine Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics* with his characteristic thoroughness and candor.

In the development of Utilitarian thought, Sidgwick and John Stuart Mill represent a radical self-criticism of hedonistic ethics. This radical departure was not always recognized by them, but it remains an important basis for further advance.

CHAPTER XXXII

ETHICS AND THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION



1. Darwin and the Evolution of Morals

The work of Charles Darwin (1809-1882) signalized not only the definitely scientific promotion of evolution as a biological principle, but the emphasis on genetic methods of investigation in various fields. The staggering complexity of the living world could now be traced and explained causally, in the natural history of progressive adaptation of organisms to a variety of environmental conditions. As the vast range of diversity in anatomical structure and physiological process were thus yielding to causal-genetic description, the mind naturally sought a similar account of itself. This application of the method of evolution was furthered by Darwin's opponents, who on the one hand defied him to explain the evolutionary origin of intelligence, and on the other hand decried his account of man's genesis as violating the dignity of mind and morals. More fundamentally, the description of animal and human life as an unbroken chain of causally connected changes demanded as pendant and completion a natural history of mental and moral powers and activities.

Darwin himself, more intent on specific analysis and detailed causal tracing than on cosmic speculation, preferred to study the development of life and mind than to undertake an explanation of their primal origins. Some of his followers showed greater metaphysical boldness. But for them all the genetic study of consciousness and of conduct was a natural corollary of evolutionism. Darwin blazed the trail in this exploration by his famous chapters on the development of the Mental Powers and the Moral Sense, in *The Descent of Man* (1871).

He recognized that "of all differences between man and the lower animals, the moral sense or conscience is by far the most important." [1] He quoted Kant's apotheosis of Duty and the great question concerning its origin; this he would investigate "from the side of natural history." He maintained that, granted well-marked social instincts, including the parental and filial affections, the development of mental capacity would yield moral perception and conscience: namely, by the perfecting of sympathetic response, by the progressive review of the unhappy results

of unsocial-impulsive action, by the more articulate expression of the social will which a developed language makes possible, and by the strengthening of social instinct in the individual through more habitual social conduct.

As he had traced in the higher animals the dim beginnings of intelligence,—emotion, wonder, curiosity, imitation, attention, memory, imagination, reason,—so now he cited authenticated instances of rudimentary moral reaction in animal behavior, of sociability, of coöperation, involving bold self-sacrifice, gratitude, shame, active sympathy, courageous devotion. In man's social development, "as love, sympathy, and self-command become strengthened by habit, and as the power of reasoning becomes clearer, so that man can value justly the judgments of his fellows, he will feel himself impelled, apart from any transitory pleasure or pain, to certain lines of conduct." [2] So the sense of Duty gradually develops: conscience, retrospectively disturbing in remorse and shame, prospectively directing and obligatory.

Darwin's genesis of man's moral powers reveals the natural probation of them in terms of survival-value. Sociable conduct may not conduce to the individual's own advantage; self-sacrifice may even imperil the individual's life, but it conduces to the survival of the group and the common welfare. Darwin prefers to designate as moral objective the general good, "the rearing of the greatest number of individuals in full vigour and health, with all their faculties perfect, under the conditions to which they are subjected." [3] But whether moral value can be defined thus biologically as survival-value, and whether any expansion of meaning would then be expressed by calling survival 'good,' are problems which confront this biological ethics as they had confronted other varieties of naturalistic morals, Spinoza's or Epicurus'. We may be informed how in the course of human development social consideration comes to command the individual's obedience or even his more and more genuine regard; but are we enlightened how or why social motives are entitled to his loyal respect?

The natural history of morals which was thus inaugurated in evolutionary terms was a review of manifold evidence and also a systematic reformulation of principle. In both respects Darwin's successors pursued his line of inquiry. He had given a new lease to descriptive ethics and impetus to far more extended and thorough anthropological, psychological, and sociological surveys. Only three works of more specifically ethical bearing may be mentioned here by way of example: Alexander Sutherland's *Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct* (1898), Edward Westermarck's *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* (1906), and L. T. Hobhouse's *Morals in Evolution* (1906).

The systematic problems to which evolutionist descriptive ethics was bound to proceed, recognized by the above writers, especially by Hobhouse, had engaged the more explicit attention of some of Darwin's associates and followers. The new biological naturalism was turned effectively to account by the advocates of materialism. The doctrines of La Mettrie and Holbach were launched with renewed confidence, ballasted by the new stock of evidence. This bolder metaphysical exploitation of evolutionism may be noted especially in Germany. The course of positivistic and utilitarian thought was also influenced by evolutionistic trends. Concentration on humanity and on the promotion of civilization and the common weal, with survival in posterity as the individual's prospect, were advanced as the tenets of a positive-scientific ethics. Or else this mainly social-philanthropic program was given a more definitely utilitarian version. The surveys of the facts of evolution and particularly of human development were interpreted to show progressive adaptation in increasing social coöperation, yielding, with growing fullness of life, enhancement of satisfaction and happiness. This sunny evolutional vista might renew religious hopes and suggest pious prospects, especially after the initial theological polemic against Darwinism was followed by the endeavors to give the new scientific ideas a spiritual reinterpretation. Against this variety of speculative development of evolutionary thought, a reluctance to go beyond the evidence and a finally agnostic attitude were advocated as alone truly scientific, notably by Darwin's ally Thomas Huxley. We shall consider some of these versions of evolutionist ethics, but turn our attention first to the most influential as well as the most elaborate ethical contribution of the biological school, Spencer's evolutionistic utilitarianism, in his work, *The Principles of Ethics.*

2. *Evolutionistic Utilitarianism*

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), the most widely popular of all English philosophical writers of his time, was a mind in direct contact with his mental environment, actively responsive to the latest scientific trends and confident of marshalling them in support of the method and principles which he had mastered in his own way, a free lance in philosophical speculation. But his neglect of the history of ideas, especially in his treatment of ethics, affected his competence alike in criticism and in systematic construction. This neglect is the more remarkable in a philosophy centering on the idea of evolution. The development of morality was his constant theme, but he seems to have ignored the development of ethics; ready to learn from worm or fish, but not from his predecessors in ethical theory.

As we have noted already, the utilitarianism of Bentham and his successors was designedly scientific, in opposition to the dogmatic or abstract methods of the ethical theories which it combatted. That utilitarianism entered the fresh scientific current of evolutionary biology, was therefore not at all surprising. In this new utilitarian strategy Spencer was the leader in English thought. We can study to better advantage the evolutionistic strain in his *Principles of Ethics*, written in installments from 1879 to 1893, by taking note also of the earlier version of Spencer's ethical theory, the *Social Statics*, published in 1851, eight years before Darwin's *Origin of Species*.

In the *Social Statics* Spencer assumed a basically hedonistic view of conduct but opposes the expediency philosophy of Bentham. The Greatest Happiness is the creative purpose of human conduct, but not its true rule or standard, nor its immediate motive. Moral rules, like other laws of society, must find their source in some aspect of human character. Spencer's early thought was inclined to recognize some sort of moral intuition, but in his later ethics, relying on evolution of conduct to yield its norms, he set aside the moral sense doctrine. Aside from this perplexing problem of the origin and nature of moral judgment, the very idea of a valid moral judgment requires us to transcend variable empirical conditions and preferences. A science of ethics, like the science of geometry, cannot deal with manifold indefinite crookedness. We require the ideal view of a perfect man in a perfect society, as we require ideal straight lines and triangles and circles of which alone geometric statements are valid. So ethics is the science of the 'straight' man; it deals with "the principles of action in a normal society." [4]

However geometry might dispose of various crookedness, no serious ethics could ignore evil. Spencer regarded it as due to conduct ill-adapted to natural conditions. Developing life manifests progressive adaptation both bodily and mental and so the gradual extinction of evil. From the earlier life of greed and ravenous conflict, social evolution points to a life of increasing concord and coöperation. This we may call the optimism of social progress; it commands Spencer's abiding loyalty, but in his later thought this confident prospect of ultimate perfection is combined with constant upbraiding of existent conditions: a note of contrast on which many chapters in the *Principles of Ethics* conclude.

So we note Spencer's revision of the Benthamite hedonism. It is not by reliable reckoning of forthcoming happiness that our acts are to be judged, but happiness itself is assured by our better understanding of the natural and social conditions of life which yield it. A social state is required in which an individual may engage freely in his pleasurable

activities without colliding with the happiness of others. Beyond this negative beneficence or justice, we need cultivation of the ability to share actively in the enjoyments of others, or positive beneficence. But this trend towards justice and coöperation is only one aspect of social development. Spencer does not lose sight of the other, "nature red in tooth and claw," men grappling with brutes and warring with their fellows. So not one but two sets of factors and conditions are involved in man's social existence. We have two ways of living and two contending ethics. Only as more settled industrial conditions of civilization suppress the brute in nature and the brute in man, will self-defense and the ravenous spirit cease to be dominant forces in man's life, and the perfect man in the perfect society emerge.

As we now turn to consider the later version of Spencer's ethics, a warning is needed in the interest of fair judgment and criticism. If we find that the theory of the *Principles of Ethics* does not differ in essentials from that of the *Social Statics*, are we to follow some critics and historians in saying that Spencer merely dressed up in evolutionary phraseology his old doctrine which he did not alter radically? We should rather remember that the idea of evolution did not first burst upon an unsuspecting world in 1859, that it was a principal strain in nineteenth century thought and was familiar to a man of such varied scientific reading as Spencer. He acknowledged his general debt to Darwin, but in evolutionistic ethics declared himself Darwin's predecessor. He, Spencer, first used the evolutional method in the science of morals, in the *Social Statics*. Darwin's great work, and the quickening of thought and spread of investigation in various fields made possible the more thorough substantiation of the basic thesis; but while engaged along with others in this undertaking, Spencer was convinced that he was only perfecting the statement of a doctrine which was, in ethics, initially his own. If he withdrew the unabridged edition of his *Social Statics*, allowing the circulation only of a brief revision of it, it is not because he regarded his earlier work as rejected but as completed by the fuller statement, *The Principles of Ethics*. Spencer was conscious of a progressive maturing, but not of a basic change of doctrine in his twoscore years of ethical reflection.

The first and the best known part of *The Principles of Ethics*, entitled *The Data of Ethics*, appeared in 1879. In it Spencer considers the science of morals explicitly as the study of the progressive stages of man's adaptation to natural and social conditions of living. He would approach his specific ethical problem by a preliminary survey of the whole field of conduct. In animal life and in the lives of men conduct is always the adjustment of acts to ends. The increasing

complexity of structural equipment and correspondingly varied and versatile functioning makes possible an ever more specific and also more adequate adjustment of acts to ends and so ever more perfectly evolved conduct. At the lower levels the problem of survival and bringing up of offspring predominates; at the highest, human-social level, there is still a struggle for existence, but also a growing community of lives. "Conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as the activities, becoming less and less militant and more and more industrial, are such as do not necessitate mutual injury or hindrance, but consist with, and are furthered by, coöperation and mutual aid. . . . Ethics has for its subject-matter, that form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution." [5] Spencer's optimistic version of the evolution of conduct, as may be seen, still persists; moral progress is described in terms of better adjustment of acts to ends. The perfection of this adjustment in social coöperation enhances the general happiness.

Spencer explicitly uses the hedonistic valuation of conduct. Optimist and pessimist may differ regarding the value of living, but they agree in their appeal to available happiness. Consider any alleged virtuous act: would you call it good if you were assured that it generally and permanently yielded misery? If not, you are bound to recognize that the act is called virtuous because of its conduciveness to happiness. So the hedonist is sustained in his fundamental valuation of acts. But he is urged to study evolution, to see the natural conditions of increased happiness in human life. Ethics, concerned with conduct, must examine it causally in all its aspects: physical, biological, psychological, sociological. To the detailed exposition of these four views of conduct Spencer proceeds. His plan is to reveal human-social conduct as gradually attained in the course of evolution and to show the assured attainment of individual and general happiness as the result of the progressively more complex and more perfect adjustment of acts to ends in the economy of living.

According to the 'physical view,' evolution proceeds from indefinite incoherent homogeneity to definite coherent heterogeneity of motions. Advance in adjustment, with increasingly varied situations, must be through increasing versatility and coherence. From this point of view good conduct is physically efficient conduct, adequate to every contingency, through an immense variety of adjustments maintaining coherently an active equilibrium. But surely the conduct of the expert criminal manifests greater coherence and versatility of 'adjustments' than the life of the ordinary honest citizen, who does not watch and anticipate his every step and all his likely or unlikely alternatives.

Spencer's 'physical view' ignores the directing ideal of a man's life by which the coherence and physical efficiency of his conduct are to be judged as blessing or damning morally.

Biologically speaking, good conduct is conduct that tends to prolong life to its full extent, a condition of adequate physiological functioning. Morality is complete vigorous health. And because sentient existence could evolve only if pleasure-giving acts are life-sustaining acts, we have a basic reason for anticipating along with more perfect general physiological efficiency in human lives, enhancement of general happiness. Spencer does not duly consider the abundant evidence in civilized life that men's highest moral purposes often involve hazards or inevitable sacrifice of physiological well-being, and that in such cases "whosoever will save his life shall lose it." But even in merely biological terms, Spencer is scarcely justified in his expectation that the exceptional conflicts between the claims of health and virtue will be transcended as men transmit to their descendants the art of more normal and perfect adjustment. It is needless to point out that biological science today warrants even less than it did in Spencer's day this view of evolution and of heredity. Expert saints might conceivably teach their disciples how to save both their souls and their skins; but that would scarcely be a paragraph in 'biological' ethics.

In the 'psychological view' of conduct, Spencer sketches the advance from actions in response to immediate impulses to actions motivated by more remote future ends. In their rise from proximate to remote goods the force of the incentive is restrained or strengthened by 'controls'; these are the already familiar utilitarian sanctions: political, religious, and social. In the course of human development these controls serve to cultivate the more distinctively moral sanction: not a consideration of rewards and punishments, but of the distressing consequences of the act itself. The lower feelings and deterrents of a coerced will are gradually evolved into higher feelings or self-restraint of a will in which the sense of duty does not involve compulsion. In the highest state of evolved conduct conscientiousness will mature into spontaneous rectitude, and duty will be invoked only on extraordinary occasions calling for radically new adaptations. This ideal of a perfectly attained morality in which the paragons of virtue would have transcended the sense of duty discloses a deficiency of moral insight in Spencer. We should remember that even Kant was not altogether free from this confusion of the state of holiness and moral perfection with the state of perfect complacency.

Spencer's 'sociological view' of morals presents his already familiar survey of conduct progressing from self-preservation and precarious

survival to increasing social cohesion, and from conflict to concord: the advance to justice and to positive beneficence.

In his proposed establishment of ethics on this quadruple scientific foundation, Spencer has used the principle of evolution in too vague a sense to achieve a really evolutionistic ethics, and has besides relied for some of his conclusions on the biologically questionable inheritance of acquired characters. He points out the conflict between immediate impulses to action and more distant motives, the ascendency of the latter through social controls, the sense of obligation and the consciousness of duty in maturing social experience. Throughout his treatment of the socializing of conduct he undertakes to give an evolutionistic statement of the traditional hedonistic issue between the indulgence of private desires and the promotion of the general happiness. Does his chosen method really lead him beyond merely empirical to rational utilitarianism? Grant Spencer's citation of progressively socialized conduct as good empirical evidence; concede his claims that such socialized conduct is not only cultivated in the interest of the common weal, but itself contributes to enhance the individual happiness in normal cases. May not a person still ask the old hedonistic question, and more pointedly now in evolutional terms: Why should I refrain from interfering with another's welfare or the general happiness in this exceptional case when the environment happens to afford me uncommon opportunities for effective selfish adaptation? If a recalcitrant will stands its ground on the grim Darwinian evidence, how is it to be admonished and confuted by a strictly evolutional ethics? The problem of imperative moral valuation is squarely before us.

Dealing with the issue between egoism and altruism, Spencer seeks reasonable terms of conciliation. Either by itself only defeats its own ends. Against the exorbitant selfishness which arouses hostility, and also against the excessive altruism which, neglecting the needs of self, leads to diminished vigor and incapacity to help others, Spencer proposes the higher principle of equitable conduct. Each person considering his own needs and interests, is to respect and promote the welfare of others but so as not to deprive *them* of altruistic pleasures.

The fuller working out of Spencer's plan of mutual regard for and promotion of mutual happiness in a moral society, the advance from the ethics of enmity to the ethics of amity is affected in the later second volume of his ethics dealing with Justice and Negative and Positive Beneficence. In this part of his ethics the utilitarian motive prevails over the evolutionistic, but Spencer relies on evolution to help verify empirical conclusions and suggest the more distant vistas of development. In the extended third part of his work, published in

1892, he undertakes a more systematic treatment not only of the sentiment but of the idea and principle of Justice and of its authority and scope of operation. The sentiment of justice is partly egoistic, which is readily seen as an expression of the desire for self-preservation, but it is also partly altruistic, respect for another's claims and rights. In the increasingly complex social life men find that, within certain limits, they may pursue each his own individual course of action, but that outside these limits the activity of each is equally conditioned by the activity of others. Inequality within the limits of the individual initiative and equality in mutually-limited spheres of action coöperate in yielding the idea of justice. In his elaborate account of the modes of operation of justice, Spencer does not derive his conclusions from the principle or the data of evolution. It is Spencer's utilitarianism that prevails here and also his characteristic liberalism, in which generous regard for the common weal and for social order is tempered and often controlled by vigorous unyielding individualism. These combined motives dictate his treatment of Negative and Positive Beneficence, in which his reliance is admittedly less on the doctrine of evolution than on what he calls right feelings, enlightened by cultivated intelligence.

The optimistic, or may one call it the utopian note in Spencer's earlier ethics finds expression also in the later version. The more confident Spencer is of the ultimate perfection which social evolution is destined to reach, the less patient he is in his criticism of existing social conditions, political, economic, cultural. His chapters repeatedly end with a rhetorical flourish: his evolutionistic ideal could scarcely be appreciated by a society which professes Christian humane principles and actually follows pagan predatory practices! In the closing paragraphs of his work he casts a serene glance ahead and sees evolution perfecting another and a higher form of life than our present humanity. The highest ambition of the beneficent person is to have a share in "the making of man." He has visions of increasing numbers of men devoting themselves unselfishly to the further evolution of Humanity, and his ethics concludes on a positivistic note. It is the ideal of the perfectly-evolved civilization which Spencer had in mind all along as the sphere of truly moral activity. Right conduct, in the strict sense of the term, characterizes only perfect men in a perfect society. Under existing conditions we can only approximate virtue. Our 'right' is at best only a 'least wrong,' for the course of action which leads us towards the ideal meets with obstacles, restrains still persisting desires, or inflicts pain and distress, and is to that extent not completely good. So we are compelled to distinguish between 'relative ethics' and the 'absolute ethics' in our moral endeavor and aspiration. But while we may seek

to attain the utmost of our moral possibilities, we are bound to recognize that the society in which we are realizing our high destiny is also a barrier to our full achievement. "The co-existence of a perfect man and an imperfect society is impossible," [6] and so the individual may perceive that his perfection as well as his happiness is conditioned by the more complete social evolution of mankind.

3. Speculative Ventures and Agnostic Reserve

Büchner's popular expositions of materialism and atheism had utilized the doctrine of evolution in support of his theses. Distinguished biologists were also proceeding from evolutionary premises to materialistic conclusions. Probably the most widely known of these was Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919). He undertook a physiological statement of psychology and a corresponding revision of human experience, character, and values. He was not unaware of the difficulties of a bluntly materialistic cosmology, and preferred to describe his view of the world-process as monistic. In his monistic vein he was inclined to recognize the psychical as a somehow essential aspect of reality, and occasionally expressed himself in almost animistic terms. But his more habitual exposition was materialistic in tone and purport.

In ethics Haeckel manifested a similar mixture of monistic profession and materialistic procedure. Against any appeal to universal principles of worth or duty, of God, freedom, and immortality, Haeckel would build a moral structure on the basis of Evolution and on a Spencerian pattern. Man, as a social vertebrate, has two sets of duties, to himself and to the society of which he is a member. Accordingly scientific ethics should aim at the reëstablishment of the natural equality of egoism and altruism: the first to secure the self-preservation of the individual; the latter, that of the species. So evolutionary survival-morality reveals the real meaning of the Golden Rule, universal moral precept of all religions. But the new Golden Rule does not unnaturally repress self-regard, nor depreciate life here and now in favor of some hereafter, nor separate man from the rest of nature, nor disdain the most natural of human relations on which the perpetuation of mankind depends. Haeckel gives expression to a keen sense of moral integrity, noble scorn of injustice, hypocrisy, and corruption, devotion to constructive and social ideals. How all these lofty judgments are to be squared with his materialistic account of the human-social vertebrate, is not made clear to his reader. If survival in nature necessitates the attainment of these high adaptations, a view of the cosmic process is implied which the Darwinian account can scarcely be said to have supplied.

The unfolding of vast human-philanthropic prospects on evolution-

ary horizons suggested to some devout minds a view of nature as cosmic benignity working at long range. Bold piety saw in a reinterpreted Darwinism a possible ally and the basis of a new theology. Evolution was God's strategy in nature, advancing from star-dust to civilization. So Henry Drummond's *Ascent of Man* would complete Darwin's work by portraying the struggle for life, natural selection, as matched by the struggle for the life of others, the divine plan leading from reproductive and domestic-social processes and institutions to the moral and spiritual treasures of human nature.

A more effective theistic version of evolution is found in the many popular works of John Fiske (1842-1901). Fiske censures Büchner for sharing the traditional theologian's conception of Divine activity as miraculous. Rejecting miracles, Büchner concludes he has banished God. Just the opposite does Darwinism teach Fiske: from low matter to man's body and man's mind, the course of evolution reveals God's spirit in nature. The most wonderful moment in cosmic history was when psychical changes began to be of more use than physical changes to man's brute ancestor. Right then and there the ascendency of mind was sealed, and with it the culmination of biological evolution in man. Beyond man material nature cannot go; henceforth the prospect and the problem are spiritual, of a more perfect human development.

Fiske finds the primordial origins of morality in the necessary lengthening of infancy connected with a more complex and delicate cerebro-neural structure. This has involved more permanent relations of parents and children, family solidarity and devotion, social cohesion, sympathy, a moral order. To Fiske this entire process reveals a divine tendency towards the higher life. Nature makes for the attainment and prevalence of spirit. Not individual survival but social welfare and perfection becomes the goal.

Thus prepared to deal with the detailed processes of nature in strictly scientific terms, Fiske interprets its basic unfolding character spiritually. Relying then on his theistic assurance, he confidently meets the disturbing evils of life: they are to him not evidences of a callous nature but the divine testing of heroic spirit in man. Even death may only be the supreme instance of mind's immortal ascendency over material forces. The higher principles arise out of the lower and then surmount the lower. So spiritual forces are natural in the world, natural and prevailing. "The moral law grew up in the world not because anybody asked for it, but because it was needed for the world's work." It is not a life of easy satisfaction that morality involves: as at the lower levels of life, so here it is a struggle and an overcoming, on higher and higher levels achieving a higher destiny. "The Earth spirit goes on, un-

hasting yet unresting, weaving in the loom of Time the visible garment of God." [7]

These evolutional glad tidings seemed to Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) to be unwarranted by the facts. Biological studies justified theism as little as atheism. Between a materialistic and a spiritualistic metaphysics, Huxley chose suspense of judgment regarding ultimates and concentrated on the specific evidence. He called himself an agnostic. Without the atheistic zealotry of a Büchner, Huxley was also free from the despairing tone of those who, like Clifford, had "seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven, to light up a soulless earth." [8] Neither docile nor fierce nor desolate, Huxley meant to stick to the facts: and valued honest respect for the facts above all other virtue or satisfaction.

Where scientific integrity has thus been assigned the highest place, what likely prospect, if not ultimate certainty, does the doctrine of evolution offer to the seeker of moral reassurance? This problem Huxley takes up in his Romanes Lecture on "Ethics and Evolution." His conclusions are different from Fiske's; in fact it was partly in answer to Huxley that Fiske wrote *Through Nature to God*. Without any metaphysical presumption and always speaking 'under advisement,' Huxley finds in the evolutionary evidence no ground for believing that nature tends to the ascendency of spirit and moral values. When we speak of the survival of the fittest, we should beware of loading the biological term with a moral connotation. The fittest is not necessarily the best in any moral sense. It is simply the best adapted to the conditions which at any period obtain: lichen and snow mosses in a glacial age, the reeking jungle under tropical conditions. Civilization is not the preëminently natural result of the struggle for existence, but a sort of garden plot which man has cleared out on the edge of the forest or plain or waste. The ethical process, the development of social feelings, sympathy, and conscience, is in resistance rather than in conformity to the cosmic process of ruthless struggle for existence. The Golden Rule is not the expression of nature but a demand made on it.

This view of the world and of human life warrants neither pessimism nor optimism. While we may not ignore the standing threat which so much in nature presents to our moral enterprise, we may also recognize that the higher powers which we have selected for human emphasis are themselves in and of nature, and direct our intelligence to make them prevail. Nature is nowise committed to morality, but morality is not supernatural; it is man's arduous trial in and against nature. With enough realism to dismiss a docile faith, and with enough courage sustained by knowledge of past achievement to surmount despair,

honest men may continue in their work of fashioning a moral order out of the jungle of nature that is in them and about them.

The emphasis on conflict in the evolutionary process is subjected to a radical criticism by Peter Kropotkin (1842-1920) in his *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution.* Prince Kropotkin does not, like Fiske or Drummond, rely on any final theistic assurance of Divine love at work in nature. He is as resolute as Huxley not to go beyond the available evidence. But that evidence does not, in his judgment, warrant a Hobbist interpretation of the evolutionary struggle as "a war of everyone against everyone else." Darwin had not neglected the importance of coöperation in the struggle with adverse natural conditions. This factor, not sufficiently recognized by Huxley and others, is investigated by Kropotkin. He is content to cite the evidence, from the life of burying beetles and land crabs, ants and bees of course, to the higher animals, to savage and barbarian life in all stages and up the ladder of civilization. Not by competition but by combination, not by individual but by mass effort do animal species survive and prevail against great odds in nature.

Kropotkin does not ignore the importance of parental care and prolonged infancy, which Fiske, Sutherland, and others have emphasized, but he regards the family as a late product, not the primitive form of human organization. The earlier grouping was in bands, tribes, clans; family solidarity is later, and it also proceeds from large matriarchal or patriarchal units to more particular families. Kropotkin traces the necessity of close-knit organization during the great migrations; the development of communal work and authority in village and town life, in agriculture, trade, and judicial procedure: Slavic *mirs* and *zadrugas,* medieval guilds, Hanseatic unions. The breakdown of this communal solidarity began with the extermination of mutual aid agencies by prince and town magnate, following the bloody suppression of the peasant wars in Central Europe during the sixteenth century. The structure of modern civilization is founded on individualism, on private enterprise, and so on competition. The evils of modern life, just as in past ages, have been due to individual rapacity and the conflicts and exploitation which it breeds. The economic and the moral well-being of mankind demands the strengthening of the weakened and partly crushed but not yet extinct mutual aid agencies, for in them is the source of our ethical ideas and the promise of moral progress.

On his return to Russia after the Revolution Kropotkin began the composition of an ethical treatise. The first part of it, *Ethics: Origin and Development,* was a historical survey of morals from his point of view already indicated. The results of this inquiry were to be organ-

ized systematically in the second part of the work, which he did not live to finish. The central idea of this 'realistic ethics' was to be that, without any theological or other presuppositions, by the direct study of animal evolution and human development, the life of Mutual Aid and Justice could be shown through organic necessity to be the good, self-justifying life.[9]

4. The Ethics of Social Solidarity

Leslie Stephen (1832-1904) published his *Science of Ethics* during the month which marked Darwin's death, April, 1882. His theory, like Spencer's, combines hedonism and altruism in an evolutionistic version. Happiness and satisfaction are indispensable aspects of the good life, but mere pleasantness cannot serve as a moral standard. Scientific ethics must examine man's conduct in the social setting in which his character is organized and matured and his normal satisfactions experienced. So the basic standard is social: "Morality is a statement of the conditions of social welfare, . . . the sum of the preservative instincts of a society, and presumably of those which imply a desire for the good of the society itself." [10] As bodily tissue is built up of cells, so human society is a tissue of individuals that live their lives to the full only in this corporate union; their heritage, their own career, their prospect and destiny are social. In the course of human evolution, enhancement of individual character is in response to the demands of an ever more complex social structure. This is the moral record of civilization.

The social order in which the individual is thus rooted has the stability and the growth of a living objective system. Moral laws, as expressions of the conditions of social vitality, have universality and permanence, but it is a constancy of growing complexity. The conformity to moral laws which the social order exacts or values is internal: not merely or mainly conforming action but a loyal spirit. Morality includes conduct that realizes a certain kind of individual character, and conduct that safeguards and emphasizes a certain kind of social order. So we may distinguish and relate the virtues of courage or temperance, and the virtues of veracity, justice, benevolence.

Notwithstanding the general and normal harmony of individual well-being and social vitality, conflicts between the private and public will cannot be ignored. How are they to be met? Stephen faces candidly the moral issue of self-sacrifice. Some self-sacrifice is involved on any theory of objective judgment of conduct. For objectivity goes beyond any private exclusiveness of mine. In the growth of the moral feelings, the social factor is manifested in my growing readiness to judge myself as I judge others. This is the obverse of sympathy or

rather one aspect of it. We value in others and so respect in ourselves the sentiments which make for social coöperation. So develops the sense and the sanction of conscience. But in fact the path of duty and virtue does not always coincide with the path of happiness. In that case individual self-sacrifice is morally sanctioned. It might be pointed out that individual happiness is normally conditioned by social well-being, and that by not undermining the social order to gratify some private desire the individual is really safeguarding his own abiding satisfaction. But considerations of this sort will elucidate one's plan of action only where social sentiments are already active and determining factors in one's conduct. Where these factors do not prevail, society may admonish or in flagrant cases may undertake to compel, by policing or penalizing the individual. Leslie Stephen expects no infallible moral guidance from his theory. It does serve to clarify scientifically the social genesis of normal moral conduct; it cannot assure practical conviction where social sentiments are not effective. But happily for the world "moral progress has not to wait till an unimpeachable system of ethics has been elaborated." [11]

5. *Nietzsche's Morals of the Will-to-Power*

British utilitarian-altruistic ethics found in the doctrine of evolution either new, scientific support of its principle of the General Happiness, or else disquieting evidence of the native strength of self-assertion and ruthless conflict in human life. The way was open for an ethics to which the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest would appear neither as disturbing nor as challenging evidence, but as natural sanction of a new and more robust morality. This radical turn of thought is manifested in the ethics of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) with its proclaimed transvaluation of all values.

Nietzsche did not begin with Darwin, nor did the explicit use of the evolutionary data play a major part in the exposition of his ideas. Darwinism served to justify the tactics in his campaign which he conducted on his own lines. Two basic directions marked Nietzsche's ethical thought: the first was his aristocratic cult of excellence as the noble achievement of the élite, roused and sustained in him by his brilliant classical studies. The other directive idea came to him from Schopenhauer, that the world was a process of boundless exertion, and human existence the insatiate striving of the Will-to-live. These two dominant ideas together affected Nietzsche's attitude towards Schopenhauer's pessimistic doctrine of the futility and wretchedness of the life of self-assertion and Schopenhauer's gospel of compassion and ascetic renunciation. All this ethics of negation Nietzsche rejected as an un-

worthy flight from the realities of life. Likewise in his relation to Richard Wagner: Nietzsche had championed Wagner's heroic music-dramas, but when Wagner turned to Schopenhauer's gospel of will-denial and glorified the Christian passion in *Parsifal,* Nietzsche spurned him as a decadent. The energetic and victorious self-affirmation of power and genius, which his Hellenism had led him to recognize in the history of civilization, was being revealed by the doctrine of evolution as the fundamental law of life. Schopenhauer's Will-to-live was disclosed to Nietzsche as a Will-to-power. He pursued the career of this Will-to-power through the whole sweep of life, recognized human perfection only in it and through it, demanded the correspondingly radical revision of traditional moral valuations, branded all counter-forces and motives as morally unsound, and read the evolutionary curve as pointing upward to the self-transcendence of man into a higher order of life. This is Nietzsche's bold gospel of Superman.

The above outline should not suggest a systematic development of ideas. Nietzsche's thought is marked by brilliant intensity and found appropriate expression in his rhapsodic diction or prose-poetry. His aphorisms, lightnings of genius, burn their way into the mind, but their blinding brilliance often punctuates intervals of obscurity and confusion. Nietzsche had a proud estimate of his oracular utterances. He demands of the readers of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* that they experience the transfiguring enchantment of his every word, for a whole treatise may be packed into a single aphorism of genius, as he illustrates in the third essay of *The Genealogy of Morals.* This work was the most nearly systematic statement, as *Zarathustra* was the most brilliant and most enigmatic, of Nietzsche's heroic morality, which found a still more emphatic expression, if that were possible, in his *Will-to-Power.*

What is meant by heroic morality? Virtues are functions of survival in the struggle for existence and reflect the position and the tactics of those who entertain them. What a man values is an index to what he is and requires. "There is *master-morality* and *slave-morality.*" The noble, dominant man, self-reliant and creative, regards himself as a determiner of values, not subject to obligations. Courage, high-mindedness, self-possessed sobriety, clear insight, justice, straight-forward candor are his virtues. He despises cowardice, meanness, lying. His is "the feeling of plenitude, of power, which seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of a wealth which would fain give and bestow." He knows how to honor and how to scorn, how to assert his power and how to harden and master himself. He is the great friend and the great enemy. Against this noble ideal of life and

character, what virtues and valuations can we expect from the slaves, the unsound, the weary, the submerged? To them, the virtues of abounding power and genius are intolerable; to them, the highest virtues are those which are most useful to their need: "sympathy, the kind, helping hand, the warm heart, patience, diligence, humility, and friendliness." [12]

So here is the fatal plight, but here also the fateful choice of our civilization. The master-morality found expression in the great life and culture of classical antiquity. But then occurred the moral disaster of European history: the poisoning of the ancient world by the slave-ideals of a beaten race. This Jewish teaching of the Christian gospel of humility and pity and renunciation corrupted nobility, led to monastic negation, stunted creative power. After the cultural twilight of the Middle Ages, European vitality again reasserted itself, in the Renaissance, but once more was checked, in the Reformation. Along with the downcast, cowardly, pleading spirit, the other qualities of the slave and the weakling prevailed: bigotry, superstition, mean cruelty, vulgarity, low suspicion, cunning and despicable greed, treachery, petty oppression. Do they not mark both the religion and the worldliness of our philistine souls?

Modern civilization needs, not reform, but surgery; Nietzsche is prepared to cut deep. Because nineteen centuries have distorted and corrupted the basic meaning of true morality, he demands first "a salvation *from* morals." [13] Europe needs a transvaluation of values. Humanity must be brought to realize its corruption and debasement. A new sense of great living and a vision of a new perfection must master the minds and the wills of men, a new morality and a new order of life. This is the gospel of Zarathustra: "Say Nay in the face of all that makes for weakness and exhaustion. . . . Say Yea in the face of all that makes for strength, that preserves strength, and justifies the feeling of strength." [14] Let man stand "unbreakable, tense, ready for something more difficult, for something more distant, like a bow stretched but the tauter by every strain." [15]

Nietzsche noted the despair that followed the depravity, the distrust of a sick age which, still idly professing a faith in God, had lost its belief in man. In what creative conviction was to be sought the hope of the new humanity? And not only philistine Europe,—Nietzsche himself was struggling with despair. An idea of devastating import possessed his mind. He could see in the world process, a monster of energy, only the play of shifting combinations. In the eternity past, all possible events must already have taken place, and more than once, and so again and again forever. How is a man to endure this thought and this pros-

pect of Eternal Recurrence? "'Eternally he returneth, the man of whom thou art weary, the small man'—so yawned my sadness, and dragged its foot and could not go to sleep. . . ." [16]

We may see that two ideas are battling in Zarathustra's mind: the one of them must be sublime and heroic enough to counteract the crushing desolation of the other. The demand of nobility is for self-exceeding affirmation of self. The prospect of sublime consummation alone can reconcile us to the certainty of eventual recurrence of dullness and defeat and disgust. Is there in life as we now see it anything great and noble enough to reconcile us to pettiness? Yet evolution surely points beyond us, beyond man to Superman. In the doctrine of Superman, Nietzsche found the apex of his Will-to-power and an idea to counteract the blighting effect of his Eternal Recurrence. "Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have you done to surpass man? . . . Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman—a rope over an abyss. . . . What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what is lovable in man is that he is an *over-going* and a *down-going*. . . . Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea, to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure. Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that sea; in him can your great contempt be submerged." [17]

This sketch of Nietzsche's thought may only suggest its imaginative sweep, the haunting emotional intensity and power of this philosophical rhapsode whose ideas are poetry. But masterly utterance does not surmount the basic confusion and clash of ideas. On the one hand is the atomistic-mechanical view of the world-process as a kaleidoscope that sooner or later uses up all its combinations and by the law of chance is bound to eternal recurrence. In accord with this we have a callous mechanistic account of life. On the other hand is a heroically moral conception of man's career as a venture in contending values. Nietzsche, radically disdaining all Christian devotion, is consecrated to his own ideal aims and principles. In accord with this is the vision of evolution as achieving the nobler and more perfect life of Superman. The contest of these two lines of thought in Nietzsche's philosophy is not resolved. It serves to reveal certain basic perplexities confronting the use of the idea of evolution in ethical theory.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CRITICISM IN ITS MORAL BEARINGS



1. English Reaffirmation of Spiritual Conviction

In our twenty-eighth chapter the growth of British liberalism in the nineteenth century was surveyed: the contest of critical inquiry and traditional authority, the resistance of romanticism and idealism to naturalistic and utilitarian ideas. Here we may note some of the more emphatic reassertions of faith, as well as moral and religious perplexities, which give tone to the philosophy and to the literature of the generation that had been stirred by Darwin and Spencer.

The life of James Martineau (1805-1900) spanned the century, and his thought manifests the strain which we are examining. Like Spencer he turned from engineering to philosophy, but the finality for him was in religion. The study of nature, in moral experience, revealed God. In perception, Nature confronts the self; in morals, God. In his direct study of inmost experience, he would map out a moral course by a divine compass. This plan yields an intuitionist ethics centering on authority of conscience. Conscience is the judge of right and prevailing preference in the ordering of our lives, and ethics is a system of graduated values and corresponding duties. Martineau's table of values and springs of action, which we cite in the Notes for convenient reference,[1] indicates his ethical outline in detail. It has the merits and also the defects of formal tabulations in ethics. The order of priority is not quite so self-evident as Martineau believed, nor the invariably superior claim of the 'higher' over the 'lower' convincing in each specific case. Add to this the difficulty, in actual deliberation, of deciding between two courses of action that both involve subtle blends of 'higher' and 'lower' motives, and the expert decision of conscience appears dubious. Martineau's endeavor to give intuitionism a more analytic form, and ethical formalism more definite substance, reveals essential limitations of these ethical methods. His moral philosophy throws further light on those of Reid and Stewart, Butler and Kant, with all of whom he has kinships.

A teleological but non-hedonistic ethics, resisting formal intuition-

ism or theological sanctions but finally avowing theistic reliance, was developed in the *Theory of Good and Evil*, by Hastings Rashdall (1858-1924). The problems of 'good,' 'right,' 'duty,' in his judgment, raise the ultimate question of all philosophy. His analysis led him to the conclusion that the good and the right mutually involve each other, but that the idea of good is the primary one. Actions are right or wrong as they tend to promote or diminish good; the moral judgment is first of all a judgment of value. But good, moral value, is not to be conceived as merely pleasure or any other gratification. The good includes happiness, but also virtue, and likewise culture and perfection of capacities. Morality thus involves organization of values, demands intelligent direction, and moral judgment is essentially rational, not mere emotional response. Rashdall proceeded towards an 'Ideal Utilitarianism' involving basic recognition of Prudence, Benevolence, and Equity. He was not impressed with the purely formal dignity of moral laws; his final basis for dignity or authority was teleological. So he respected the autonomy of conscience, but would have it learn wisdom from religion and from social experience and sanction. His survey of the social sphere of moral activity led him towards the larger cosmic vista, the ultimate status of moral values, Man and Universe. Here he turned to theistic conclusions. Morality precludes optimistic dismissal of evil. Moral achievement or frustration involves enhancement or check in the world of values. As in our moral career we are thus real agents, so our moral struggle is a genuine experience of God. Ethics here finds its culmination in religion, with belief in God who actively wills the highest good, and in eternal life for worthy souls.[2]

The critical reaction towards traditional Christian values was affected by the spreading knowledge of the literature and especially the religious scriptures of Asia. The mastery of Oriental languages by Western scholars yielded translations of an entire library of great works, many of which had not been known to our forebears even by title. Preeminent achievement in this field was the publication at Oxford of the *Sacred Books of the East*, in fifty volumes, edited by F. Max Müller. New strains of imaginative power entered and colored the currents of Western thought and feeling. We have already noted them in our study of Emerson; they may be observed from the early decades of the nineteenth century, on the Continent as well as in Britain. To a mind like Goethe they were no more than added strings to a richly resonant lyre. To others, who inclined towards strange cults, they offered new veins of exotic devotion. Some of the deepest and most critical study of them, to be sure, did not cross the restricted circle of scholarly or

academic interest; but the influence of others was far-reaching. One Western version of Eastern wisdom that had wide popular appeal was the book of *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám, Englished by Edward Fitzgerald (1809-1883). The Epicurean zest for the pleasures of the hour in man's precarious career had, in Omar's verses, the undertones of resignation. He might have applied to himself Giordano Bruno's line: "Gay in his sadness, but in his gaiety, sad." The joy of his audacity of unbelief is bitter. The question, if it is a question, of Fitzgerald's accuracy as a translator is of no concern to us. What interests us here is not Persian literature but the moving power of those quatrains, Omar's or Fitzgerald's, in the religious and moral unrest of the nineteenth century.

English poetry of the period expressed the clashing emotions of intense but disturbed religious experience. Can it be that all our spiritual ideals and aspirations are passing human visions in an ultimately neutral or callous world? This thought was intolerable to Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892). Rather than learn from natural science such a disdain for man's higher aspirations, he recognized in the loves and gropings of men a revision of mere nature and a vision of God. He did not dismiss "honest doubt," but would not yield to it, and would "faintly trust the larger hope."

The God to whom Tennyson's mind was brought by men's moral-spiritual life of endeavor could not allow the final extinguishment of persons. The idea of immortality, an unyielding and burning certainty in Tennyson's faith, dominated also the poetry of Robert Browning (1812-1889). Our lives dramatically reveal in every act and feeling the inconclusiveness of all our ends and designs. They are lives of perennial frustration, but even in frustration yield new revealed meanings and reconstituted ideals. Thus unfinished and inexhaustible, personality does not allow of extinction, else the universe would end in unreason. But the ground of Browning's religious faith was to him also the basis of moral reflection. The meaning and the worth of our lives is in aspiring and resolute endeavor. The exaltation of the moral will, familiar to us in the idealism of Fichte and of Carlyle, found in Browning new and dramatic utterance.

A lyrical rush of self-assertion, professed disdain of Christian hopes and scruples, an upsurge of paganism, spirit released and senses rapturous, marked the ardent pages of Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909). The enchantment of his rich harmonies still possesses us who no longer find in him abiding wisdom of life. As defiant a bard as Walt Whitman of unbound human nature, Swinburne lacked Whitman's

mellow humanity and vast outlook on life. He had Nietzsche's exulting self-affirmation, but not the resolution or hardness of the seer of Superman.

Less sensual as a "reading of earth" and a less violent utterance of spirit was the work of George Meredith (1828-1909). Here was subtlety, irony and the comic spirit, but here also the unwavering clear perception of ideal values. Our lives are rooted in nature and apart from it we wither; but the sap drawn from the roots rises upward through each branch and leaf of our expansive humanity. Man's true career, in the whole range of personal-social realization, is to perceive and to achieve in the soil of nature and normal living the fruition of human-spiritual values.

To Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) nature and human nature were tangles of spur and misdirection. In the chaos of driving forces he observed some emergence of order, precarious and ever subject to stray disarrangement of pattern. The "ceaseless artistries in Circumstance" of "the Great Foresightless" do not yield a world on which rational spirit can rely. Nature, sex, reason itself trip us up unawares, and our most resolute endeavor to realize abiding values ends in futility. Men as Hardy sees them are "time's laughing stocks." Yet, renouncing the hope of rational mastery, he does not yield the chance of striving, sole condition of possible worth and dignity.

2. *Positivistic and Sociological Ethics in France*

Positivism and evolutionism inclined leading French minds towards a sociological outlook and method in ethics. This tendency might involve criticism of Spencer and Nietzsche, or repudiation of the Comtist cult of Humanity; it might be modified by a strain of idealism seeking scientific recognition; but it expressed a basic conception of moral value in terms of socialized life-enhancing activity.

In his brilliant essay, *Outline of an Ethics without Obligation or Sanction*, Jean Marie Guyau (1854-1888) undertook a positive naturalistic version of ethics. The motive power in conduct is the intensity of life pressing for expansion. This drive towards an ever fuller and more varied and fertile living is the real imperative in morals. Obligation finds here its natural source and ground. Guyau points out five so-called "equivalents of duty." In thought and in action the consciousness of 'ought' expresses a prevailing vital propulsion. I can, I ought: this is the self-imposing of power. The idea of a better and more expansive course of action is itself a dynamic in conduct. The progressively more extensive fusion of feelings and higher pleasures moves us towards ever more sociable conduct. The risk and adventure of living draws us on

to new frontiers; in the exaltation of the supreme moments of experience, life itself may be staked on the peak of living. Hypothesis and speculation, the metaphysical risk of the mind, represent a similar bold self-outreaching of thought, and a fifth equivalent of obligation. Intense life thus creates its own obligation and constitutes its own sanctions. There can be no question of initial assurance here: but need there be occasion for final despair? Between dogmatic faith and blighting scepticism, man's thought and will validate themselves step by step. This is man's true virtue, in action. This also is man's natural piety, in progressively socialized, arduous and fertile expansion of life. Guyau advocated this ideal in his *Irreligion of the Future*.[3]

A less brilliant but more systematic development of a similar theory was that of Guyau's stepfather and guide, Alfred Fouillée (1833-1912), in his *Ethics of Idea-Forces*. Fouillée subjected the evolutionary process to a Platonic contemplation. Among the motive powers of life he recognized preëminently ideas; he calls them "idea-forces." In opposition to Nietzsche's "will to power," he emphasized more explicitly than Guyau the self-affirmation of ideas in progressively social spheres of action. He revised the Cartesian *Cogito:* "I think, therefore *we are*." My consciousness is essentially social; it is engaged by ideals and values that are social in prospect and in realization; in espousing these values, I undertake to achieve them; ideas in my experience are social creative powers. So my freedom is ever in process of realization, through the actualizing of ideal purposes. Resolutely engaging our will in the service of ideas, we may find ourselves less and less subject to constraint; so our life gains in freedom, dignity, and universal value. This is moral progress.[4]

The more explicitly sociological treatment of morals, proceeding from Comte to new scientific advance, is represented by the school of Émile Durkheim (1858-1917). Durkheim would study social facts as things: a naturalistic sociology without teleological principles. History is not understood as the progressive imposition of the heroic will, nor as the expression of the Absolute Idea or of the Spirit of Humanity, but as the development or decline of particular societies under determining conditions that can be studied scientifically. Morality does not depend upon certain alleged ideal principles, entertained by the aristocracy of spirit. It is the fundamental condition of solidarity in all social life, pervasive, constraining, keeping the individual will in line with the common interest. Individual morality is not apart from this social-integrating dynamic; it is in the individual's clear perception of his social solidarity and in his complete rational alliance with the common weal that 'virtue' consists. In our civilized society the division

of labor is highly developed; the individual need not press specialization unduly but must do his special part in a complex social order. In gaining active distinctiveness, he also achieves effective community of life; he is, "at every moment, struck by the sentiment of common solidarity in the thousand duties of occupational morality." [5] This treatment of social facts was applied by Durkheim and his followers to special topics of moral import.

Not all advocates of positive-social ethics were prepared to go the whole length of sociological naturalism. Gustave Belot (1859-1930) represents this tendency of reluctance. The study of the social conditions and determination of character and institutions does not exhaust, does not penetrate the heart of morality. The moral problem concerns not merely the progressive social constraint of the individual will, but the convincing of it, its genuine loyalty. Morality is not merely a result of past conditions but a present achieving and an ideal demand on present resources. 'Sociality' provides the contents of morals, but the form and the principle demand rational judgment. Some of the French moralists who disowned metaphysical methods did not follow Durkheim's sociological procedure but preferred psychological analysis. So Frédéric Rauh (1861-1909) probed the immediate environment: scientific research, the social struggle, politics, syndicates. He advocated alert experimental morals. The distinctively moral agent is straightforward, active, ready for sacrifices but not seeking them, ever critical but in quest of belief, undogmatic but demanding principles. He approaches his problems of conduct with the integrity and the experimental spirit which characterize the scientific investigator.

3. Religious Unrest and Moral Reconstruction

The modern decline of theological authoritarianism and the progressive adoption of secular methods in ethics might leave the Christian theologian unsatisfied yet still confirmed in his own more explicitly Scriptural convictions. But the consistent advance of 'higher criticism' in Biblical studies during the nineteenth century undermined more definitely the theological structure that was being unsettled by the general critical shift of ground in modern thinking. The problem was no longer, whether morals required a foundation on theological truth. Many of the alleged truths and facts of the theologian were themselves discredited by Biblical-historical criticism. What was to be the new ground of faith? This became a grave problem for Protestant liberalism and Catholic modernism. We can consider only some ethical implications of the theologian's perplexity.

Not even the briefest survey of Old and New Testament 'higher'

criticism can be undertaken here. Suffice it to say that a long line of competent and, in their intentions, mainly constructive scholars, in their investigation of the order and process of composition of the books in the Bible, the development of the Hebrew religion, and the early history of Christianity, reached conclusions which involved the collapse of the traditional Mosaic-miraculous system of beliefs. Among these critics, Eichhorn, De Wette, Ewald, Wellhausen, Kuenen, and Cheyne, Robertson Smith and Driver, Strauss, Baur, Renan, and Harnack stand out. As authority was thus being discredited in its credentials, the problem of criteria and sanctions was accentuated.

The more negative ethical corollaries of religious criticism may be studied in the "confession" of David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874), *The Old and the New Faith*. Strauss, whose *Life of Jesus* had treated the Gospel story as Messianic mythology and who had dismissed supernaturalism, sought to find a new faith in the materialism of scientific research and in social readjustment. Morality is a natural growth, and its sanctions are changing necessities of the life process. Man should see himself as one with the things that perish, should resign his sublime but pathetic illusions about eternal life and eternal values, should turn to his more immediate tasks and, like Voltaire's Candide, cultivate his little garden.

Resolute insistence on the sovereignty of moral values marks Protestant liberals of a more idealistic temper, some of them contemporaries and spiritual brothers of Martineau. At Tübingen, where he was colleague of the Biblical critic F. C. Baur, Immanuel Hermann Fichte (1797-1879) edited his father's works but pursued his own ethical idealism to more definitely theistic conclusions. He concentrated on moral experience and on the divine reality which he saw reflected in the higher endeavors of man, and tested the soundness of a philosophical system by its adequate recognition of personality and moral values.

Meanwhile explicitly orthodox Protestant theologians were devoting attention to ethical issues in their relation to Christian doctrine. Christoph Ernst Luthardt (1823-1902), whose *Apology of Christianity* achieved a notable popular success, presented in *The History of Christian Ethics* the results of a faithful though not very critical examination of moral ideas in their Christian setting. Forty years before Luthardt, Richard Rothe (1799-1867), a deep churchly thinker, produced in his *Theological Ethics* an interpretation of nature and human nature and a system of moral values by explicitly theological methods, sharply distinguished from philosophical procedure though not without occasional reference to philosophical doctrines. Rothe's Ethics, like Schleiermacher's, is in three parts, dealing respectively with Goods,

Virtues, and Duties. Fundamental in his theological treatment of morals is his distinction between natural man and spiritual personality. The perfection of the latter is man's blessed destiny in the Christian life. Morality finds its fruition in religion; the attainment of Christian virtue is in the redemption from the life of sin, the Divine grace of the Savior bringing man into communion with God, in the Christian fellowship of the Church. Rothe's survey of the Christian virtues and his counter-scrutiny of the manifold pitfalls of sin manifest his characteristically vigilant and subtle conscience. Of especial and lasting value is the extensive third part of his treatise, on Duties, where through a thousand pages he pursues the course of Christian devotion in its moral expressions.

Individuality, liberty, sovereign conscience, the claims of the heart over reason received emphasis from a succession of French-Swiss Protestant thinkers of critical and constructive power, among whom Alexandre Vinet, Ernest Naville, and especially Charles Secrétan (1815-1895) are notable. These men recognized the results of Biblical criticism but were not crushed by them. Liberal in their treatment of theological dogmas, they were firm in their loyalties to the moral principles of Christianity. They advocated a spiritualism committed to the dignity of man's soul, human freedom and immortality. The most thorough development of this French-Swiss spiritualism is in Secrétan's *Philosophy of Liberty*. He recognized the sense of moral obligation as a prime fact of moral experience. It involves a capacity for loyal action in us, and a worthy authority in the law which we respect. So the freedom of our will and the sovereignty of God's will are inevitable principles of the ethics of duty. Morality in each one of us is in a demand for the practical recognition of them. I am free in principle: I ought to be free in fact. Duty and freedom may conflict; in moral perfection their unity is attained, divided personality is integrated, the full meaning of God's will in man is expressed. This is the supreme Christian virtue of love, a law of freedom. In this life of moral realization, man is a colleague of humanity, but also unique and irreplaceable in his own right. Secrétan on the one hand maintains the individual's absolute value and personal immortality; on the other, he traces the progressive accomplishment of God's will on earth, through economic and political order of social solidarity, and finds its summit in moral-religious devotion. Less systematic but gripping was the thought of Henri Frédéric Amiel (1821-1881), whose *Intimate Journal* is a troubled self-expression of the modern spirit. Unquenchable thirst for the Infinite and intense self-penetration contend for mastery in him. He would grasp by ardent demand the certainties which elude his

reason. The dominion of conscience decreeing an ideal ever pursued but never completely possessed: this consumes his life and is the heart of his morality.

The study of religious ideas in a historical perspective, which was to direct Catholic thinkers towards the critical position of Modernism, had found early and vigorous exponents in Italian philosophy. Here the first important but unfortunately neglected mind was that of Giambattista Vico (1668-1744). Vico unveiled history as the progressive self-revelation of the human spirit. A vague sense of justice gradually finds expression in law; religious and moral feelings and beliefs attain form in social institutions, the creative power of man seeks utterance in language, poetry, and science. This was the *New Science*, the self-knowledge of mankind. Its importance for modern historiography is evident; we can only mention some of its ethical bearings. Against pleasure or interest, Vico emphasized integrity as the moral principle. He called attention to the feeling of remorse, and to shame. This self-dignity, this awe and fear of oneself are motive powers in the moral organization of society. They point to an imperious perfection that crowns morality in religion.

Vincenzo Gioberti (1801-1852) and Antonio Rosmini-Serbati (1797-1855) represented creative liberalism in a period of Italian thought marked largely by crass sensationalism and by shallow eclectic tendencies. Gioberti resisted materialism and bigotry; he would revitalize Catholicism by critical spirituality, active coöperation in the work of civilization, abandonment of false mysticism. Christianity should be revindicated in action. The heart of Christian morality is the imperative conscience, the voice of God in our souls. Gioberti advocated an unmistakably Christian ethics. Kant's doctrine of the moral law requires a religious revision to give duty substance and sanction. Virtue is loyal accord of our will with the will of God; moral perfection is in our union with God. Of this union, love is the evidence and the promise, and is thus the heart of morality. Evil is in withdrawal from God. Gioberti agrees with Dante: evil is its own damnation, and hell, the ruinous consummation of sin itself.

Gioberti's opposition to Jesuit dominion and his social-political program for Italy caused his banishment, and he had to spend a large part of his productive life in exile. Ecclesiastic condemnation darkened also the life of Rosmini, but the two men did not understand each other, and indeed the center of their emphasis was not the same. For Rosmini, rational insight and recognition of the true eternal order constitute the principle of morality. Rosmini's kinship with Malebranche is evident here. But for Rosmini religion is the consummation of morality, not

its initial course. Essentially morality is in rational direction of the will: in the worship of God we find the full range and meaning of our moral enterprise. All the perfections are comprehended in divine love. Justice and human dignity are guiding principles in Rosmini's social philosophy. His advocacy of church reforms earned him the enmity especially of the Jesuits, and he like Gioberti suffered from that entanglement of political and ecclesiastic intrigue which darkened so much of Italian life during the period. .

The conflict of values and basic convictions found expression in Italian literature. Against the liberal confidence and affirmative note of writers like Alessandro Manzoni may be noted the desolate life-outlook of the pessimists. There was emotional-romantic depression in a vesture of social despair, as in Ugo Foscolo. Deeper and loftier and more universal was the utterance of human woe in the poems and essays of Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837), master of modern Italian lyric poetry. From Rousseauistic disdain of the miserable pretenses of civilization, he proceeded to profound distrust of all values. Social progress is illusory, for man is essentially selfish. Truth, justice, honor, beauty, love: these are all phantoms of the mind; yet without them our life is null. We are ever in pursuit of a felicity which eludes us, committed to values beyond our reach and unreal. Philosophy, in disillusioning us, strips us bare and leaves us without sustenance. Yet the utter and invincible weariness of life, *noia*, to which we are thus bound, is itself in a measure its own refutation. In the lyrical expression of the vanity of ideal values, value is achieved. Life cannot be so utterly worthless if it has been so tragically uttered. Spirit refuses to yield, and imagination sublimates the blighting conclusions of reason. In poetic contemplation thought is swallowed up in sweet negation:

> . . . So
> In this immensity my thought is drowned:
> And sweet to me is shipwreck in this sea.[6]

The moral range and direction of pessimistic poetry may be more clearly suggested by at least a glance at Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863). Leopardi's peer in nobility of spirit and in poetic genius, Vigny represents in French literature a disillusioned aristocracy of values. Our life humiliates virtue and superior worth. Is nature callous to value, or worse, is the Supreme Power at the heart of things ruthless and malign? Vigny's Biblical studies and poems end on a desolate note. But despairing of abiding happiness or final vindication of values, he refuses to yield his noble effort, in which is all his honor, "the poesy of duty, . . .

conscience divinized." Vigny teaches Stoic fortitude, but without the cosmic acquiescence of the Stoic sage. Serenity gradually prevails over despair and disdain in his outlook on life, but his heroic devotion at whatever cost remains to the last.[7]

The demand for a religion responsive to the spirit of civilization and concentrating on moral issues marked the program of radicals who were not ready to spurn the spirit along with the letter of Christianity. The most widely influential leader on the front line of religious criticism and modernism in France was Ernest Renan (1823-1892). He has been described as a successor of Comte. He did not acknowledge himself a disciple of the Positivistic Messiah, declaring that the scientific spirit was in his own nature. But his thought seems to have gone through Comte's three stages. He began with devout beliefs, which were wrecked on the rocks of criticism. Then he put his faith in rational principles, in his case scientific, from which he expected final assurance and values to replace those of orthodoxy. But, as he tells us, in his nature was always a Gascon playing tricks on his devout Breton soul. Sceptical irony humbled his intellect, as logic and research had routed his faith. In the end he despaired of certainties or ultimates. Was he then resigned to his dreams; or did he, hoping for the Truth, probe his truths cautiously one by one? Irony and a passion for enlightenment were both his, as they had been Voltaire's a century before him.

He expected the science of the future to reorganize humanity and "organize God," though he would not insist on the latter point. But in his doubts and ironies, the certitude of moral values was firm. It was a secular assurance. Renan was convinced that morals have no supernatural warrant, but he did see a tendency in nature to achieve and to sustain moral values. He studied the social basis and evolution of morals, the gradual attainment of human character, a self-unfolding of nature. Morality must be studied genetically, in process; here Renan's viewpoint was akin to that of the evolutionistic and the sociological school. But if, on the one hand, abandoning all dogmatic or metaphysical pretensions, we should trace and probe the development of moral ideas and institutions by scientific methods, yet on the other hand it is in the moral nature of man that all our reliance must be put for the perfection of science, by the integrity, disinterestedness, devotion of the intellectual life. The supreme value to Renan was Truth; it is from Truth that he hoped for justice. So it was in disinterested devotion that he trusted for the love that not only moves but perfects human conduct. Renan held in rich ironic solution many of the clashing strains in

our spiritual life. Minds less rich but more consistent might reflect in greater concentration different shades of his thought. Anatole France and Alfred Loisy are both of Renan's fold.

4. Russian Philosophy of Life: Dostoyevsky, Solovyof, and Tolstoy

The novelist Dmitri Merezhkovsky portrayed in his *Peter and Alexis* the beginning of that contest between Eastern and Western ideals which has marked the history of modern Russia. This conflict had political and racial aspects which should not be neglected, but it was also a significant Russian expression of the clash of traditional moral values with the structure and strains of modern culture. From this clash of national ideals the masters of Russian literature were led to larger issues of all-human significance.[8]

The *Zapadnik* or Westernist saw only one universal and irrefutable way of salvation for Russia, the way of Western Civilization. The Slavophile, on the contrary, regarded the entire German-centered orientation of modern Russia as a fatal misdirection. It is Slavic Russia that must bring salvation to Europe, but she must first repossess her old Russian ideals and institutions, in which alone was the assurance of moral freedom and Christian values of life. This Slavophilism might pursue liberal ideals, or it might become a program of Czarist reactionaries, at their worst specializing in Jewish pogroms and in Siberian exile, at their best or strongest producing a dictator of Russian orthodoxy like Pobiedonostsev, Procurator of the Holy Synod.

The larger contest of ideals engaged the loftiest genius in Russian literature. Westernism was championed by Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883), whom Taine called the finest artist since Sophocles.[9] Slavophilism found its major prophet in one of the most profound analysts of the human soul that the world has known: Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1822-1881). Not unrelated is the nationalist-Russian reaction in music, represented by Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and their circle, to the 'Beethoven strain' in Tchaikovsky. As philosophy of life, Russian Westernism is less original and of less interest to us than the radical reaction to the spirit of our civilization which we find in Dostoyevsky. Holy Russia had all but destroyed this lifelong sufferer, but he remained to the end the firmest believer in her. He went to Siberian exile a pessimist weary of life; he returned an optimist, with the firmest faith in the inherent goodness of sinful man, with distrust in modern efficient social agencies and trust only in redeeming Christian love. Dostoyevsky disowned the entire radical movement that was professing to liberate Russia yet first robbed her of her faith. Turgenev as well as Dostoyevsky had portrayed the Russian nihilist; but Dostoyevsky undertook

to stigmatize and to destroy the nihilist spirit of denial. Social regeneration is not to be achieved technically. What Russia and mankind need is not a new structure and system: all this is mere externality, and vain is the trust of mechanical minds in it. A new spirit is needed, or rather the revival of the old spirit of Christian love, and the creative faith which love generates: not hatred of classes, social revolution, and enforced justice, but the strength of brotherhood that alone in any system can redeem and realize human life, that alone can achieve peace. If Russia could be truly herself, then she would not live unto herself, but would speak to mankind the great Russian Christian word of "fraternal aspiration to unite all mankind." We cannot pursue here Dostoyevsky's probing of the murky caverns of evil, in which he found gleams of redeeming light, in *The House of the Dead*, in *Crime and Punishment*, nor yet his harrowing disclosure of the betrayal of man by seeming virtue. There is obscurantism and rabid partisanship in Dostoyevsky that may not be ignored in any balanced estimate of him. We have only called attention to one aspect of his thought, a radical alternative in the moral judgment of our modern civilization.

Vladimir Solovyof, or Soloviev (1853-1900), is the most thoroughly Russian philosopher, yet he sought to realize the conscious unity of mankind in religion,—through union of Russia with Rome in the Church Universal! His ethical doctrine is found mainly in his work *The Justification of the Good*. He found the natural root of morality in the sense of shame. Man's spirit distinguishes itself from the flesh, combats and masters it and thus attains spiritual self-preservation, the principle of all true asceticism. The second spring of morality is the feeling of pity; its essence is the recognition of the inherent worth of others. Ruthlessness is egoism, the absurd notion that one is exclusive and central. The life of truth and justice is basically a life of compassion. Piety or reverence, the third primary datum of morality, concerns man's due relation to the divine and is the natural basis of all religion. So morality may be summed up as "*mastery* over the material senses, *solidarity* with other living beings, and inward voluntary *submission* to the superhuman principle." [10]

The moral nature of man, the 'Good' is from God, and towards God's perfection we are striving. This realization of moral value is the theme of history. All social sanction and the value of all social institutions depend upon the principle of man's absolute worth. But the realization of this worth demands social organization. So we are involved in the examination of social problems, national, economic, penal-juridical, the question of war and peace. National ideals should express not exclusiveness and aggression but a living sense of a people's share

in God's work on earth. Penal justice should never lose sight of man's inviolable moral dignity or lose hope in the ultimate reclamation of the evil-doer. So Solovyof condemned capital punishment. Exploitation is to be condemned because men are not merely economic agents. Without this directive principle, all social reform is futile. "The rule of true progress is this, that the state should interfere as little as possible with the inner moral life of man, and at the same time should as securely and as widely as possible ensure the external conditions of his worthy existence and moral development." [11]

Lyof Tolstoy (1828-1910) was probably the most universally known writer of his time, and the external details of his modern apostolate are familiar to all; but the impression they have left is apt to be distorted. As he predicted, "people will say that Tolstoy taught men to plow and reap and make boots; while the chief thing I have been trying so hard to say all my life, the thing I believe in, the most important of all, they will forget." It will be enough for our present purpose to consider this main and most important thing in Tolstoy's work. His gospel represents as negative a reaction as Dostoyevsky's to the structure and principles of modern civilization, but it is a less mystical reaction, transcending Russian-Panslavic issues, a more universal moral program. His struggle with the problem of value was accentuated by a crisis of intense depression. Midmost in his life's career, like Dante, he found himself astray. By all worldly standards he was a brilliant success: an aristocrat, wealthy, in fine health, with a family of seven admiring children and a devoted wife, world-famous author of *War and Peace, Anna Karenina:* what more could he desire? Yet after winning the game of life he found it not worth playing. The height of human ambition on which he stood was to him the brink of an abyss. Why should he be living at all? Unless he could find and possess some abiding value, how could he banish the thought of suicide? The moral struggles which he had portrayed in some of his characters now openly engrossed him.

Seeking light, he went from philosophy to religion, to the peasant's faith, to the Gospel. And there he found, in the Sermon on the Mount, a way of life and a vision of life's values that bore the seal of abiding truth: five principles of conduct over against the Decalogue of Sinai. "Jesus condemned murderous anger and contumely, and preached considerate and generous respect of man for man. Jesus branded sensuality, veiled or unveiled, the flagrant or the contemplated degradation of woman to serve as a mere instrument of lust. Jesus denounced the willing surrender of a man's free conscience to his official superiors implied in the taking of military or bureaucratic oaths of unquestion-

ing obedience. Jesus tore down the barriers separating one nation from another, and applied the moral law to international relations: not merely love your neighbor, but love your enemy, the alien; love all mankind. And fifthly, in a commandment which Tolstoy regarded as the keystone of his moral edifice, Jesus condemned unreservedly the use of force and the law of retribution, and preached the law of love, non-resistance." [12] On this last principle Tolstoy is literal and adamant, condemning public violence as well as private. By prisons and punishments we can shackle bad men and make them harmless, we can assure our own security; but moral reclamation is quite another matter. By force we can cow an evil-doer into submission, but we can get him freely to leave his evil ways and to follow God by love and by love alone.

The adoption of these principles required a thoroughgoing change in his whole social outlook. Tolstoy observed that they ran counter to the dominant principles of our civilization, which is motivated by egoism, trusts to force, involves the exploitation of man by man. Moral redemption requires the denial of the powers of darkness in us: anger, lust, desire for dominion, class pride, national exclusiveness, violence in all forms. The source of evil is in the selfishness which exploits others; self-sacrificing love of others is the heart of good. Moral reformation begins at home! My first step in brotherhood is to earn myself the bread that I eat. On this basis of common justice, each man can then freely bring to others his special gift of enlightenment or deep feeling or spiritual vision. Make industry, science, art, religion serve to knit men together, in mutual ennoblement of life. In all relations replace the lust that corrupts and blights by the love that blesses. This ideal of life may not be practicable, nor expedient, nor even scientific: Tolstoy brushed these objections aside. The amazing boldness with which he undertook to make these Christian imperatives realities, and first of all in his own life, can be understood only if we remember the intensity of his moral revulsion from many quite respectable modern proceedings. To the critical moralist Tolstoy's whole career is a document of the first importance. We may not accept his conclusions, nor admit as inevitable his repudiation of modern civilization; but he may lead us to reconsider certain iniquitous practices in our social order which to many of its favored sons still appear unquestionable.

5. *The Moral Issues of Radical Individualism*

An outstanding characteristic of modern ethical thought has been its social orientation. The utilitarian "greatest happiness of the greatest

number," Spencer's evolutionistic program of justice and benevolence, Comte's cult of Humanity, Hegel's realization of personality in social institutions, modern sociological ethics: these all emphasize the universal character of moral values. But, in this social range and medium, are not happiness and intense vitality personal, is not morality *self*-realization? Even Hegel's absolutism, for all its emphasis on institutional ethics, never relaxed its hold on the sovereign Kantian principle of the self-legislative will. I grow to moral maturity in the social system, but is society the active power in this achievement? Can one man fulfil another's duty, realize another's perfection?

Against the moral exaltation of social-institutional order and values, we may note the upsurge of individualism in modern thought, anarchic in principle, whether only philosophical or violently aggressive in practice. Modern anarchism may be considered in its eruptions or in its essential statement. Moral revulsion at the oppressive abuse of authority led Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876) to revolt against oppression, and then to defy all authority and to repudiate the very principle of law. No system or institution has imperative claim on any man. Sovereign is only the individual's free will, and only on the basis of unquestioned individual spontaneity can real human well-being rest. Laws may not be imposed on free individuals; it is the will's espousal of them that constitutes their validity: even so-called laws of nature. Bakunin unflinchingly declares in his *God and the State:* "The liberty of man consists solely in this, that he obeys the laws of Nature, because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been imposed upon him externally by any foreign will whatsoever, human or divine, collective or individual." [13] Where august self-will thus claimed sway over gravitation and thermodynamics, the sweeping aside of minor conventions as imperialism or parliamentary rule, marriage bonds or penal justice or the law of supply and demand was to be a foregone conclusion of social revolutionaries. It was this clean wiping of the slate that Turgenev styled Nihilism, perceived and portrayed it in the character of Bazarov in his novel *Fathers and Children,* this program of utter negation that moved Dostoyevsky to life-long irreconcilable opposition.

Philosophical anarchism was heralded in *The Ego and His Own* by Johann Caspar Schmidt (1806-1856), better known by his chosen pseudonym, Max *Stirner,* "the broad-browed," like Plato! But unlike Plato and unlike Hegel, Stirner rejected all absolutes and universal principles. Absolute and supreme is the individual alone. Social and institutional forms distort the genuine life of the self. To strip off all strait-jackets, discard all masks, in self-possession and candor, that is the true libera-

tion and realization of man. Only not of man, generally, but of Myself. For what have I to do with man or with God?—no more than with truth or justice or freedom in general. My only concern is with myself, with my truth, my justice, my freedom. I grapple with the state and with the social system, but also with any thing or any thought that would externally determine me and make me a thing, a condition, a type. You may not put new wine in old bottles; and the wine of my real individuality is ever new. I make my character; my every act ever constitutes me. This would be Egotism on principle, if there were any principle! All so-called principles whatever, duty and reason and law: I take or leave them as suits my humor, as vestures maybe and for a while, not as moulds or as shackles. Religious or rational or social-judicial sanctions in morals are just such moulds and shackles. Morality from outside or from above refutes itself; and the morality from within has no principles, but is joyous candor throughout. The moral truth is the reverse of Kant's maxims, of the categorical imperative: not the universalized but the utterly individual life, my life, my act, moment by moment, is the perfect, the only *life*. So in the Kingdom of Ends each man, like the Grand Monarque, lives "according to his pleasure." This is the perfect spontaneity of unqualified egoism. True social reform is a reforming of the conditions outside me, to bend them to my will. The past is not to bind me, nor any future, but my present is to achieve its future. This unique self-absorption is my power and my joy. All that hampers it—traditions, standards, scruples—is a phantom to be banished or a chain to be broken.[14]

Sören Kierkegaard (1813-1855), ranked by his compatriot Höffding as the greatest Danish thinker, struggled with the social and ecclesiastic institutions of his day, but his radical individualism went beyond the desire for external reform. The problems of life confronted his mind with dramatic tension and called for more than rational analysis; they required not solution but resolution. Here was keen dialectic that scorned itself. The universals of conceptual thought were pale abstractions; the real issues of life were individual, individual their import and their eventual decision. Kierkegaard's philosophy is the drama of the individual will.

He shared with Hegel a lifelong keen sense of paradox and antithesis. But whereas Hegel thought his way to a Panlogism in which oppositions were reconciled in more and more expansive synthesis, Kierkegaard's dramatic mind settled on the alternatives, and would brook no compromise. His first great book sealed his philosophy in its title: *Either-Or*. The universal concept owes its unity to abstraction, but what it neglects are the very factors in each individual tension which

embroil the will. Real life is not to be caught in the net of categories. *The Ring and the Book* comes to mind here. Browning, whose way of thought repeatedly recalls Kierkegaard's, revealed in his poem the subtlety of one human drama that eluded his thirteen analyses. Here is the final futility of jurisprudence; theology and metaphysics fare no better.

Truth, duty are presented to each will individually, yet the decision must be acted out in a social world. The choice is ever impending, but never quite vindicated in the event. How am I to find the peace of a clear conscience, who have to live my unique life in this so alien world? In his thought Kierkegaard was forever seeking himself, and found only the *dramatis personae* of his being. With uncanny psychological insight he probed different aspects of his complex personality; they were different outlooks on life, alternatives for the will. A great many of his works were published under various pseudonyms: protean individuality here disclosing the subtle complexity of character, eluding definition but nevertheless exacting decision.

Either-Or represents the contest between two ways of life: the aesthetic, in which man with a sensual-ironic view of life goes through the round of passions and fancies which his environment affords; and the ethical, which is a life of chosen alternatives, tragic but heroic and self-resolved. A man is moved to moral decision by the restlessness of merely passive 'enjoyment,' and primarily by the sense of dread, the burden of the soul which awakens it to the moral task in which it comes to self-realization. Kierkegaard, like Vico and Solovyof, emphasizes the sense of shame, consequence of the original sin which is also man's transition from the stage of innocence to his arduous moral career. It is not by general growing but by individual choice-commitment that a person rises to moral stature.

Pascal had distinguished the three cosmic orders of matter, mind, and *charité* or value, which do not form a continuity but require a leap to scale each interval. So Kierkegaard in his *Stages on the Way of Life:* from the aesthetic to the ethical, and thence to the religious way of life, man needs a leap, a spring of spiritual decision or radical conversion. Like the romanticists in search of themselves, like Novalis ever "homeward-bound," Kierkegaard reënacts in his philosophy man's tragic career. In restless but unsatisfying round of externalities, like Peer Gynt peeling his onion, seeking to reach the heart in moral self-penetration, man is ever discovering himself and going astray. The impending decision once made brings the will to perplexities, to new dreads and regrets. Not a man's home but his care is his castle; immured he is in remorse, in the thought of might-have-been, "hardest of categories." Man ever demands and never attains complete achievement of

his unique rôle. Might he finally realize himself and be at home in God? [15]

The allusion to *Peer Gynt* is not accidental. This play of Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), and more especially *Brand*, which preceded it, reflect the poet's grapple with some of the problems which engrossed Kierkegaard: the degrading expediency of compromise and the futility of mere fanciful-sensual abandon, over against the tragic dignity but also the hardness of the unsurrendering will. This issue like a double-edged sword cuts through social problems, as in *An Enemy of the People.*

To more positive or more reasonable minds, some of this tragic thinking seemed, if not theatrical, yet unduly dramatic. The radical individualism on which Kierkegaard insisted was criticized as the kernel of his difficulties. Bishop Hans Martensen (1808-1884) was among Kierkegaard's most learned compatriots. His *Christian Ethics* was marked by a super-Hegelian confidence in reason, not only to plumb the depths of human nature but also to scale the heights of divine revelation. Yet he also manifested a practical sanity and an alert social conscience in dealing with the economic and political problems of our modern complex civilization. His criticism of Kierkegaard's individualism was severe. True morality and religion find individual expression in a social medium. Kierkegaard had maintained that moral choice isolates a man; Martensen believed that Christian values never appear in individuals alone, but always also in a social order.

In frankly secular terms, Harald Höffding (1843-1931) pointed out that Kierkegaard in his eternal self-searching achieves no significance of character, which is and must be social. In his criticism, which also expressed his own ethical conclusion, Höffding maintained that sociality is the fundamental ethical category. The idea of individuality can be achieved socially, but we cannot derive real society or a social ethics from the idea of radical individualism.

Kierkegaard's more recent influence, especially on German thought since the first World War, is partly due to his search for inner refuge in an unsettled world. Of more specific import in philosophical and religious method has been his emphasis on 'existential thinking.' Instead of cogitating abstractly about and around things, bring thought to bear on life's deepest experiences, in crucial issues when all that men know and are is at stake, when decision cuts through all surface to the core! This direction of philosophical interest, affecting both form and content, may be noted in Karl Jaspers (1883-), who began as a psychopathologist. Jaspers criticizes the misty indecision of so much modern thinking, its inconsequence and its sterility of will. Beyond

the abstract world-surveying philosophy, he demands existential self-penetration of the mind, which recognizes itself and its limitations, and seeks the ultimate range of reality. Martin Heidegger (1889-) in his work *Being and Time* expresses a similar tendency. Heidegger seeks from philosophy a resolution of central decisive issues. Noteworthy is his development of the idea of concern or care, *Sorge*, characteristic of individual existence, which he also finds expressed morally in conscience, and the idea of death in relation to demanded completeness and existence in time.[16] This characteristic thinking-in-crisis has affected also Protestant theology, through Karl Barth (1886-). For Barth, the ethical problem arises from crisis: what ought we to do? But against much traditional moralizing, Barth finds human life, individual, social, international, crushing to man's pride. The answer is that there is no health in us. Man is not good. The placid secular ethics is gone; it is only from the depths that we can cry out, for "it is through the unescapable severity of this (moral) doom that we come upon the reality of God." [17]

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE ETHICS OF SOCIALISM



1. The Beginnings of Socialistic Doctrine

Criticism of the social order, ever since Plato, has been apt to yield communistic utopias. But socialism is more properly a nineteenth century product of thought, a reflection of the industrial revolution. Its importance in economic theory and in the social history of our time is bound to be recognized but cannot receive extended discussion here. We can only consider some of the problems in social ethics which are raised by socialism: its character as social protest and a gospel of social salvation, in view of its economic-materialistic account of man and of history. We shall deal especially with the so-called scientific socialism of Karl Marx and his followers.

The phrase "gospel of social salvation" is peculiarly appropriate to the earlier ventures in socialistic theory before Marx. The French Revolution, in sweeping away church and state, was undertaking to replace what it destroyed. After the Revolution, traditional Christian devotion sought a new living expression in a social gospel; or social radicalism sought religious appeal as the New Christianity, the Cult of Humanity; or else the ardent rejection of religion was itself used to provide the social revolutionary with a substitute-gospel, the worship of unbelief. The general connection of religious and moral principles gave these tendencies in social radicalism ethical significance. Some of these expressions of the modern spirit of reform have already been noted: the Christian Socialism of Maurice and Kingsley, Lamennais' revolutionary evangelism, the Saint-Simonian and the Comtist social religion, the radical ardor of Fourier and of Proudhon, not to mention more recent instances. Robert Owen (1771-1858) combined a remarkable capacity for specific reforms with headlong utopian zeal and with a negative attitude towards traditional religious sanctions and loose ideas of family life.

"Scientific socialism" is marked by a consistently prevailing emphasis on economic analysis and criticism and by a program of organized mass-action, not mere individual zeal. Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) and Karl Johann Rodbertus (1805-1875) are Marx's predecessors in

this reconstruction, the organization of the international socialistic movement. Lasalle rejected the *laissez-faire* conception of government, and used Hegel's ethics as revolutionary doctrine: the state is an instrumentality for the full development of human capacities. What sort of a state must this be? Certainly not any of the existing varieties. An organized socialistic party is required to make the idea of this desirable state generally understood and to translate it into actuality. In Lassalle and Rodbertus we note the beginning of that far-flung historical survey and economic analysis as a basis of socialistic propaganda with which the name of Karl Marx is preëminently associated. One specific conclusion of radical import was the Iron Law of Wages describing capitalistic exploitation of labor. As Lenin later put it, the worker spends "one part of the working day . . . to meet the cost of supporting himself and his family (wages), but another part of the day he spends working for nothing, creating for the capitalist surplus value, the source of profits, the source of the wealth of the class of capitalists." [1] The definite recognition of this surplus value was to motivate the organized workers' demand for their rightful share of the products of industry.

2. *Some Critical Reactions*

This doctrine of exploitation emphasized the economic aspect of the social problem and the intensity of the class-struggle. Both of these emphases were challenged. Against the conception of economic life as a conflict of interests, Frédéric Bastiat (1801-1850) expounded his doctrine of *Economic Harmonies.* Society is an elaborate system for the trading of services; industry and commerce involve a competition in service; men need only greater intelligence and liberty to realize more fully the natural harmony of interests in their dealings with each other. "If interests are concordant, it is enough to have them understood, in order to realize the good and the general harmony, for all men will naturally give themselves to them." [2] Here is Helvétius reversed: economic insight reveals men's natural coöperating altruism. This version of social history made little impression on an age that was being initiated in the tactics of the class-war.

A more radical criticism of the socialistic program attacked its preoccupation with economic issues. The social problem reached deeper than conflict and adjustment of interests. This was the view of the Italian liberal, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), whose contrast to Karl Marx was shown in the formulation of policy at the First International. Mazzini's work *The Duties of Man,* written for Italian workingmen, contains a clear statement of the moral and religious ideals which inspire

his revolutionary apostolate. Mazzini warned the workman against the two evils of Materialism and Machiavellism: the preoccupation with goods, and the concentration on self-interest, the isolation of the economic problem from the rest of human life and its higher values. He set himself against the Utilitarians and the Manchester School no less than against the Communists. They all tended to ignore that man cannot live by bread alone. Really to win economic justice you must know first why you should seek it. You must first seek the kingdom of God and righteousness. The problem is fundamentally not one of interests or of rights, but of duties. Like Lamennais, whom he quoted, Mazzini undertook to realize man's divine destiny. Men have a right to that which they require for the performance of their duties. Concentrate first on the clear perception of the duties of men. Beyond the ambition to win in the class-struggle, to overthrow the oppressors, to secure for yourself the product of your labor, to become materially satisfied and happy, is a goal higher than all such success and well-being; the devotion to duty which alone dignifies any struggle or effort. How can you really strive for justice unless you have it first in your minds, and all that it implies? Put the moral motive of duty first: "Declare with courage your needs and your ideas; but without wrath, without vindictiveness, without threats." [3]

So Mazzini undertook to educate the people's conscience in the way of duty: the slower but the only sure course of social reform. And Duty, Good, in his thought, implied God, and Humanity as God's living word. Men should be led to see their life's career, no matter what its externals, as a moral career of duty, active sharing in the divine life of mankind. Only as moral and religious devotion thus come to possess men's souls can they be brought to perceive and to combat rightly the human degradation of oppression and exploitation, tyranny and corruption. Here the individual's alert conscience and the 'general voice of Humanity' may sustain each other in progressive moral experience. An ardent patriot, Mazzini taught men's duties to their country. But above the state, which may vary, he set the family, the enduring and essential social institution, and the all-embracing life of Humanity, higher than all nations. Men's duty to themselves is to achieve freedom and responsibility, the conditions of their moral career, and the enlightenment that assures their progress. Seen in their right moral relation to the rest of life, the economic questions can be met and answered rightly, but not until then. Mazzini declared: The motive in your demand for reforms is all important. You must seek them in the name of a duty fulfilled or to be fulfilled; "you will not succeed except by *growing better yourselves;* you will not win the exercise of your

rights except by *deserving* them, through self-sacrifice, industry and love." [4]

3. *Marx's Scientific Socialism*

Mazzini's gospel was one of moral-religious salvation from within, if a reform of outward social conditions was to have any abiding significance. It was the opposite, more 'realistic' and 'scientific' program which prevailed against Mazzini at the First International, and has prevailed ever since in the socialistic movement: the reform of human life through a change of the conditions of living. The Marxist economic-materialistic interpretation of human life and history must now be considered, for it is crucial in any fair judgment of socialistic ethics.

In Karl Marx (1818-1883) a speculative philosophical intellect, incited by a zeal for social reform, concentrated on systematic analysis and reconstruction in economics. He was trained in Hegelianism, wrote a doctoral dissertation on Epicurus, planned an academic career, but went into radical journalism and propaganda. His collaboration with Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) in the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, their alliance in the revolution of 1848, in the organization of the international socialist movement, in the long London years during which Marx was building up his *Capital*, the second and third volumes of which were edited and published after his death by Engels: all this is a chapter of eminent comradeship in socialistic achievement.

Hegelianism, as we have noted, contemplated reality as a progressive self-revelation of Spirit, through the organization of different elements in systems of expanding complexity and significance. The idea of logical necessity and development marked Hegel's treatment of nature and history, of morals and religion alike. But there were recalcitrant, naturalistic minds in Hegel's camp, who rejected the idealistic character of his dialectic. So Feuerbach declared that the Hegelian pyramid was upside down and should be turned over. Not spirit but nature, matter, was at the basis of things. Not "Ideas have hands and feet," but rather "Man is what he eats." Ideas are results, by-products of material conditions.

Here in Feuerbach we have the turn towards Marx's reinterpretation of the Hegelian dialectic, the so-called "dialectical materialism" of the socialists. History shows a succession of material conditions which determine the course of human life, institutions, and ideas. Engels regarded this as the nucleus of the doctrine, the importance of which for history he compared to that of Darwin's theory for biology: "In every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form

the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch." [5] We can thus make a science of social history by understanding the forces at work; we can anticipate the next stage; by the use of these forces we can hasten the next stage. Marx the economist would show why the socialistic state is inevitable; in his propaganda he would stimulate his followers' desire for it and organize their wills to speed its realization.

To combat your enemy you must first understand his position and his resources. In his great work Marx undertook the analysis of capitalism, its origin and its inevitable destiny. Capitalism is the result of modern conditions of production as necessarily as slavery was the result of the conditions under which the pyramids were produced. In both periods, and all the way in between, we have a continual class struggle, a contest between exploiter and exploited: slavery, serfdom, feudalism, trade-guilds, modern 'bourgeois' production and disposition of goods. Always the few seeking to appropriate the output of the many, always the many submitting as they must but pressing for emancipation. The French Revolution released the bourgeois classes from monarchical and aristocratic oppression, but the common toiler was only bound in new proletarian chains. We must understand this new enslavement and the revolution to which it inevitably leads.

The pyramiding of the vast capitalistic structures has been made possible by the employer's use of "surplus value." Here is Marx's version of the Iron Law of Wages. The workman has only his labor to sell; his wages represent the value of part of the goods he produces by his work. The rest of his product is kept by his employer. This unused product of labor, unused by the laborer, serves to amass capital. The perfection of machinery, technical efficiency in operation, organization of methods of mass-production and disposal of goods, control of the market, ability to dictate terms of employment: all have for their aim the increase in the surplus value over the share of the workman's product which is returned to him as wages. Proudhon had said, "Property is theft"; here it is described as a contractual expropriation.

In the capitalistic system the individual worker is helpless. But the stupendous magnitude of the modern enterprise makes uninterrupted operation absolutely essential to success, and so utterly dependent on labor as a whole. The sporadic struggles of the laborers with their masters may achieve partial success and do teach the workman that his strength is in organization. The crises in which such chronic rebellions, as well as cutthroat competition, over-production, or mismanagement involve the modern system offer periodic opportunity for a combat on a large scale. With increasing concentration of control and more ef-

ficient exploitation of labor, capitalism puts fabulous wealth in the hands of a few, leads to the growing impoverishment of the masses, and embitters the class-struggle. Capitalism thus inevitably accentuates the contest between exploiters and exploited and proceeds to its own dissolution.

Marx contemplated this coming collapse of the capitalistic system as a historical necessity. The vaster and more closely knit organization of labor will gradually exact political recognition, the vote, representation in parliament, improved conditions of labor, regulation of hours and wages, formulation of state policy, control of the capitalistic system itself. The socialistic revolution will thus be achieved by the dictatorship of the proletariat, so that in a society in which production is social, appropriation will be social too, in the communistic state. Nowise committed to equal distribution of wealth, the commonwealth may include differences in compensation, and it will retain control, but not by an exploiting class. In a bourgeois society the government actually represents the interests of the exploiters. The dictatorship of the proletariat, as it wipes out exploitation and reclaims the oppressed, will achieve a class-less society, in which government will consist simply in the public direction of social production. In the political economy of the new social order, the political state will be extinguished.

4. Revisionism, Syndicalism, Bolshevism

Students of Marx's historical-economic analysis have criticized his emphasis on exploitation and surplus values and his insufficient notice of technical skill, inventiveness, and organizing intelligence as factors in the upbuilding of capitalistic enterprises. The doctrine of surplus value would not explain adequately the Ford Motor Company. Soviet Russia has found it necessary, for the success of its vast communist enterprises and Five Year Plans, to adopt modern industrial methods of encouraging initiative and unusual efficiency. Despite all doctrinaire professions, this fact is a practical acknowledgment that these methods and factors are essential elements in capitalistic production. They should be so recognized.

Disciples of Marx did not all accept unquestioningly the specific forecasts of the next steps in the expansion and in the collapse of the capitalistic structure. While some of the more orthodox followers boldly specified the date of the coming dissolution, others undertook a revision of the doctrine in the light of accumulating evidence. So "revisionist" critics like Eduard Bernstein have pointed out that alongside of the titanic capitalist edifices forecast by Marx, there was not only impoverishment of the masses but also a certain spreading out

of new capital and sporadic or more general improvement of labor conditions. The social-catastrophic prospect, then, was not inevitable. A program of gradual legislative democratic reform was more in accord with the facts.

The tactical issue in the socialistic party was involved in a more fundamental problem. The collapse of capitalism and the coming dictatorship of the proletariat were declared to be inevitable, and yet socialism was in practice the revolutionary propaganda to achieve these very goals. Is unqualified determinism the right scientific basis of a social-revolutionary program? In the light of this question we may appreciate the import of the syndicalist philosophy of Georges Sorel (1847-1922). Sorel renounced or rather scorned all parliamentary-legislative programs, and rejected any alliance with 'intellectuals.' The workmen should remain workmen and should rely exclusively on the autonomous development of workmen's syndicates in the organization of the general strike. Whereas Bernstein's revisionism moderated Marx's program of the class-struggle, Sorel undertook to make the conflict uncompromising. He would advance beyond Marx, not follow after him: a completer of the master, not a mere commentator.[6]

Behind this program of aggressive action was a radical criticism of the theoretical foundations of Marxism. Sorel followed Henri Poincaré in emphasizing the hypothetical character of scientific principles. Nature is not to be really captured in our deterministic nets. Beyond the experimental and abstract mechanism of scientific construction is the concrete reality of hazard, the indeterminate emergent in the process, which only the event can disclose. Sorel's irrationalism and his emphasis on clashing unfathomable wills point back to Schopenhauer, or rather to Hartmann whom he repeatedly quotes. More immediate and decisive in his thinking is the influence of Bergson's intuitionism and the doctrine of creative evolution. Even more artificial than mechanistic science is the alleged deterministic science of society. Sociologies are mere houses of cards: we cannot formulate the universal laws of the social process. Historical-dialectical materialism is dogmatic. Not inevitable, but unpredictable is social process. In it we can recognize our productive activity when directed towards a chosen end. That is our freedom. It does not warrant reliance; it does not justify resignation; it may incite us to revolt. "Intuitions, instincts, irrational and unconscious potencies, myths, imprevisibility, upsurge, violent action, revolution: thus only can we invent, produce, create, advance." [7]

The idea of the general strike is not the idea of an ascertainable and determinate eventuality. It is the idea in which the workmen picture to themselves the apogee of the class-struggle in which they are en-

gaged. It is called by Sorel a myth, but it is a creative power in the workmen's lives. It inspires their imagination, intensifies their sentiments, strengthens their will, recruits all their available though unpredictable powers in the sublime hazard of social revolution. In the ardor of this ideal is all proletarian worth. We cannot set in advance the principles or the moral criteria of the workmen's course. The genius of the struggle achieves its own values, may achieve "an ethics of the producers." Here is the vindication of violence and of revolution: the creative venture that brings salvation to the modern world.

Leninism, the doctrine and program which have found expression in the Russian revolution and in the Bolshevik régime, is a development of historical-dialectical materialism, which undertakes to combine confirmed determinism with revolutionary propaganda. Marx had recognized this theoretical problem, and had distinguished his doctrine from the mechanical materialism of the eighteenth century. He would not reduce his account of the social process to mere mechanics, and he was not unreserved regarding historical predictability in detail. Men themselves were somehow factors in the complex process which determined them.

Lenin and the Bolsheviki, in starting the social revolution in non-industrial Russia, undertook in practice a revision of alleged inevitable order, yet remained strictly orthodox Marxist in their theoretical exposition of historical determinism. Did they consider the crisis produced by the first World War as scientific warrant for proceeding to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia without the full intermediate development of the capitalistic régime? Or was the Bolshevik attitude toward Marxist doctrine in the circumstances one of practical revolutionary tactics? The papers of 1917 contained in Lenin's two volumes *Toward the Seizure of Power* incline one towards the latter interpretation. The nipping in the bud of the 'bourgeois' Kerensky revolution through the assumption of sovereignty by the councils of workers and peasants—"All powers to the Soviets!"—can scarcely be regarded as the systematic inferences from the doctrine, but rather as tactical applications of "living Marxism." Those who lacked Lenin's subtle combination of theory and practice might stiffen in doctrinal pedantry or fail through inelasticity in concrete decision. Despite the pliable practical application of Marxism by the Bolsheviki, their exposition of dialectical materialism is orthodox, but it inclines towards a mechanistic emphasis on the necessity of human-social processes. "Lenin's Marxism presents the anomaly of being at once the most dogmatic assertion of orthodox adherence to the principles of the master

and at the same time the freest rendering of it on points where circumstances required its modification." [8]

5. *Moral Values and Socialistic Materialism*

The systematic confusion involved in materialistic ethics is here aggravated by its alliance with zealous and disinterested devotion. The dictatorship of the proletariat forecast by Marx, whether inevitable or not, is at all events a declared fact in Soviet Russia. But what does it *signify?* If it admits only of a factual statement of the conditions that produced it and of its future course, then we might grasp the situation 'objectively,' as the outcome of a class-struggle. We could understand the active support of the new régime by those now in power, the opposition to it by those ousted and expatriated. But what would warrant any evaluation here? In Europe Communist and Fascist excoriated each other, later seemingly came to terms, then once more returned to blows. Even though we may not regard these bewildering shifts in alignment as merely partisan tactics and demagoguery, but acknowledge honest devotion in both camps, how on a Marxist materialistic basis are we to make more than a partisan choice between them? If there is really a problem of justice and of social morality here, what view of human character and of the social process is required for the solution or even for the recognition of this problem?

Marx called religion "the opium of the people," and his followers have habitually dismissed bourgeois morality along with religion as mere instruments to keep the workers docile and manageable. Rosa Luxembourg lampooned the idea of Justice as the old ungainly Rosinante on which so many Quixotic world-reformers have ridden and got nothing but black eyes. Morality is a function of the economic system. There are no moral principles; the value of moral ideas is their value in the tactics of the class-struggle. So Marx scorned the utilitarian preoccupation with pleasure no less than the moral rigorist's exaltation of duty.

In his evaluations the socialist does not pretend to an illusory universality. Instead of being hampered by bourgeois morality in their struggle, the workers in waging the class-war will achieve the conditions of a new morality. In moral discussion we cannot presume to deal with human life in general. As Lenin put it, we must "accept openly and clearly the standpoint of a definite social group." [9] The communist consciously espouses the proletarian side. The 'moral question' then becomes for him this: What can best contribute to the accomplishment of the proletarian aim? He may undertake ethical studies, of the

historical conditions or the development of morals, but moral condemnation is for him plainly a means of speeding the destruction of capitalism.[10] So N. Bucharin (1888-1938), in the days when he was recognized expositor of Russian socialism, stated explicitly that for the proletariat ethical norms are technical rules of effective procedure. For instance, the communist must not steal, must not himself, for his own benefit, rob the capitalist. Why? Because that unfits him for the class-struggle with capitalism.[11]

On this interpretation of moral principles as "hypothetical imperatives" of communist tactics, the motivation of the communist *appeal* remains unjustified. If I want the dictatorship of the proletariat, I must act thus and so. But ought I to want it? To what does the communist agitator appeal for converts and for loyal support? The closing words of the *Communist Manifesto* come to mind: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!" This call does not do justice to the motivation of the movement of social revolt. In its many currents it was marked by disinterested and self-sacrificing leadership: Marx and Engels, Lassalle, Rodbertus, Ruskin, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, Lenin.

Socialism, for all its dismissal of morality and religion, is itself vitalized by motives of a moral-religious character. It makes no provisions in its doctrine for the creative principles and values by which it has been actually sustained. Marx's pages continually reveal the moral indignation which motivates his exposure of the capitalistic system, and especially his denunciation of child-labor, "converting immature human beings into mere machines for the fabrication of surplus-value." [12] To ignore the socialist's actual and often intense response to moral motives is not only to ignore the spirit behind the letter but also to overlook some of the most aroused social conscience of our time. But unless these motives and principles are recognized explicitly in the program of reform, the meaning of the struggle for social justice remains confused and its real success precarious. So the Belgian socialist Émile Vandervelde (1866-1938) recognized and expressed it: "If the workers triumphed without having attained their indispensable moral development, their reign would be abominable and the world would be plunged again into just as great sufferings, brutalities and injustices as at present." [13] Some socialist thinkers have seen and sought to utter spiritual meaning in the social struggle. So, for example, Jean Jaurès (1859-1914) contemplated the socialist movement as a vast religious quickening of spirit and conscience in modern life. But the general

socialist emphasis has been the contrary: a suspicion of any moral or religious expression of the social struggle as likely to compromise the explicitly proletarian-revolutionary character of the movement. Interesting in this connection are Lenin's recorded reactions to Tolstoy. Unmistakable is Lenin's admiration for Tolstoy, for his art and his devotion to the people. But Lenin finally condemned Tolstoy's social gospel: the Christian ideal of universal love and non-resistance, the appeal to the spirit, the emphasis on conscience and on moral self-realization. In Lenin's judgment this was all utopian and reactionary, harmful teaching.[14]

The basic ethical criticism of the socialistic program remains. If man is first and foremost an economic agent, and human life merely a process of material conditions, there is no ground for the protest against social injustice. But if indeed there is injustice in capitalistic exploitation, it is because man is more than an economic agent and society no merely economic relation. In that case, however, we require a complete reconstruction of the program of social protest, a revised estimate of man's rights and duties and of the social order that is to realize them, a social order that may not necessarily fit in the frame of socialist formulae. If you emphasize justice to men, then economic systems and institutions become instrumentalities of human self-realization, then you may advocate social control and production in certain fields of activity, but may well demand individual initiative and direction in others.

This fundamental inadequacy in socialistic doctrine must be pointed out. Yet it does not close the main issue. We must not neglect the socialist's motive for resisting any moralizing, his suspicion of Christian or any other spirituality. They seem to cloud his main purpose; they are to him superstitious or hypocritical barriers to radical reform. We need not elaborate this point, on which Marx and his followers have expended so much satire. Perhaps one instance may suffice. Bishop Butler's vindication of conscience and his doctrine of the justice of God are preëminent in British ethics and theology. And yet, when preaching before the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Butler saw fit to admonish them as follows: "Of these our colonies, the slaves ought to be considered as inferior members, and therefore to be treated as members of them; and not merely as cattle or goods, the property of their masters. Nor can the highest property, possible to be acquired in these servants, cancel the obligation to take care of their religious instruction. . . . If the necessity of the case requires, that they may be . . . for our advantage, made

as miserable as they well can be in the present world; this surely heightens our obligation to put them into as advantageous a situation as we are able, with regard to another." [15]

So, if we criticize the socialist for his preoccupation with economic values, we must yet recognize the significance of his radical emphasis on them, for they have not received due attention in the traditional ethical theories. The social revolutionary has burned into the contemporary conscience this neglected idea; he has compelled honest moral and religious reflection, even while criticizing his materialism, to acknowledge the importance of the social-economic fruits of any true righteousness. In thus compelling virtue to step from the altar or from the study into the factory and the market-place, the socialist has served to give the moral problem of our time a concrete reorientation, social-economic substance and vitality. The present growing alertness of Catholic and Protestant leadership to the problem of economic justice is most significant in this connection. One could not imagine a Christian prelate of Joseph Butler's moral earnestness uttering today such words as those we cited from his missionary sermon delivered two centuries ago.

CHAPTER XXXV

REVIVAL OF IDEALISM. THE ETHICS OF SELF-REALIZATION



1. *Post-Kantian Idealism and British Philosophy*

Idealistic philosophy, which had yielded before the rising tide of naturalism and positivism towards the middle of the nineteenth century, was not long in returning to new advance. Just because its revival was due to a growing conviction that the rival philosophies did not fully comprehend the reality of spiritual values, it was bound to concentrate on moral and religious ultimate problems.

The ideal aspirations of romanticism, which in Germany had led to the achievement of monumental systems of philosophy, found in British life mainly literary or religious-social utterance. Yet it was not to be expected that minds which had been moved by Shelley and Coleridge, by Wordsworth or Carlyle or Ruskin, could remain content with utilitarian or positivistic principles in philosophy. The genuine humanitarianism which inspired the advocates of the Greatest Happiness Principle and their growing recognition of a hierarchy of pleasures and values raised the question of the more ultimate moral foundations. The same problem was approached, though not clearly acknowledged, in the endeavors of evolutionists to achieve a sort of biological perfectionism, an ethics of the most abundant and best functioning life. Empiricism, though prevailing, had never quite eclipsed Plato and Aristotle in the nurture of British intelligence; and it was only natural that cultivated minds, moved by ancient ideals and perplexed by what appeared to them as the inconclusiveness or the irrelevancy of naturalistic ethics, should seek in modern idealism a revindication of spiritual principles. What Coleridge had attempted in his Neoplatonic and Kantian studies was to be achieved by a later more thorough and more competent generation of thinkers: a synthesis of ancient and modern idealism, emphasizing the living reality of Spirit. This dual, Hellenic-German inspiration of modern British idealism should be kept in mind, but in the reformulation of its ideas the Post-Kantian influence was dominant, and the term Neo-Hegelianism which has described the movement is more than a convenient label. The systematic study of

German idealism and the more thorough mastery of Kant yielded translations, commentaries, and then new philosophical treatises of major importance.

2. *Green's Prolegomena to Ethics*

That the new philosophy, while demanding a deeper metaphysical foundation of spiritual principles, was not negligent of the more immediate issues of political and social order was shown by its leading mind in ethics, Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882). The son of a country rector, a descendant of Oliver Cromwell, he combined religious with social zeal for reform. His personal influence on his students and fellow-townsmen was deep and lasting. A movement of practical idealism which led from Oxford to London and from local to broader national issues, had its source and initial stimulus in Green's teaching.

For all his practical-social interest and activity, Green's main approach to his problem was systematic-philosophical. His study of Kant had impressed upon his mind the importance of the problem, How is morality possible? His own examination of empiricism, as may be seen from his Introduction to the standard edition of Humes' *Treatise*, showed it as inconclusive. An atomic series of sensations cannot yield valid knowledge, nor is a mere cluster of ideas ever a real mind. Unless we recognize the mind's synthetic activity as essential in nature, knowledge and science cannot be comprehended. But as with Kant we resist the Humian atomism, we are enabled to go beyond Kant, by overcoming the dualism of experience and reality. The ultimate is not an abstract Absolute but the world of experience itself, in its ideally complete and perfect and concrete universality.

Knowledge is grounded in spiritual unity; consciousness points to self-consciousness. So the basic character of spirit cannot be a bare result or accumulation of 'natural' data; itself is ultimate, the direct manifestation of God in existence. Our spiritual career is a life in God, and our infinite potentialities as persons are eternally realized in the Divine. Green achieves that conception of human personality as finite-infinite which is so characteristic of modern idealism. In man is the evidence of the infinitude of spirit, but not the actual attainment of it. So we may recognize here the possibility of ethics but also its problem in detail. Man is in principle a spiritual being, and therefore his duty and his true career is to realize this spiritual character in his actual conduct, to live up to his true essence. Green's thought advances from an assured conviction in principle to a challenge in detail: idealism in theory and in practice.

Moral philosophy must be sharply distinguished from any mere anthropological description or natural history of human behavior.

Neither the utilitarian nor the evolutionist can advance beyond a recital of incentives and reactions. Their concluding evaluations are unwarranted, for they have not recognized in man a really evaluating agent. Evaluation and real moral obligation and a principle of worth all imply a spiritual character. This spiritual principle, as has been seen, goes beyond any empirical accumulation of data, but it is not transcendent in the sense of implying a metaphysical dualism. It reveals a depth and a range of being to which the natural sciences do not attain. So moral freedom is not utter indeterminism and a miracle in nature, but the self-determination of personality, revealing unity of spiritual principle rather than a causal concatenation of events.

The full realization of this spiritual character is our moral ideal, and the achieving of it, our true good. This gradual attainment of humanity is the heart of civilization. Although it has involved the accomplishment of outward results, it has not been in externalities nor yet impersonally in Humanity at large, but concretely in your and my careers and in the social order of our lives. For real values are always personal in origin or reference or connotation: values for, of, or in a person.[1] These values are true claims to satisfaction, but we should not confuse them with bare interests or pleasures. The determination to achieve an end with which the self has been identified is an act of will. Moral perfection thus involves the guidance of the will by reason and the actualizing of rational ideals by the will, in the dutiful loyalty of conscience. This distinction only reveals the complex integrity of character in moral experience.

Self-realization is thus for Green the moral ideal. But the self whose fullest realization is the end of moral activity is not an isolated self. Human experience reveals the increasingly and essentially social nature of the values with which spiritual character is identified. The advance from narrow selfishness to social-mindedness is really a growth in spiritual maturity. The individual's lower satisfactions and pleasures concern the pursuit and possession of goods which involve competition because they cannot be shared. Here one man's gain is or may be another's loss. But the deeper and higher realization of personality is in an attainment of values which demand social participation and are enhanced and the more truly possessed the more universally they are shared. Truth, beauty, justice, tolerance, loyalty, love cannot be realized or enjoyed in self-isolation. Social-institutional participation is the actual medium of achieving fullness of personality. This general principle of the Hegelian ethics is sustained more concretely by Green's idea of shareable goods, an idea of rich meaning and power and far-reaching implications.

The conception of organized society as an instrumentality for the

perfection of human character, which Green develops in his *Principles of Political Obligation*, combines Platonic-Aristotelian with Hegelian meanings. But there are marked characteristics of Green's social ethics which distinguish it from the theories with which it is mainly allied. Unlike Hegel's occasional tendency towards a Prussian exaltation of the state, Green is unwavering in his emphasis on the citizen's perfection of character as the main function or justification of government. Unlike the Aristotelian distinction of the drudges from the élite citizens, for whom alone ethical theories were composed, Green's thought is dominated by the Kantian conviction of the moral dignity of man, any man. His very recognition of the moral ideal as ever real in pursuit though never quite actually achieved, leaves him less impressed by the superior status of some men than by the moral claims and possibilities of all. Christian humility and charity blend with sturdy democracy in setting the tone of his moral and social program.

The real self of man, of any man, is higher than his bare individuality, broader and deeper. It embraces all society; it envelopes and concerns the whole world. Green has traced the gradual coming of this truth to clear consciousness. It is a major achievement of our civilization, but the full possession of it is still to come. We may acknowledge the principle of a community of good for all as an abstract idea, but it does not yet have the positive influence of a living conviction in our lives. We may, negatively, recognize certain limits to the violation of any man's moral rights, but we do not yet positively and actively identify ourselves with the pursuit of shareable values which make all men partners and colleagues instead of rivals. Green's social-political outlook as well as the directing ideal of his ethical thought cannot be better suggested than by quoting the concluding sentence of his eloquent discussion of Virtue as the Common Good. "Until the object generally sought as good comes to be a state of mind and character of which the attainment, or approach to attainment, by each is itself a contribution to its attainment by every one else, social life must continue to be one of war—a war, indeed, in which the neutral ground is constantly being extended and which is itself constantly yielding new tendencies to peace, but in which at the same time new vistas of hostile interests, with new prospects of failure for the weaker, are as constantly opening."

3. The Scope and the Bounds of Morality: Bradley

The metaphysical foundations on which Green had undertaken to establish the ethics of self-realization were being subjected to critical examination. Ethical idealism was being pursued within the frame of

social experience and civilization; but in the ultimate range of metaphysical principles the reality of moral values seemed scarcely abiding. A blending or alternation of these two views, with the second one prevailing, characterized the brilliant speculations of Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924). His *Ethical Studies,* published in 1876, has been called "epoch-making" and "the most readable extant book upon the subject." [2] While its brilliance discouraged some from venturing on the same field, it did not satisfy Bradley himself who, while holding fast to its main position, was unwilling to republish it without rewriting. The second edition appeared posthumously in 1927; during most of the intervening half-century, it was out of print or circulated in an anastatic edition, and did not have the wide influence of the frequently republished ethical treatises of Green, Sidgwick, and Spencer.

Against any ethical theory like the utilitarian which treats morality and estimates virtue in terms of some empirical results, Bradley regards goodness, not as attainment by the self of specific pleasures or advantages, but as the realization of the self. Morality is a being, not a having. The moral self is not an aggregate of pleasures; it is concretely integral in the process of experience. It is integral in principle; to attain this integrity, actually to become a whole, is our moral destiny. So self-realization is not merely functional efficiency or maturing of organs and powers, or evolutional perfection: it is the realizing of an infinite ideal in finite experience.

While morality would have no real meaning save by reference to the ideal infinite whole, the ethics of self-realization would lack content were it to be exhausted in a sublime declaration of the infinite ideal. The articulation of moral worth is in the process of experience, and is thus in a sense always finite. The scale of values is elevated to eternity, but each step on the ladder is taken progressively in time. Shall we say, morality is a perennial finite endeavor to achieve an eternal infinite perfection? Would it not be self-transcended and indeed self-extinguished in the eternally realized perfection of the Absolute? In *Ethical Studies* Bradley concentrates on the former of these two views, but recognizes the second prospect as disturbing to ethics. The fuller probing of the latter, and of many other finalities, was reserved for the metaphysics of *Appearance and Reality.*

Bradley finds actual content in moral experience in his portrayal of the realizing of personality through social participation. One of the doctrines by which his ethics is distinguished is that of "My Station and its Duties." The influence of Hegel is apparent here, but even more notable is Bradley's own keenness of moral perception and brilliance in

terse and revealing phrase. One epigram should suffice; it is typical also of his social-ethical doctrine: "Marriage is a contract, a contract to pass out of the sphere of contract." [3] Duty is not merely formal; in our actual life it is determined by the community of social-institutional life in which we find and can realize ourselves. The social order is the medium in which each person, in his own characteristic station, can realize his moral and spiritual possibilities. This thought, as we noted, moved Green to a demand for concrete reforms, to achieve in fact a social order in which men, all men, could find a sphere of self-realization. Bradley, in a more Hegelian vein, contemplates the history of civilization as a progressive spiritual achievement and tradition. "There is an objective morality in the accomplished will of the past and present, a higher self worked out by the infinite pain, the sweat and blood of generations, and now given to me by free grace and in love and faith as a sacred trust." [4]

But the exaltation of this social-ethical ideal did not keep Bradley from a more metaphysical glance above and beyond any human actualities. The moral ideal is ultimately and so in principle an ideal of perfection; but real perfection transcends striving and struggle, and so transcends moral experience. This conclusion finds further development and emphasis in *Appearance and Reality*. Morality is at the relational level of thought; it can never yield finality, and if pursued to its conclusion ends in self-contradiction. The super-moral sphere to which it leads is that of the religious consciousness. But religion also in the end reveals its instability as relational thinking, incapable of reaching beyond appearance.

The paradoxes in which absolutism involved Bradley's thought affected ethical method as well as the basic philosophical position of modern idealism. The unsettling inferences of *Appearance and Reality* might be elaborated, as they were by A. E. Taylor (1869-) in his *Problem of Conduct*, in which he questions the fundamental principle on which Green had relied and which Bradley had respected: the ultimate harmony of moral self-sacrifice and self-realization. (In his later thinking Taylor has sought different paths to certainty). Or else without the Bradleyan metaphysical embroilments, idealistic ethics might concentrate on self-realization as the highest good, with a reliance on religion for spiritual expansion and fulfillment. So James Seth (1860-1924) advocated the moral ideal of free personal realization of values as man's true heritage in God. J. H. Muirhead (1855-1940) espoused Green's doctrine of the Common Good, the ideal-social realization of personality; and John Stuart Mackenzie (1860-1935) likewise turned his attention increasingly to social-institutional problems of welfare.

4. Bosanquet's Account of Morality and Religion

The most comprehensive statement of modern British idealism, in logic, aesthetics, social philosophy, metaphysics and philosophy of religion, was achieved in the writings of Bernard Bosanquet (1848-1923). Bosanquet's early plans for a special treatise on ethics seem to have been forestalled by Bradley's *Ethical Studies;* but the main outlines of his ethical thought are discernible in his other works, especially in the two volumes of Gifford Lectures. Repeatedly acknowledging Bradley's influence on his thought, but resolutely undertaking to escape some of Bradley's difficulties, he raised profound issues in moral philosophy.

Bosanquet emphasizes stability and self-maintenance as essentials of individuality, and self-transcendence as inevitable in man's spiritual activity. We are finite-infinite beings. Our true career ever points to a completeness of attainment which our lives never actually yield. From the connectedness of a sand heap or a rock, to the organic texture of a plant or animal and to the concrete unity of self-consciousness, the advance is immense but gradual, the progressive manifestation of integrity and synthesis in reality. Morality, just as logical process or other spiritual activity, reveals the principle of realization through harmony with the Whole. This truth is most deeply plumbed in religion. We are saved by giving ourselves to the Supreme. The guiding purpose of the moral self is self-consistency and consistency with the whole of experience. The rational organization of the individual's desires and interests and the realization of spiritual character through social participation progressively point to the consummation of spirit in the Absolute.

Right valuation and right choice and decision involve recognition of the greater, the infinite life and reality in which our own nature is fulfilled. The individual self has moral dignity in his own right, for, as Bosanquet cites from the Letters of John Keats, the world is "the vale of soul-making." [5] Soul-making, the achieving of personality, involves self-remoulding, the soul's capacity to rise above its factual conditions to its fuller realization. In this double, finite-infinite character of man are revealed the hazards and the hardships of his career. Claims and counter-claims bind and also oppose him to God, to other men, to nature. He is in principle one with all things, and the achievement of this harmony is his true destiny, yet he is continually thwarted or overwhelmed by that which should be the medium of his realization. Moral experience manifests this conflict-in-relation: rights and sanctions unattained, duties acknowledged and unfulfilled, justice thwarted in the very conditions that alone could achieve it, perfection demanded and in the very demand for it ruled out.

Sheer morality, individualist ethics, cannot be a finality; it points beyond itself to a deeper realization of spirit. But moral experience is indispensable to this deeper realization. That is its dignity and reality as a stage in the finite-infinite career of the self. Were it not for the moral reach after the ideal, the sense of the frustration of mere individual attainment and the conviction of the higher destiny in self-transcendence would not be realized. Yet this conviction of deeper unity with God is implied in the first stirrings of conscience and moral aspiration. In the social order is manifested that essential involvement of each in the hazards and hardships of all to which religion has given a divine expression in the Christian doctrine of the atonement. From the level of bare individualism, with its network of claims and counter-claims, we have risen to the level of an all-comprehending life of fellow-membership.

So morality reveals that the finite self is more than it knows, but the achievement of this higher spiritual reality transcends moral experience. Even so the experience of pleasure and pain points to the demand for happiness, but the highest happiness transcends mere pleasure and transfigures pain in tragic dignity. On the level of moral judgment, good as good involves evil and opposition to it. But our highest form of judgment, for Bosanquet, is not the moral judgment of good and evil, but the judgment of perfection. "The universe may be perfect owing to the very fact, among others, that it includes, as conditions of finite life, both moral good and evil." [6]

In religious devotion the self makes this sublime ascent from moral effort to acknowledged unity with infinite perfection. There is no complacency or self-sufficiency here. In humility and in helplessness but with assurance, the self "will not admit that it *really* is what it is *in fact*." [7] Even its sense of individual frustration expresses only its conviction of a more abundant inheritance. In dying to itself it lives in God. So the eternal destiny of the self is not personal immortality but self-transcendence in the perfect reality of the Absolute.

Bradley's Absolutism and Bosanquet's doctrine of self-transcended and absorbed selfhood aroused radical criticism. John Ellis McTaggart (1866-1925) advanced a form of monadistic idealism. The universe is spiritual, but the Absolute is not personal. It is a society of selves, which are eternal, preëxistent and immortal. This doctrine pursued an idealistic argument to an atheistic conclusion. More inclined towards a theistic view of a real God and real and finite persons were the doctrines of Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison (1856-1931) and of Sir Henry Jones (1852-1922). Pringle-Pattison, whose chosen method was one of "construction through criticism," held fast to the reality of God, but also to the real moral career and values of finite persons who were not for

him merely finite appearance. We must beware, in our ideas of perfection, not to dismiss the nature of spiritual values as we know it. Sir Henry Jones emphasized the idea of an active and moving perfection. Perfection is not perfection if truth, goodness, beauty disappear in it. Not even for the sake of religion can we repudiate the world of endeavor or deny the reality and the value of the moral act. Rather should we follow the lead of moral and other valuation and conceive of perfection as inexhaustibly active. Reality is in process, and perfection is perfectibility.

5. *American Idealism. Royce's Philosophy of Loyalty*

Some of the earlier currents of idealistic thought in America were surveyed in a previous chapter. Theological in its aim and mystical in its resources, the idealism of Jonathan Edwards yielded to Emerson's no less mystical but more cosmic-poetic vision of the Oversoul and to his more positive conviction and estimate of the finite individual. The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the organized spread of German idealism, of Kant and Goethe but more especially of Hegel, in the school of philosophy led by William Torrey Harris (1835-1909) first in St. Louis and later at Concord. Harris' *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* gave a number of rising philosophical minds the medium of publishing their ideas: Peirce, James, Dewey, Royce.

In critical grasp and in systematic reconstruction of modern idealism, no American thinker ranks with Josiah Royce (1855-1916). The voluntaristic strain which he emphasized in his philosophy, and in which Fichte and even Schopenhauer contended with Hegel, and his deep preoccupation with moral and religious values secured him a unique place in American ethics. During a generation marked by a popular naturalism combining utilitarian and Spencerian-evolutionistic versions of a philosophy of expediency, and also by the rise of newer winds of doctrine, pragmatic, realistic, Royce gave American idealism its most thorough and mature expression.

Our examination of Royce's far-flung system must concentrate on the ethical issues. Here we may note a reconciliation or union of the ethics of duty and of self-realization in the moral ideal of loyalty. We also remark a development of this ideal, not always under the name of loyalty, which retains Hegel's and Green's emphasis on social ethics but emphasizes the reality and the rôle of the individual self more explicitly than is done by Bradley or Bosanquet. These two main aspects of Royce's ethics are revealed in the detailed study of his thought.

Royce regarded the ethics of hedonism or mere expediency as inadequate because it fails to express the real character of the self. A per-

son cannot be understood as an organism with certain functions, impulses, and reactions; a real individual can never be truly recognized in terms of conditions and consequences. Personality in the full sense is the adequate expression of an ideal purpose. Perfection, self-realization is thus an involvement of the present by the future; moral insight is self-prospective. So Royce had early stated it as a first rule of conduct: "In thy acts treat all the future as if it were present." [8] Moral life is the achieving of one's purpose and meaning. But one's meaning and purpose, central in every moral act, are never fulfilled in any act. Man is forever recognizing his truer self, beyond the reach of his performance.

The realizing of self is thus an ever-impending demand. Duty is that disinterested devotion to the ideal through which the actual self rises from mere gratification to achievement of worth. The sovereign principle is imperative in my actual conduct, for only in it can I more perfectly realize what I mean to be, and only in myself can it find this unique realization. That alone is my duty which expresses my part in the ideal Whole. Through it I am a true person and irreplaceable: Nobody in the universe can do this duty for me. "My duty I must myself do." [9] Towards this conclusion Royce moved in his great work on *The World and the Individual.* I am in God, but I am not passive and transitory. "The best world for a moral agent is one that needs him to make it better." [10] The moral self is unique and irreplaceable; but it is not exclusive. It is social and finds its meaning in and with others. The progressive emphasis on the social is characteristic of Royce. Moral experience and achievement, genuinely individual, is likewise communal. This was Royce's insistence in his first book, and on that note he concluded his career. Unselfishness is a condition of self-realization. My own fuller life remains unuttered, and yours also, unless we find it each in the other and in the All.

The importance of social ethics is thus paramount, and Royce interpreted in his own way the moral rôle of institutions and the ideal of the common good. But he regarded as his distinctive contribution to ethics the formulation and the advocacy of the principle of loyalty. Loyalty is "the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause." [11] Royce recognized the changing standards of our moral consciousness, our perplexing search for abiding objects of devotion, the challenge which an imperative moral principle presents to self-expression, the apparent check to individuality which duty involves. But in our testing of other moral aims and standards,—happiness, social conformity, effective power, independence and self-possession, serenity,—we are always thrown back upon the need of loyal devotion. Even in the conflict of different loyalties, it is the principle of loyalty

itself that can achieve their reconciliation, subordination, or harmony. The highest loyalty is not devotion to any specific end but the devotion which sustains and promotes the loyal spirit, *loyalty to loyalty*. This is Royce's revision of Kant's ideal of the purely dutiful will.

The fundamental duties and virtues of our civilized life may be interpreted as special instances of loyalty to loyalty. Thus justice means fidelity to human ties in so far as they are ties. And benevolence is direct concern in your influence on your fellowmen whose lives engage yours. The organization of loyalties unifies a man's life in a single purpose. This is the achievement of true moral personality. A condition of this achievement is the guiding devotion to the principle of loyalty, conscience in action. It results in the cultivation and spread of loyal spirit, a maximum of fidelity, the marks of a moral society. Without this spirit, men fail of true self-realization. The betrayal of it, in disloyalty and faithlessness, is moral suicide.

The reinterpretation of duty in terms of loyalty is regarded by Royce as "deep-going and transforming, not only for ethics, but for most men's views of truth and reality, and of religion." [12] In his work *The Problem of Christianity* he undertook to interpret Christianity as "the most highly developed religion of loyalty." [13] It is the ideal of the Spiritual Community which gains the ascendent in this view. Men are to win salvation in union with the Community. Unaided and unsustained, the mere individual is under a heavy and guilty burden; in the spiritual union the unstained atones for the guilty. The individual finds his truest realization in loyal devotion within the life of the Spiritual Community. The Community develops, sustains, redeems him. So the moral law is transfigured by the Christian ideal of the Beloved Community, the Kingdom of Heaven.

A more explicitly theistic version of idealism, emphasizing the personality of God and the unambiguously personal immortality of men was attempted by George Holmes Howison (1834-1916). Definitely theistic in its commitment is also the personalism of Borden Parker Bowne (1847-1910). In his *Principles of Ethics* he portrays ideal good as "conscious life in the full development of all its normal possibilities." [14] This development marks the spiritual perfection of the individual, in social participation and communion.

6. French Idealism and Spiritualism

Some French positivists while sharing Comte's renunciation of metaphysics, distrusted or quite dismissed Comte's social religious vision, the Cult of Humanity. For them as for John Stuart Mill, Comte's truth was in the explicit advocacy of empiricist method. In French terms, posi-

tivism was the more competent reaffirmation of that philosophy of experience or ideology which Cousin and his school of eclectics had disdained as sensualism. Opponents of eclectic spiritualism utilized Comte's positive-scientific formulas, to restate the empiricist materialism and hedonism of Holbach and Helvétius. Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893) was a man of letters rather than a systematic thinker, and when moved by Goethe he could feel kinship with Spinoza or even with Hegel. But more characteristic was his effort to achieve a positive-naturalistic criticism of literature and art. Like other human expressions and institutions, religion and morality depend on empirical conditions. So he introduced his *History of English Literature* by declaring that "vice and virtue are products, like vitriol and sugar; and every complex phenomenon arises from other more simple phenomena on which it hangs." [15]

But other students of Comte saw in his phenomenalism a path to Kant, which they followed. Here was also a more scientific approach to Cousin's idealistic conclusions for those who regarded Cousin's eclectic intuitions as too shallow. In the neo-criticism of Charles Renouvier (1815-1903) the advance was from Comte to Kant, and with Leibniz toward spiritualism: from the surrender of substances and of any metaphysics, to a new monadology and to personalism. Renouvier's ethics set out from the conviction of conscience: against all ethics of consequences or sentiment or emotional incentives, he recognized the supremacy of an imperative ideal. Morality is expressed in the acknowledgment of this imperative duty; it involves the assurance of individual freedom: my capacity to act dutifully, to be as I ought. Duty lays claim to freedom; without it the idea of moral obligation is inadmissible. Duty implies further a world which sustains moral endeavor and finds its consummation in moral perfection, a realm of ends, God. The moral ideal demands the perfect harmony of goodness with justice. Without the gradual attainment of this harmony social progress is unthinkable; the perfect realization of it transcends the present scene of human activity and points to personal immortality. Renouvier's personalism resists any ultimate absorption of finite individuals, and inclines rather to the alternative view of a finite deity.

In more specific practice, Renouvier considers the adaptation or revision of the ideal principles of duty and right to the actually existing and imperfect conditions of human life. The last part of his *Science of Ethics* is devoted to an extensive examination of institutional ethics: moral problems of family life, of the economic system, political and penal régime, extra-social order and justice. How are we, without ceasing to acknowledge the ideal, to take cognizance of factual evils, in the

tactics of social adjustment, so as to achieve the truer perfection? Renouvier faces the menacing invasion of moral scepticism as to the ultimate reality of the ideal order. He tries to meet it by Pascalian strategy: in our moral resolution we waive the inconsiderable advantages of sensual living, to wager and stake our destiny on the reality of eternal worth.

Jules Lachelier (1834-1918) did not, like Renouvier, merely proceed towards idealism or find final refuge in it. He maintained it throughout, in writings marked by great concentration of thought and by conciseness of statement. Resisting empiricism, which leads to scepticism, and also the eclectic intuitionism, which makes too short work of our perplexities, Lachelier chose the Kantian critical method. But more positive idealistic strains influence him; that of Ravaisson's spiritualism should be noted. It is on the self-analysis of thought that he establishes his metaphysics. The levels of reality are the stages of thought; the primal basis of all being is the self-affirmation of thought; the summit of reality is perfection of thought. So in our career: our real character is not a product but an ever more perfectly free self-expression. We are what we affirm ourselves to be. Like Pascal and like Maine de Biran, Lachelier distinguished three orders, three grades of life: animal life, of impulse and receptivity to impressions but no active intelligence; human life, of systematic logical mind and personal character and choice; and higher still, the divine life, in which one rises above the limitations of individuality, is liberated, and is led by pure science, art, and morality to the contemplation of eternal values, the life in God. The moral imperative of duty is our unconditional affirmation of our supreme perfection and destiny. Our present life is morally neither goal nor obstacle; it is medium and vehicle of the more divine realization. Beyond but also through social and economic order, or science and art, or justice and charity themselves, is the supreme destiny of our true nature, in that divine City of which our cities are but images.

Émile Boutroux (1845-1921) continued the spiritualism of Biran, Ravaisson, and Lachelier. Between causal determinism and mere chance Boutroux recognized contingency as the real law of nature. Physical science traces the stage-setting of the drama of existence in which free creative activity marks the real action. God's creative activity is perfect and infinite freedom; our destiny is to achieve godliness, and the higher our mission, the greater is the range of our available freedom, our capacity for achieving perfection. This freedom is realized by reaching beyond self-interest, in social-mindedness, through humanity toward God. So morality rises to religion.

7. Italian Idealistic Ethics

Philosophical thought in Italy during the first half of the nineteenth century lacked vitality. Incapable of appreciating its two fertile thinkers of the period, Gioberti and Rosmini, it was content to transplant British or French empiricism and materialism. Systematic construction transcended its powers, but it did use philosophy to sustain liberal ideals in an age of political and social repression. Gradually the influence of German idealism affected it, especially in Naples which became a center of Kantian and of Hegelian studies.

Following the rehearsal of Hegelian doctrine by awed disciples like Augusto Vera (1813-1885), modern idealism found a more creative reinterpretation in the thought of Bertrando Spaventa (1817-1883). Spaventa penetrated beyond the letter to the spirit of Absolute Idealism. He viewed reality as inexhaustible spiritual process, "an eternal problem which is an eternal solution," ever potential-actual. Spaventa's influence on the newer Italian philosophy has been matched by that of his contemporary, Francesco de Sanctis (1817-1883), whose *History of Italian Literature* not only set a new standard of literary criticism but revealed to alert Italians the spiritual treasures of their culture, imparted a sense of living mind, and challenged it to seek and find concrete expression. The response to this creative idealism was not immediate nor general; but it has gained dominance and maturity in our day, in the thought of Croce and Gentile.

Like Vico, whose rôle in European thought he has revindicated, Benedetto Croce (1866-) regards reality as history, significant creative process. Croce's *Philosophy of Spirit* is not a study of mind knowing or experiencing external objects, but of mind as itself a theoretical and practical activity, knowing and practice. Reality has as many phases as there are kinds of spiritual activity. So knowing, theoretic activity, is twofold: intuition immediately and concretely expressive in art, and conceptual judgment aiming at logical validity. Practice is manifested as the will's commitment to individual or to universal ends: in economic or in moral activity. In Aesthetics, Logic, Economics, and Ethics are recognized the four pure concepts of reality: beauty, truth, utility, goodness.

Croce's ethical theory, developed in his *Philosophy of Practice: Economics and Ethics*, undertakes to meet the perennial issue between prudence and goodness, interest and virtue, utility and duty. Volitional activity involves a contest and a possible organization of ends. The error in moral philosophy has been a double one: on the one hand, a failure to distinguish the universal end of goodness or virtue from the

individual end of utility or pleasure; on the other hand, a confusion in treating this distinction as an opposition. Utilitarianism is finally unavailing, not because it insists that the good life is one of satisfaction and happiness,—that is its true perception,—but because it would express moral value merely in terms of pleasure and utility. So the Marxist description of man as an economic agent and the economic-materialistic interpretation of history may be correct in their citation of the evidence, but are confused and inconsequent in using it as adequate basis for moral judgment of the existing social order. Morality does not dismiss or oppose utility, but it goes beyond and above it. It concerns individual action, but consists in the volition of a universal end: not individual pleasure, nor the general advantage, but universal value. Evil is precisely in the contradiction and clash of desires. To attain singleness of character in the volitional act is the implied aim in moral good. In Croce's own case, as he tells us, it was the earnest struggle with the antithesis of pleasure and duty, habitual or impulsive and ideal motivation, which led to the achievement of his ethics.

Croce would champion and also transcend Kant. Kant is eminently right in exposing hedonistic and other spurious ethics and in emphasizing the autonomous ethical principle. "Moral action has no other motive than morality itself"; and after Kant "no serious philosopher can be anything but a Kantian in ethics." [16] But Kant's error was in thinking that morality involves the separation of virtue from utility or happiness. When we perceive the error of the hedonist's espousal of utility as moral value, we also see Kant's confusion in trying to divorce them. Moral activity leads beyond immediate individual interest, but it is not disinterested. In developing this relation of Economics to Ethics as the two stages of Philosophy of Practice, Croce endeavors to vindicate the autonomy and the sovereignty of moral values, but also their concrete realization in the daily lives of men. Moral perfection is never wholly reducible to the frame of factual conditions, yet in the clashing ends of our social economy it demands a harmony of universal moral values.

To Giovanni Gentile (1875-) philosophy and the history of philosophy are together one as a process of mind. Art, religion, and philosophy represent phases of spiritual activity: art finding its integration in religion, and both of them realizing progressively a true synthesis in philosophy. Only an idealistic philosophy can do justice to morality, for "morality is the value of a world which has its root in mind." [17] Unless we recognize reality as spiritual, we cannot understand moral judgment. The moral world is spiritual reality as it is being realized, and man is a moral agent in process: he achieves himself

morally in action. Evil is a check or frustration of this self-realizing of spirit. Yet in the very judgment of it as evil, our will recoiling from it constitutes it an element in a higher good. The value and the agent are both real in the act. Morality is not in conditions of nature or in external consequences, but in the act as revealing the quality and the character of will. So Christianity perceives truly the redeeming worth of love, without which the law is a dead letter; and Kant is right in emphasizing the autonomy of the dutiful will and moral freedom.

8. Idealistic Trends in German Thought

In the decline of Post-Kantian idealism after the middle of the century, as we noted in the previous chapter, the Hegelian dialectic itself was utilized by the socialists in their economic interpretation of history. The spread of materialism was a counter-blast to idealistic metaphysics. To some critical minds, this seemed a clash of dogmatisms, needing the sobering influence of a more cautious adherence to the facts of experience. The Neo-Kantian movement, led by Friedrich Albert Lange (1828-1875) and Otto Liebmann (1840-1912), advocated a return to a scientific phenomenalism. Lange's well-known *History of Materialism* sustained the materialist's sound regard for the actualities of nature, but demanded of him the equally sound recognition of the ideal principles and values of human life and character. A more explicitly positivistic attitude was maintained by Ernst Laas (1837-1885) in his work *Idealism and Positivism*, the second volume of which dealt with ethical issues. With Plato he resisted selfish pleasure-seeking and irresponsible scepticism, but he would establish moral values without any ascetic appeal to transcendent principles. Duties and rights have their origin in the social order, and the life of virtue can be explained and vindicated positively in terms of the complex interrelation of men's needs, interests, and actions.

The Kantian distinction between fact and value, "is" and "ought," raised again the problem of the ultimate relation of these two, and thus stimulated idealistic speculation. The philosophers of the "Marburg school" developed and revised Lange's Neo-Kantianism on their way to more systematic construction. In this work Hermann Cohen (1842-1918) was sustained by his younger colleague Paul Natorp (1854-1924), whose thought manifests Platonic influence. Cohen reaffirms with Kant the purely autonomous character of morality. The principle of moral value is not derivable from outside conditions but is realized in the free rational activity and endeavor of the moral will, and finds actuality in the social system of law. The ordered achievement of will-

ideals, to Natorp as to Cohen, is in the all-human enterprise of civilization. The fruition of individual character in social order, the central importance of the community, and the orientation of all institutional functions towards the guiding cultural ideal are more especially the principles of Natorp's social idealism.

The emphasis on historical development found expression on the one hand in a prosecution of historical studies, to which Hegelianism had already given a powerful stimulus. More especially in the field of ethics may be noted, in addition to Hartmann's *Moral Consciousness*, Theobald Ziegler's and Karl Köstlin's works on ancient morals, as well as the more comprehensive history of ethics by Friedrich Jodl (1848-1914). As a systematic historian of philosophy Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915) set the standard for his time; but it is in his interpretation of historical process that he especially interests us. History is the realization of the ideal of humanity. In manifold social coöperation the individual's life at any stage of culture attains universal significance, and society itself is a progressive achievement of a system of civilization. Historical life, ongoing significant activity, is ever self-propulsive: it does not point to an eternally set aim, but "the way itself is the goal of the way."

The realization of humanity in the history of culture and the interpretation of the meaning of life in a system of values are accentuated also by Heinrich Rickert (1863-1936), Windelband's successor in the Heidelberg chair of philosophy. This strain of ethical idealism is more familiar to us in *The Eternal Values* of Hugo Münsterberg (1863-1916). This work, a translation or paraphrase of Münsterberg's *Philosophie der Werte*, expressed systematically the world-view of a thinker who combined philosophical with psychological interests, and activity in German and in American thought. Münsterberg conceived of morality as conscious self-realization in which action is the achievement of an ideal purpose. When our will grows in harmony with our rational ideals, and is itself the active demand for the affirmation of the world of values, logical, aesthetic, moral, religious, the noblest meaning of life finds concrete expression. This activity of the will is wholly an action of the inner world. Moral obligation and moral worth are in loyalty to the ideal self. But in this activity the individual is allied and in communion with the heart of all reality. For the world is ultimately a deed, the fulfillment of will, achievement, completion, and infinite enhancement. A kindred strain of ideas has led William Stern (1871-1938) to a metaphysics of "critical personalism." In his work *Person and Thing* personality is regarded as the integrating category,

and the world is viewed as a system of progressively comprehensive personal unities, with God or the All-Person as the creative heart and summit of reality.

A Fichtean exaltation of the moral will characterizes the eloquently advocated philosophy of Rudolf Eucken (1846-1926). The heart of history for Eucken is in man's struggle for spiritual realization. Spirit is arduous activity; the world is a range and a challenge. Man strives to achieve intellectual and moral mastery and self-possession in his objective social world; he demands a harmony of the inner and the outer in his experience; but finally he seeks utter self-penetration of spirit. Eucken pleads tirelessly for concentration in the inner life as the greatest need of our modern age: spiritual self-preservation. Convinced as he is that morality loses real character unless spiritual life forms the core of reality, he sees in moral activity man's communion, through the depths of his inmost being, with the Infinite, his "becoming infinite from within."

Friedrich Paulsen (1846-1908) who expounded panpsychism and combatted materialism in theory and in practice, undertook in his *System of Ethics* an Aristotelian teleological theory which he styled energism. The highest good individual and social, in his view, is the perfect development and exercise of life. Paulsen criticized the excessive formalism of Kant's ethics and undertook to subordinate duty to achievement of good, in the development and perfection of our nature, especially of its highest rational capacities. His doctrine of virtues would combine Greek with Christian ideals: self-control, honor, compassion and benevolence, justice, love of neighbor, veracity.

Thorough scientific grasp and systematic analysis rather than ardor of convictions and eloquent advocacy of them characterized the thought and the exposition of Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), a founder of modern psychology and premier savant of his day. The prosecution of experimental study of mental processes led him to an idealistic conclusion in philosophy, to vindicate the deeper reality of spiritual character.

Built on social psychology and confronted by the self-affirmation of the individual will, Wundt's ethics is involved in the issues of individualism and universalism. The realization of personal character requires the field of social activity and institutions. Wundt's ethics recalls Hegel's in its survey of the family, the community, the state, and the common life of humanity as expanding spheres of man's moral fruition. The individual is not plowing a lone furrow; his labor is communal. Even man's inmost guide in conduct, 'conscience,' is interpreted by Wundt not so much as balanced and integral judgment, 'knowing

together'; like Feuerbach, he regards it as socialized judgment, 'knowing with someone.' Yet Wundt does not overlook the virtues of the heroic pioneering conscience, the career of the moral genius who turns a new page in the spiritual history of humanity. There is perplexity here. What is preëminently true of a Socrates or a Jesus cannot be wholly ignored in the least of us. It may be observed here that Wundt's distribution of emphasis is the reverse of Eucken's. The problem is one of not merely balancing but truly integrating two aspects of the complex moral experience.

9. *Moral Values and the Philosophy of History*

The social germination and growth of mind, of speech and myth, ideas and institutions were investigated in Wundt's monumental *Folk-Psychology*. The survey and interpretation of ideas in a social-historical setting is increasingly characteristic of our time. The explicit advocacy of historical synthesis as philosophical method marked the work and the spreading influence of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey excelled in vast outlook and living reconstruction rather than in systematic thoroughness of thought. He undertook to vindicate, in a naturalistic age, the true method of humanistic-historical studies, as Kant had undertaken the vindication of science in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. His life's work might be called an attempted "Critique of Historical Reason."

Dilthey's method set out from a recognition of the complex integrity of life, which thought may study in detail or analyze, but which it should never disrupt or distort. Philosophy is the expression in thought of this living integrity. Nature admits of being objectively known, but life, human experience, must be lived out in penetrating insight and communion. Thus only can a historical process be really grasped and understood. True historical thinking is no mere examination of parts, but always a recognition of elements in a context, always of the living Whole, integral and synthetic. Dilthey distinguished three types of philosophy and pointed out in each of them the pervading influence of the basic view-point on specific analysis and valuation. Naturalism is materialistic and necessitarian in cosmology, sensualistic in theory of knowledge and in practice, hedonistic-utilitarian. The Idealism of Freedom sees the world as the realm of active, creative spirit, and the lives of men as the perfection of personal capacities in loyal devotion to ideal ends. Objective Idealism contemplates in the immense variety of nature the manifestation of a universal harmony. Wisdom consists in the self-understanding of thought. Philosophy must consciously spring out of the living Whole of experience, in living and

manifold responsiveness to the historical process, intellectual, artistic, social, religious. The individual mind and thought must be seen in their social setting, and historical intelligence must be seen and recognized as integral and creative in the world-process. Thus oriented, man's career can find also its true practical direction. No longer subject to prejudices, we may recognize our scope and more effectively realize our characteristic values.

Dilthey's relation to positivism involved a shared social standpoint, but vaster and richer historical perspective, and a different distribution of emphasis. More definitely positivistic minds before him had studied the development of moral ideas in the social process. So Rudolf von Jhering (1818-1892) was mainly interested in the genesis and in the psychology of law, the survey and analysis of the social-historical formation of institutions and laws expressing human valuations and purposes. His work was a solid contribution to descriptive ethics and comparative jurisprudence. Closely related to Dilthey's work was the sociological interpretation of Christianity which engaged Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923) in his *Social Doctrines of the Christian Churches and Groups*. The turbid course of communist and fascist revolution, confusing religious and economic issues, had spread the interest of more analytic minds in the writings of Max Weber (1864-1920). Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, as was noted in our fifth chapter in connection with Calvinism, undertook to establish a connection between the rise of capitalism and the Protestant's idea of serving God in and by his daily work, which accorded moral dignity to gainful pursuits. Back of his specific argument Weber emphasized a fundamental point of social science: against the Marxist treatment of ideas as the results of economic-material conditions, here were ideas growing into institutions. Weber combined sociological research in various fields with earnest if unavailing political activity during the first World War. Of systematic interest is Weber's doctrine of the value-neutrality of true science. Our moral life is in practical devotion to values the choice of which expresses our view of the world. Ethical partisanship in the guise of science, however, reveals prejudice and neglect of the actual conflict of values, which human life manifests and in which there is no ascertainable ultimate perfection. We are reminded here of Spinoza's resolution in his *Ethics* to abstain from evaluation and to concentrate on understanding.

Sociological relativism in its ethical implications had found systematic expression in the *Introduction to Moral Science* by Georg Simmel (1858-1918). In this critique of fundamental ethical ideas, Simmel opposed all ethical monism and undertook a descriptive-scientific treat-

ment of the 'varieties of moral experience.' His conclusion was that moral principles lack universality and finality. The analysis of duty, of egoism and altruism, of ethical merit and blame, of happiness, of freedom, all point to relativism. Moral values and ends do not form a unitary system, nor admit of a rational hierarchy: they manifest diversity and tragic conflict. We can study their emergence in the social process and the conditions which they sustain or transform; we may note the relative stability which they attain in the cultural system; but we should not confuse this sociological universality with the eternity of principle in speculative ethics. The science of morals should not go beyond the specific and varied evidence. The reader of Simmel's book might be reminded of Bradley's *Ethical Studies*. Bradley found moral experience incapable of expressing the fullness of his metaphysical reality, to which his idealistic loyalty remained firm. Simmel detected in his analysis of moral experience, as in his sociological investigation of other fields of human activity, cumulative ground for renouncing metaphysics of any sort. The explicit scientific relativism of his earlier thought inclined later towards reliance on biographical analysis to yield an insight into personality and into the universal spirit of culture. As from landscapes to miniatures, psychological analysis may turn from culture studies to the portrayals of individual temperament and tone. Ludwig Klages (1872-) has in our day given this tendency some vogue with his *Science of Character*. A more systematic study, influenced by the rich human understanding of Dilthey, is the work of Eduard Spranger (1882-), *Types of Men*, in which he examines the basic kinds of individuality as six attitudes towards life: the theoretic, the economic, the aesthetic, the social, the political, and the religious.

CHAPTER XXXVI

ETHICAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

1. Sociological Methods in Morals

Repeatedly we have found the modern mind alternating between the quest for the ultimate and the resigned or contented inspection of the nearer scene. So the revival of idealistic metaphysics is accompanied by renewed sociological positivism. Our concluding chapter may begin with a brief mention of this contemporary sociological method in ethics.

Two leading French sociologists, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857-1939) and Celestin Bouglé (1870-1940), develop the general position which Durkheim had outlined and in which the influence of Comte is evident. They undertake frankly the study of comparative morals. Instead of deducing a system of ethical principles from a theory of reality or from an analysis of human nature or from the general theory of value, they study the social evolution and actual regulation of conduct. Morality is a social fact, developing under certain conditions of social life. The sanction of its rules is relative to those conditions and accordingly subject to revision.

The scientific treatment of morals is difficult, and it is apt to be suspected as morally disruptive. But, we are told, it alone can give us an undogmatic objective grasp of morality. In place of the traditional ethical theories, practical ethics is now entering the field, that is to say, sociology: an investigation of the social roots of morality and a scientific outline of its culture. Lévy-Bruhl undertakes to meet certain objections to his method. We are not left without rules of conduct while forming our moral science, for these rules are a social reality, which science investigates. Nor is conscience repudiated in being recognized as a relative social product; it still has imperative principles. More generally, this method does not lead to ethical scepticism. We acknowledge the moral order of life when we have grasped its social genesis. The ethical science in the future will not be a part of a philosopher's system. It will be cumulative research, the collaboration of investigators in different fields, biology, psychology, ethnology, perfecting our

survey of the social past and our understanding of the present, as a basis for reasonable social planning and redirection.

Clear and explicit in rejecting deduction from alleged first principles or universal ideals and in concentrating on the particular evidence at hand, this sociological naturalism is ambiguous in the more ultimate valuations expressed in its social planning, or in its provisions for the resolute non-conformity of social reformers or conscientious objectors. Sociology traces the paths of past experience, points out the cross-roads. But how can it judge what way we ought to follow, or judge between different courses pursued? Would not the sociologist here vaguely appeal to principles of valuation which are plausible or actually operative in our society but which have not been established in his procedure and are perhaps debatable? Though we may renounce rationalism initially, we have to rely on reason in the end.[1]

Among British sociologists, Leonard Trelawney Hobhouse (1864-1929) emphasized the importance of the rational factor in the direction of conduct, in his *Rational Good.* His earlier solid work in comparative ethics, *Morals in Evolution,* had traced the development of conduct from customary adherence to the recognition of moral obligations in social behavior, and then to the more rational conception of principles and ideals. While recognizing the functions of impulse and feeling in human conduct, he points to reason as the principle of interconnection and organization of experiences. The rational good is in a harmony of purposes and relations, in individual feeling-tone and in social co-operation. On the other hand, Edward Westermarck (1862-1939), whose notable work on *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* was noted in an earlier chapter, emphasizes the importance of emotion in moral judgments. His more recent work on *Ethical Relativity* is a sociological study of morals from this point of view. Westermarck derives the moral emotion of disapproval from anger and revenge, subspecies of resentment, and moral approval from retributive kindly emotions like gratitude. These emotions are expressed in moral judgments when we judge disinterestedly. This impartiality has a social source, the group-indignation over some socially harmful or disruptive act. But the personal reference and reliance prevail in the grading of values. The 'higher' morality is my own, that with which I am identified, or rather that to which reflection has finally led me. There is evident balancing here. With the advance of experience, we are told, the moral emotions come to be "more and more influenced by thought and reasoning." Approval and conscience are apparently emotions, but the better approval is that which is better considered. So conscience would seem to express the most thoughtful feeling in any circum-

stances. The ethics of sentiment here shows its characteristic need of rational sustenance.

2. *Moral Education and Religious Modernism*

The perennial issues between ethics and theology have found practical expression in the problem of moral education in the public schools. The separation of church and state in modern democracies, as it ruled out the catechism from the public school program, imposed the task of secular moral instruction. The gravity of this need has not been so keenly felt in countries like America, where a great many churches supported by their parishioners had well-organized Sunday-school programs. But here also a radical change is noticeable. In the earlier days when church-going was very general, and was sustained by regular Bible reading and religious devotion at home, even the secular school reflected the conventional piety. Now family religious instruction is even less general than church-attendance. The church, which in the past had directed the moral training of the young, fails to reach a great part of the population. The young generation, growing up without religious and moral instruction, represents a social hazard which modern educators cannot ignore but which has not been met adequately.

In Germany before the first World War the problem was solved by dividing the school pupils into groups and placing each group for moral-religious instruction under the direction of a Lutheran minister or Catholic priest, according to the pupil's religious affiliation. This system met with objections even in Germany where only two main churches divided the field. It promises little for denominationally conglomerate lands like America or Great Britain. In emphasizing sectarian differences, it would tend to defeat one of the main social purposes of the public school: the purpose of building up a spirit of tolerance by mutual understanding and daily coöperation.

The plan of secular moral instruction was undertaken in France for the self-preservation of the Republic. French royalism had found in the Church a willing ally: so the Republic excluded the religious orders from any participation in school-work. In place of the traditional religious training, France undertook secular moral instruction. Its object was to teach French youth sound principles of conduct, to impart understanding of the moral problems of life, individual and social, and to inspire high ideals and a spirit of devotion to them.

This training has been described by its critics as lacking the real spirit which only religion can give to morals. In its earlier stages the positivistic humanitaran note was modified to meet the demands of the churchman; the influence of Cousin's followers, like Janet and Simon,

and of Renouvier, had its effect in not breaking too brusquely with religion. But that theistic note has been subdued and eliminated, despite Catholic protests against godless education. Leaders in this work, like Ferdinand Buisson, have championed reason and conscience as abiding foundations of morality, have explicitly dismissed supernaturalism, and have looked to rational morality for true religious elevation in an enlightened life. But it has been charged that a new secular sectarianism has crept into the system. Capitalistic, socialistic, mildly liberal writers have written textbooks of morals with differences of opinion as real as those of the theologians of various denominations.

In spite of these and other objections, the future, and also its problems, seem to be in the direction of secular moral training. But it may well be questioned whether moral education means teaching morals in special classes. If the schools are to develop character and enrich the moral nature of the young, a thoroughly moral, that is to say a thoroughly sane, humane, just, tolerant, socialized spirit should take possession of the entire educational process. Real character education in the schools can be attained by giving the entire school program real character. This is not a problem of administrative or pedagogic details; it concerns the fundamental principles and the whole spirit of education. It likewise concerns the basic moral outlook on life: not a partial but the integral view of significant human life as the rational organization of values.

The promotion of the cause of moral education by actively organized leagues with distinguished leadership has been a noteworthy aspect of contemporary culture. Organized philanthropy outside of the churches spread in the establishment of social settlements and community houses in the large cities. The moral challenge of democracy in modern industrial life found an eloquent voice in Jane Addams (1860-1935), the founder and head-worker of Hull House in Chicago. Her *Democracy and Social Ethics* untangles the confusion of values in the congested immigrant colonies: the clash of plain kindliness with trained relief in charitable effort; filial relations and readjustment of household economy; industrial and educational problems, and the complexity of political reform.

An important rôle in spreading the idea of moral education and the reorganization of modern life on moral principles has been played by the Societies for Ethical Culture, started in 1876 by Felix Adler (1851-1933). They were leading factors in the organization of International Moral Education Congresses. For growing thousands their community houses have provided centers of moral-religious stimulus and devotion. They have been active in educational reform, notably at the Ethical

Culture School in New York. Adler's *Ethical Philosophy of Life* is guided by a Hebraic deep sense of righteousness and personal inviolability and by a Kantian conviction of duty and dignity. Not men's equality but their moral equivalence marks their true destiny: the realization of unique spiritual character by each in a social system of harmony and tolerance. Moral right is the basic principle of all social reform, and moral scope is the ground of true religion. The supreme ethical rule is: "Act so as to elicit the best in others and thereby in thyself." This basic principle does not incline Adler to any easy optimism. Men are to recognize frustration as incident to human effort, but also as a possible condition of growth and greater realization. "The better may be within the reach only of the exceptional few, the best is within reach of all." [2]

The movement stigmatized by the Vatican as Modernism has represented in the main an effort to discourage Catholic reliance on dogmas of doubtful validity, in order to concentrate on living Christian truths of thought in action. Beyond all doctrinal formulation or external-institutional order, the modernists emphasized our integral utterance in action, self-creative, self-revealing, penetrating the real. This is the primacy of the moral. The fullness of life is in love: love is the recognition and the espousal of the good. In the love of the good, our life is in God. The emphasis on moral action has found its fuller expression in the work of Maurice Blondel (1861-1939). The essence of philosophy is the heart's demand to find a meaning in life. We recognize our will as affirming an end with which it is in principle identified but which it does not in fact carry out. Here is the conviction of duty, but also of moral inadequacy. Our Christian experience must combine self-reliance in willing with a conviction of our utter dependence on Divine Grace. "After having done all as if expecting nothing from God, we must yet expect all from God as if we have done nothing ourselves." [3] Morality sustains religion, and finds its full meaning in it.

The struggle with the Catholic hierarchy which Ernest Renan led during the preceding generation has been continued in our day by Alfred Loisy (1857-1940). Of special interest is Loisy's view of morality in its relation to religion. He emphasizes the central importance of duty and obligation in morals. They cannot be reduced to any institutional or social compulsion but involve a mystical sense of sovereign exaction and need. There is thus a religious dynamic in morality as there is a moral core in religion. Loisy's examination of the origins and of the social evolution of morals is meant to keep in view this sovereign principle in man's life, not a formal imperative nor yet the mere expression of the growing needs of living, but directive principle of the

fullness of character,—concretely realized in the life of man, and in every realization pointing to the infinite perfection of the Divine.

Over against the plain rejection of traditional orthodoxy by negative or frankly secular minds, and the proposed reinterpretation of it by the liberals or modernists, we note also a growing demand to repossess it. Neo-Scholasticism proclaims the perennial verity of the basic principles and methods of St. Thomas Aquinas and undertakes to speak the Thomist-Catholic word in the language of our age. A significant statement of Neo-Scholasticism in our day may be read in the Gifford Lectures on *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* by Étienne Gilson of the Sorbonne and of the College de France (1884-). Gilson defends the vitality of the Christian philosophy, which is a faith seeking to understand. The Biblical tradition represents a strain of ideas essential to the understanding of modern philosophy. Much modern confusion is due to our failure to grasp the deep truths of Catholic insight. Christian philosophy cuts through the issues of optimism and pessimism by revising the basic question of valuation, which is not, whether the world is good or evil, but whether it suffices. Likewise Christian asceticism is not negative, like Stoic repression. It positively fulfills desire by revealing its divine object. Nothing worldly satisfies it, for it is meant to reach unto God. Christian ethics found all man's worth and beauty and honor in virtue, but regarded "virtue itself as honourable only because it leads man to God." [4]

Catholic Modernism and Neo-Scholasticism are different expressions of faith seeking understanding. Outside of Rome, the demand for rapprochement of religious and philosophical-scientific ideas is a feature of contemporary thought. Significant is the prevailingly ethical orientation of these discussions. So, for instance, A. E. Taylor, whose earlier speculation we noted as embroiling him in the inconclusiveness and the confusions of morals and religion alike, expounds now confidently the theological implications of morality, in his Gifford Lectures on *The Faith of a Moralist.* While erudite philosophy is thus elucidating divine grace, revelation, miracles, and sacraments, we find William Ralph Inge, Dean of St. Paul's (1860-) turn in the evening of life from Neo-Platonic Christian speculation to examine candidly *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems.* Dean Inge reveals the utmost alertness to present conditions and issues. Not only the topics which he includes in his discussion,—the moral problems of industrial life, intemperate nationalism, the population question, birth-control,—but his manner of treating traditional themes, such as asceticism and an imperial church, may suggest to the reader the spirit in which enlightened religious leadership in our day is striving to meet crying moral problems.

3. Bergson's Two Sources of Morality and Religion

In his *Creative Evolution* Henri Bergson (1859-1941) struck one of the most widely resonant notes in contemporary thinking. James' pragmatism, Blondel's activism, the syndicalist upsurge of Sorel, all show Bergsonian influence. Beyond the schematic rigidity of mechanism this philosophy pointed to the pulsating reality of life. Evolution is a contest between mechanical passivity and the active vital urge, *élan vital.* Always materiality hardens life into fixed moulds, always the rising sap of new life cracks the bark of the mechanical. Habit and intuition are instances of the two processes on a high plane. Conceptual thinking schematizes, tabulates aspects and factors; but it is intuition which sees face to face: perceives directly not the spread of time but its real duration, not the notes but the song, the living body not the members.

Bergson traces two lines of evolution. One leads to the intelligence in mammals and in man; it is mediate, contemplative, analytic. It deals with its object or situation externally, pictures, classifies, speculates, but never penetrates in concrete action. The other evolutionary direction we may observe in the instinct of insects. Here is immediate life-springing activity, uncanny yet unthinking aptness; infallibly it proceeds straight to the aim, of which nevertheless it has no understanding. In ourselves also we feel deep upwelling streams of instinctive behavior, which intelligence undertakes to canalize, but has not quite surveyed or controlled. At the deeper levels of experience, in moments of intensity or crisis, we may see the rising stream find or make its own channel. Thinking mind then rationalizes or criticizes the direct action.

It is this counter-action of instinct and intelligence which Bergson studies in his work on *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.* Society is a beehive, but a hive of thinking bees. A great deal of our life, like the bee's or the ant's, is in unquestioning or even unconsidered social conformity; but not utterly, as in their case: our intelligence is ever on the alert reviewing, protesting,—an individual slant claiming generality. That which we call morality is twofold. It is implicit obligation, conformity to social exaction, ant-like and conventional in its adherence. But in the very sense of duty there is a self-reference and self-exaction in which the individual emerges. The individual will marshalls intelligence to challenge the social fiat. It meets the social "you must because you must" with the critical "why" in which the "I want" of self-initiative seeks expression. To understand morality we must consider "what obligation *would have been* if human society had been instinctive instead of intelligent." Such a view would com-

pensate for the opposite extreme of an individualism which ignores the social cohesion of human life. Moral obligation is social pressure; but it is also individual aspiration, the devotion of the pioneer: on the one hand, "Ye have heard that it was said"; on the other, "I say unto you." The moral individual reenacts in his own experience this dual rôle. Our moral reason may vindicate what it has not initially created; intelligence may sustain this or that duty; but the basic compulsion, the "obligatory in obligation does not come from intelligence." Or we may find ourselves, despite all respectable reasons, feeling bound to act contrary to regular obligation. Such is the complexity and the subtlety of moral motivation.[5]

Bergson applies his doctrine to the problem of moral education. There is a difference between moral instruction and moral influence; the second is the mystic way, subtler and more difficult, but creative. Mysticism engages him also in his study of religion. On the one hand he examines 'static religion'; "a defensive reaction of nature against what might be depressing for the individual, and dissolvent for society, in the exercise of intelligence."[6] But on the other hand is 'dynamic religion,' in which intelligence outreaches itself in mystical intuition. Neither in Greece nor in the Orient did mysticism attain its summit, beyond contemplation in creative action, as we find it in the great Christian saints. Bergson makes a plea for more generous judgment of the mystic appeal and response. He looks from order and stability to progress and creativeness; he is alert to a revealing immediacy of experience, luminous intuition, love pervading and transfiguring human existence. He would see moral pressure and moral aspiration as actual in society, but reaching beyond the social level to the deep realities of Life capitalized.

4. The Ethics of Pragmatism

The emphasis on experimental activity has characterized pragmatism from the outset: the world of experience is a problem of practical adjustment; ideas are demands or expectations which the event validates or refutes. Although pragmatism has given more attention to epistemological than to ethical issues, its practical motive is unmistakable, especially in the leaders of the movement. We may note it in James and in Dewey.

William James (1842-1910) came to philosophy by way of art, chemistry, medicine, and psychology; but what brought him to philosophy was a moral-religious urge for satisfaction combined with a radical-empiricist resistance to abstract principles. The modern scholasticism of science convinced him no better than the older theological

scholasticism. He would test his thought and his course of action not by the validity of axioms and principles, but by the practical upshot of his ideas. His scepticism regarding alleged verities makes him hospitable to possibilities. His world is one of venture, in which error is so probable that it is not so awfully solemn. Are we to miss the likely great alternatives because of the hazard of being duped? Morally this means a concentration on specific issues, with a weather eye for certain eventual assurances. Ultimate good does not concern James so much as this specific good: "Evil at large," he says, "is *none of your business* until your business with your private particular evils is liquidated and settled up." The only margin of freedom which the moral self demands, the only chance, is to make the future morally better; and faith that we can make it better is often the one condition of realization. So moral life is a life of intimate aspiration, but also a life of social endeavor, urge and obligation. 'Good' is always satisfaction of a demand; morality aims at the satisfaction of most demands, at what makes for the best whole. No general abstract rule will serve us here. Every real dilemma in conduct is unique. The basic requirement is that of the right kind of spirit. The deepest difference morally is "the difference between the easy-going and the strenuous mood." So much does achievement depend on a soul-consuming urge that men, believing in God, can 'live hard.' Always "religion will drive irreligion to the wall." The religious faith which morality requires is a conviction that the moral struggle is a real fight but not futile. Life is a heroic venture with the divine.[7]

John Dewey (1859-) has given the pragmatic-instrumental philosophy its best systematic expression. The most influential thinker in America today, he has also been, during the years of the first World War and the subsequent general unsettlement, a leader in courageous and generous liberalism. According to Dewey, a moral situation arises when alternative courses of action appealing to different interests and dispositions compete for selection. We deliberate between alleged contending goods; to confirm some one alternative as *the* good for us in that situation, rejecting the others, is the aim of our choice. In this emergence of a unified preference, conduct discloses a certain kind of self and a certain kind of world in the making. This prevailing self and world may or may not be justified in the event. Conduct like knowledge is experimental and enjoys no vested prerogative. The scope of ethics is coextensive with conduct. Dewey rejects the idea of a separate and solemn region of morals. This everydayness of morality indicates the sort of sanction on which it can rely. Moral science cannot set out with any axioms of perfection; it must plunge into the

midst of conduct, observing its biological roots and conditions, subjecting its course to detailed psychological analysis, acknowledging the social moulding and direction of individual behavior, aiming at a cumulative expression of the good life that is sustained by the event.

There are limits to provisional valuation like Dewey's, if moral loyalty is to be more than tentative and ambiguous. Nevertheless in resisting traditional abstract rigorism, this pragmatic ethics is salutary as an experimental warning against premature ultimates. Moreover, in firmly knotting morals with social-political research and organization, as Dewey and James H. Tufts (1862-) have done, the pragmatists have vitalized contemporary practical philosophy. Systems of government and economic institutions, just as moral principles, enjoy no initial sanctity. They have to vindicate themselves in process. But this experimental temper, wholesome in resisting the dogmatic and the static, must surely recognize a normal bent towards finality. Each conclusion, relative and provisional, is yet a recognition of principles and values by which experimenting, theoretical or practical, is judged.

5. *Transitional Thinking*

The rhapsodic strain popularized by Nietzsche and in different ways by seers from the East like Rabindranath Tagore has inspired some new self-declared poets of wisdom. The collapse of traditional verities since the first World War has led many especially in Germany to seek refuge in these misty or raucous gospels. The Darmstadt School of Wisdom of Count Hermann Keyserling (1880-) is a case in point. Keyserling's *Travel-Diary of a Philosopher* showed the world-scene as a changing reflection of his own moods. This indulgence of naïveté is dignified by him as philosophy. Against the rational discipline of the West, Keyserling would teach concrete vision and self-refinement and depth of tone. In the past mankind attained these treasures in the East; by this master's guidance, they can presumably be ours also.

Much stir is made by world-sweeping speculation for the hour, which, as the proponents are sometimes anxious to explain, is not also of the hour but was very well conceived before 1914. This would seem to indicate that the War was an element in, rather than the determining cause of the confusion or dissolution of principles in our day. Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) set philosophy of history to read the future course of destiny: a critical pendant to the historical dialectic of Karl Marx and a sonorous postlude to Nietzsche. The journalistic stir made by Spengler's *Decline of the West* illustrated our general unsettlement of ideas. He portrayed history as a seasonal cycle of cultural epochs, proceeding from the springtime of heroic creativeness to the bleak

winter of sterile materialistic-utilitarian practicality. In this view, the ascendency of ethics in philosophy marks a decline from the free contemplation and devotion of creative spirits to the preoccupation of 'practical' minds with accomplishment and discipline. We expend in tension and self-testing the energy which no longer creates. It is a senile civilization.

Social history is complex and can be used to illustrate many a bold thesis. Spengler himself, recalling his earlier visions of Prussianism, had lately been surveying his scene through Nazi glasses, revealing our history as a strife between Europe and Asia. Russia is the Asiatic vanguard, and it is the mission of Germany to be the frontier of Western civilization. Thus Spengler writes prior to August, 1939. His reasoning in *The Hour of Decision* is blunt: "Man is a beast of prey." Not justice and international conciliation are imperative, but utter heroic devotion that prevails in the trial of destiny. "Will-to-possession is the Nordic *meaning of life*. . . . The ultimate decisions are waiting for their men." [8] This sort of philosophical journalism always needs a later edition.

The entanglement of issues in theory and practice has been aggravated in Spain by clashing factors of religious and social tradition. Two men stand out as Spanish interpreters of the modern theme: Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) and Jose Ortega y Gasset (1883-). Unamuno reveals a Pascalian blend of scepticism in beliefs and intensity of aspiration. He is passionate for the supreme satisfactions of life, the ardor for God and for eternity. These satisfactions are not yielded by science and logic; for science is bound to the proximate scene and does not attain to ultimates, and logic is itself a form of sensuality, the lust for conceptual mastery. Pascal had said: "The heart has its reasons." The truths of the heart, Unamuno adds, require not a logic but a "*cardiac*." We should reach beyond halting reason to the creative span of faith. This can be Spain's gift to the world, the wisdom of Don Quixote. In Don Quixote's hands the barber's basin becomes the helmet of Mambrino. Living the ideal is better than abstract and finally inconclusive thinking. The life of Saint Theresa is worth any *Critique of Pure Reason*.[9]

Here cautious reason intervenes, disturbed and unsettling. The ideal may be illusory; why should one be taken in? No, but rather one should not miss the supreme fruition through sterile reluctance of spirit. Here once more is "the will to believe" of pragmatism. Let us seek truth in life and life in truth. Does science point to the finality of death and to dull matter? This finality we shall not acknowledge; we shall battle for the ideal, not because we are certain of it, but because our whole life affirms and demands it. Heroism is of the stuff of despair.

In vital anguish to long for God and for eternity, and "to live by this longing and to make it the inner spring of our action," that is creative faith, that is religion and morality. Our best proof of the ideal is the moral proof of our supreme desire. We *prove* it in our moral experience, in conduct. So Jesus: "If any man will do His will—the will of Him that sent me, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself." Moral conduct is conduct passionately good, utter ideal commitment. My soul is supremely a demand for eternity: let my life throughout be an utterance of this demand. "The end of morality is to give personal, human finality to the Universe; to discover the finality that belongs to it—if indeed it has any finality—and to discover it by acting." [10]

Jose Ortega y Gasset sounds a warning against the Revolt of the Masses. Real civilization involves the will to live in common, and so demands liberalism, the supreme form of generosity, the concession of rights to weak minorities, social justice. But the mass hates all that is not of itself; it resents whatever is different, select, or excellent. In its demand for flat uniformity, it wipes out standards. No longer willing to acknowledge the criteria of their betters, yet unable to achieve worthy principles of their own, the masses live a life of moral chaos. The so-called new morality or amorality is plain immorality. Europe is without a moral code; without standards or direction, men acknowledge only force and violence; they crush or they submit, or they are swept by passion which they mistake for principle; but real authority and loyalty and tolerance are eclipsed. Is Europe then decaying, and Western civilization on the point of extinction? Ortega resists cultural pessimism, but he demands a radical redefinition of issues. The alternative to mass-rule is not the traditional aristocracy. We can accept neither the heroic-individualistic interpretation of history nor the collectivist and communist dialectic. We must recognize a basic vital coöperaton of the best men with the common people. So in morals we must acknowledge a "double imperative": the exalted cultural imperative, lifting from above, and the basic vital imperative, sustaining and spurring from below. Moral activity is a process of achieving, in a social medium, personal significance of character.

A searching examination of the breakdown of authority and the dissolution in principles and standards in contemporary life is Walter Lippmann's book *A Preface to Morals.* He points out the traditional foundation of morality on religious belief, modern men's difficulty "to conceive a God whom they can worship," and the consequent moral drifting of a society which has lost its old righteousness and lacks the convictions requisite for a new one. This "dissolution of the ancestral

order" may not be as general or as unprecedented as Lippmann thinks, but it is radical, and his exposure of it is keen and eloquent. He sees a way ahead in a morality of humanism, a life of sanity based on understanding of nature and of human nature. Anthropomorphic religion conduced to wishful thinking: the innocence but also the petulance of immature reflection. We must now put away childish things. To attain maturity is to see nature for what it is, and our actual place in the cosmos. To look maturely at the heavens, in the perspective of cold illimitable spaces to see and feel and endure reality, without the cherished bulwarks or hopes, that is maturity of thought and action, the goal of moral effort: a harmony with the nature of things in a modern view. This is also the ascetic discipline which Lippmann advocates: control and overcoming of immature desires and demands, an understanding way of life. This has been and is the function of High Religion. The virtuous life,—courageous, temperate, just, magnanimous,—is a life of disinterestedness and maturity of character. In the new setting modern man must be ready for new principles of conduct. Because he expects radical revisions in established institutions,—industry, government, the family,—he must not be afraid of strange or even shocking labels, but he must be on his guard not to exchange old delusions for new.

6. The Problem of Objective Moral Standards

Individual and social morality suffers but also survives continual dissolution of standards. Why should ethics set before itself the futile task of achieving universal abiding principles? Warner Fite (1867-), who in his *Individualism* had examined self-consciousness in its social and political relations, undertakes in his *Moral Philosophy: The Critical View of Life* a brilliant challenge to all authoritarianism and to all standards in ethics. The expression "moral conduct is deliberate conduct" is for him a definition: "morality is the self-conscious living of life." Moral problems are concrete problems-in-process. Despite all our ethical maps, there is really no definitely marked road of virtue. Morality is not one value among others but the value of integral living. The man of moral insight, the true humanist, does not make any part of life, his past or his present, subservient to another. He lives each moment in the consciousness to which Walter Pater has given utterance, that "nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality." [11]

So the moral problem becomes concretely one of investing conduct with critical intelligence. "Take any action you please. Then put consciousness into the action. You cannot say how the action will be

transformed; and no law can describe how it ought to be transformed. But this you can say: those who understand will mark the presence of moral quality and for them it will have moral dignity." [12] So moral action is responsible, answerable action in the literal sense of the term: it is justification by thorough perception. Such a view of life is critical, urbane, generous, genial. There is here no respectable zeal for disciplining others, nor worry that something is amiss simply because people are enjoying what they do. Fite's moral sage lives and lets live, not because he is indifferent to others, but just for the opposite reason: because he is so thoroughly alive to the lives of others that he is content to reflect without intrusion, and can restrain prying impertinence.

One might ask Fite whether the denial of moral worth to compliance with authority warrants us in ignoring the significance of moral standards. The moment I put critical intelligence into any act of mine, I find myself to be more than a mere individual. In deliberating, as my own critic, I take an over-individual social view of myself and of my proposed act. In the degree that it is critically thought out, my own moral judgment expresses my unique version of a world of values—which includes but also transcends me. My tolerance of my neighbor is my recognition of a community of values on which he may be warranted in relying and with which I may be well-advised to reckon. If I act merely in conformity to authority, my act lacks moral dignity, since it is not really my act. But this truth does not exclude the counter truth that the more deliberate and critical my conduct is the more adequately it will reflect the larger experience which forms and is formed by mine, the more it will express the living integrity of moral standards: standards which I cannot be content merely to obey but which I am bound to recognize when my thought and action gain the dignity that comes from critical insight.

The ethical issue between imperatives and spontaneity is hardly ultimate. God's law may become perfect freedom in the moral life. George Herbert Palmer (1842-1933) thirty years ago traced what he called "the three stages of goodness." Action may begin with unreflective response to impulse. Then consciousness is aroused to the demands of law and the exactions of standards; self-conscious execution and conformity mark conduct. But finally principle becomes second nature in our lives, or rather a reconciliation of nature and spirit is attained, and we do spontaneously and freely as we ought, each act the ready unconstrained utterance of moral culture and self-penetration.

The fundamental problem of the objectivity of moral standards is

to the fore in contemporary discussion. Combining historical with systematic work in ethics, Arthur Kenyon Rogers (1868-) has been wary of any recognition of authoritative moral principles that does not respect non-conformists. But he is reluctant to go the whole length with Fite. A certain strain of intolerance, in disapproval, Rogers considers as essential to real valuation. The very emphasis on critical intelligence in conduct is an espousal of a standard. The intellectual favor or approval which an experience or course of action enjoys in our judgment of it determines its 'goodness.' The self-maintenance of this value against rival invasions of interest gives it a distinctively moral quality which may be expressed in duty or conscience. "Moral quality is comparative, not absolute; it stands not for any simple and intrinsic character but for 'better than.' "[13] The emphasis on 'betterness' as the fundamental value has been advocated especially by Albert Perley Brogan (1889-), who in a series of papers has made statistical and systematic examination of preferences in valuation. The detailed survey and estimate of the solid moral treasury of human experience as distinguished from descriptive reports of the evolution of moral ideas, is still a major task confronting modern ethics, but fertile consciousness of it is evident in a number of contemporary writings. Two works that come to mind in this connection are Walter Goodnow Everett's *Moral Values* and Dewitt H. Parker's *Human Values.*

Discussion of the objectivity of moral standards and values finds an ample context in the finely uttered naturalism of George Santayana (1863-). Though Santayana has not undertaken a systematic ethics, the tone of his thinking is that of a moralist, ironic in temper. From Spinoza he has learned not to confuse his values and interests with cosmic actuality. A poetic temper has made him subtly responsive to beauty and to all values. He finds existence to be material; then recognizes other realms of reality: a realm of essence, of truth, of spirit. These make our world significant, but we should not confuse them with existence. Matter alone exists: yet what most matters to us is not matter. To realize to the utmost our values without yielding to sublime superstitions regarding them is a test of wisdom. Here are Sancho Panzas, actualists but without ideals; here are Don Quixotes, idealists but mad. Santayana would understand both but would not join either of them. It is our thought and interest which constitutes things significant and good. Leopardi called values phantoms of the mind; so to Santayana they are ideal figments. In realizing them is our own worth, provided we do not yield to delusion. We must grasp and not confuse the poetry of reality with the prose of existence. "Religions are the great fairy-tales of the conscience,"[14] and the Christian drama is a

magnificent poetic version of existence as it concerns the souls of men. Perfection, justice, beauty, piety are values not existences, and values irrational, the tone not the content and citation of being. The sage materialist does not proclaim them cosmic powers; he does not mistake the moral neutrality of nature; but, because he finds her no champion of his ideals, he does not desolately charge her as evil. He chooses rather, and cherishes, "a homely morality . . . sympathy with the movement of things, interest in the rising wave, delight at the foam it bursts into, before it sinks again. Nature does not distinguish the better from the worse, but the lover of nature does. He calls better what, being analogous to his own life, enhances his vitality and probably possesses some vitality of its own." [15] As to nature's final meaning, who can tell? "She does not know how to speak more plainly. Her secret is as great a secret to herself as to me." [16] We perceive it, we laugh, and the Sphinx instantly draws in her claws.

7. *Morals and the General Theory of Value*

The growing emphasis on axiology or value-theory in contemporary philosophy has involved a revised account of moral judgments and of ethics in its ultimate implications. Important work in this field was done by the Austrian school led by Franz Brentano (1838-1917). In his empirical psychology Brentano distinguished three classes of mental phenomena: ideas, judgments, and feelings, love and hate. These last, like judgments, express the mind's attitude towards that to which it attends and also a certain acceptance or rejection, rightness or wrongness. In the case of theoretical judgment the mind claims truth; in love and hate objects or acts are pronounced good or bad, lovable or hateful. The value-experience is not a theoretical judgment of an ascertainable lovable quality in the object: the value is in the loving or hating. Ethics here must consider how value-acceptance or rejection determines rules of action, how the validity of these rules may be tested, and how we may recognize them. In judgment, the mind may attain objective necessary validity, likewise certain acts of loving and hating can be characterized as right. In judgment, blind prejudice may prevail; and in practice, we may in fact see and approve the better yet pursue the worse. But as "all men by nature desire to know," so the rightly lovable engages us in normal experience, and pleasures or pains are not ultimately unreliable guides. Brentano inclined towards a blend of Aristotelian and utilitarian ethics: "a certain harmonious development and exercise of all our noblest powers . . . in the service of the still greater collective good." [17]

The problem of validity is crucial here, and it engages Brentano's

successors. Alexius von Meinong (1853-1920) located value in feelings of worth. In considering a thing as existing or as non-existing, I may experience a certain pleasure or displeasure which indicates the value of that thing for me. Values are subjective, feelings, but they concern objective, though not necessarily existent things or situations. This theory of value avoids bare subjectivity; but how can it attain to valid appraisal? Christian von Ehrenfels (1859-1932) would measure value in terms of desire. The more intensely I desire an existent thing, or would desire it if it did exist, or would desire its existence rather than its non-existence, the more valuable it is for me. Ehrenfels explicitly declares that a thing is of value because it is desired, not conversely. Here is plain relativism, which investigates the development, order, and practical sanction of various values, but which cannot recognize their final validity. Ethics is here conceived as the psychology of moral values. Moral valuations are developed in, and sustained by social experience; the values which we espouse are desire-tendencies and emotional dispositions. There is no one supreme value, universal benevolence or any other. The values of our Western-Christian morality indicate normal expectations or emotional reactions which have been developed in our social life. We praise conduct which exceeds our moral expectations and condemn what comes short of it. Our imperatives and ideals must reckon with the desires and feelings which yield them.

Some of the issues which engage Brentano and his followers have found expression also in American value-theory. William Marshall Urban (1873-), recalling Brentano, holds that "existence is perceived; truth is thought; value is felt." He specifies however that value is not in the feeling-tone of any perception: it is "the feeling-aspect of conative process." [18] No existential factual statement of value is available; but while value is felt, subjective, a meaning of reality and a reference to truth is intended by us in all appreciation and evaluation. Value is a claim on and for reality; desire and valuation reflect and complete each other. Values are not experienced in isolation but in a hierarchical order of higher and lower, involving preference and choice. A social demand, of impersonal sanction, marks the operation of moral judgments. Urban reserves the term 'ethical' for the larger and more indeterminate region of personal ideas and scruples. Plowing a neighboring furrow with Ehrenfels, Ralph Barton Perry (1876-) in his *General Theory of Value* defines value as "any object of any interest." This is relativism as emphasizing the relation in which value is involved, but it is not sceptical relativism. Perry investigates the biological and the psychological factors in interest, its modes, cultivation,

and individual and social control. Around the great centers of interest —science, conscience, art, industry, state, and church—he would organize the whole field of values, rectifying frontiers and establishing order. This study of the "Realms of Value" confronts him as a sequel to his general theory. In it ethics is presumably to find its proper rôle in relation to theory of knowledge, politics, jurisprudence, economics, and philosophy of religion.

Moral philosophy in these theories is seen as contingent on the value-relativism in which they are involved. Ehrenfels and Perry acknowledge this relativism which Brentano and Meinong had tried to overcome. Urban proceeds with growing assurance towards the Intelligible World, which he has more recently been contemplating. The explicit demand for abiding values and for a metaphysical foundation of morals implying a finally idealistic orientation is illustrated in Bernardino Varisco's work *The Great Problems* (1910): "Morality that is not fictitious, provisory, or illusory is one with metaphysics. . . . Personality is the highest right and the highest duty, because the highest value." [19]

The resistance to value-relativism engaged the entire philosophical career of William Ritchie Sorley (1855-1935). In his first important writing, *The Ethics of Naturalism*, Sorley, as Jacob Gould Schurman after him in *The Ethical Import of Darwinism*, criticized the adequacy of evolutionistic moral philosophy. The evolutionist's evidence does not sustain a hedonistic ethics; and more generally the genetic description of a process does not by itself yield an evaluation of it. Unless our views of reality enable us to proceed from factual to evaluative statement, real moral philosophy is unavailable. This line of thought in *The Ethics of Naturalism*, briefly developed also in *The Moral Life and Moral Worth*, finds fuller expression in Sorley's Gifford Lectures on *Moral Values and the Idea of God*. Moral values are realized intrinsically in personal lives, but never realized completely, and thus always express a claim on further experience. Essential to personal character and activity, moral values are valid *of reality*. Moral judgment is not in the awareness or the measurement of pleasure or of desire: else how could desires or pleasures be estimated? Nor is morality simply a process of social organization; nor yet any kind of merely emotional response. In all these cases we should beware of confusing "the process by means of which we become aware of value and the value itself of which we become aware." [20] The recognition *of value* is a recognition of a corresponding kind of reality, the reality of truth in and beyond all our truths, the reality of Good implied in all moral endeavors, the reality of God.

8. German Value-Realism

In German philosophy the prestige of Kant had emphasized the distinction between ethics of incentives or consequences, hedonistic in purport and ending in relativism, and the ethics of pure duty, the formalism of the moral law, declared as alone unconditionally imperative. But is 'material ethics' committed to hedonism, to mere description, and to inconclusiveness in principle? Realistic treatment of this and allied problems in which Max Scheler (1874-1928) was a leader in Germany, and the related systematic reconstruction of ethics by Nicolai Hartmann (1882-) are significant achievements in contemporary moral philosophy.

Scheler was a versatile thinker of restless energy and responsiveness to current social and spiritual demands. Eucken's personal idealism, Husserl's phenomenology, Catholic piety, sociological and anthropological strains of thought all influenced his mind in turn. He rejects the Kantian formalism of the moral law, but would reaffirm the *a priori* character of the consciousness of worth. He resists Nietzsche's relativistic treatment of value, but would possess the rich expanse of values revealed by Nietzsche. Values are material qualities, inherent in the nature of things and not dependent on divine or on human devising. Scheler ranks values according to five tests of superiority. Values are higher if they are (1) more enduring; (2) not diminished in being shared; (3) more general in interdependence; (4) more deeply satisfying and (5) involved with other values beyond the relation to specific structure. Whether we can justify by these tests the more subtle shadings of preference in valuation, may be open to question. Scheler's own scale of values proceeds from pleasure to vital well-being, thence to the values of intelligent cultivation (beauty, justice, truth), and to the summit of religious value, holiness. Of interest is the emphasis on Personality, which remains central in Scheler's moral philosophy. Values reveal a progressive involvement and expansion of personal character, integrity of personality in action.

Nicolai Hartmann's *Ethics* has been given wide notice, especially since the publication of its excellent English translation in three volumes. While his dependence on Scheler is acknowledged and unmistakable, his *Ethics* cannot be described as merely an elaboration of Scheler's critique of Kantian formalism. Hartmann's survey of the range of values is intended as an Aristotelian inspection and appraisal of modern human experience. His basic conception of value is a realistic intuitive reaffirmation of the Platonic, and is intended to correct and to mediate between Kant and Nietzsche.

The persons or things we pronounce good may vary, but the moral principles and values are not merely relative, nor are they ideal laws beyond nature. Like geometric entities or logical principles, moral values are essences in and of reality. The moral life is a realization of them, in both senses of the term. Duty can find its true place only in an acknowledgment of life's treasury of values. That this treasury still awaits exploration was shown in our day by Nietzsche, but we need not share Nietzsche's illusion that he had discovered the final promised land.

From the study of the structure of the ethical phenomenon (phenomenology of morals), Nicolai Hartmann passes to the axiology of morals, a survey of the realm of moral values, their multiple gradation and dimensionality, their complexity and attendant antitheses. His value-scale starts with valuational foundations like life, consciousness, activity, suffering, strength, freedom, foresight, purposive efficacy; also goods as values, such as existence, situation, power, happiness. From these he proceeds to the fundamental moral values: goodness, nobility, richness of experience, purity. The special moral values are then examined in three groups. The first includes the classical virtues: justice, wisdom, courage, self-control, and the Aristotelian scale. The second group of virtues is the peculiar treasury of Christian experience: brotherly love, truthfulness and uprightness, trustworthiness and fidelity, trust and faith, modesty, humility, aloofness. The third group indicates expanding prospects of modern ethical valuation.

Against the traditional simplicity of the alleged choice between good and evil, Nicolai Hartmann points out the multidimensional relatedness and corresponding complexity of moral alternatives. Not only positive and negative values contend in deliberation, but good strives with good, and the possession of any value by the decision of preference involves a certain sacrifice and even an inevitable guilt. The perception of this tragic note in all moral experience, this complex and subtle antithetic of values, is a curb to complacency or to bigot rigorism, an inducement to moral tolerance, to understanding and humble sympathy. Only in relation to other values, only in this contest and completion, is fullness of worth realized.

Centrally important in Nicolai Hartmann's ethics is his double grading of moral values, according to height and to strength. Values are higher or lower; they are also stronger or weaker. Every lower principle is raw material for the realization of the higher. Every higher principle is a new formation upon the lower, and is thus free as against the lower. These three laws, of strength, of material, and of freedom, guide Hartmann's further moral analysis. Because the lower values condition

the existence of the higher, violation of them is the more heinous evil. But only in the higher values can the more perfect morality be realized. So theft is a graver misdeed than ungenerosity, but personal love is a higher good than bare honesty. Moral valuation, in condemning vices and in lauding virtues, follows these two lines of precedence. In insisting that the violation of the lower values imperils the attainment of the higher, Hartmann, according to one critic, "without calling it by name, . . . has given formal statement to the ethics of socialism." [21] But if it be so, yet Hartmann's doctrine also indicates the moral insufficiency of the socialistic concentration on the lower values. The moral life is perverted if it neglects the lower values; but it is poverty-stricken if it is imprisoned and spent in them. This is a double-edged criticism: "The meaning of the moral life is no more to be found in the lower values than its foundations are to be found in the higher." [22]

The third and concluding part of the *Ethics* concerns the metaphysics of morals, the problem of moral freedom. Hartmann's examination of previous doctrines and his own analysis do not lead to a conclusion altogether satisfactory even to himself. He does not claim to prove freedom, but relies on the consciousness of responsibility and of guilt to strengthen our conviction of it.

9. Analysis and the New British Intuitionism

Contemporary British ethics has turned systematically to the more careful definition of the basic moral notions. The leader in this analytic work, George Edward Moore (1873-), distinguished two basic questions in moral philosophy: the question of good or intrinsic value, and the question of right action or duty. The predicates 'good' and 'bad,' according to Moore, are ultimate and indefinable. We cannot explain 'good' in terms of anything else, and it is a predicate of more than moral application. It concerns morals, but is not a specifically moral idea; therefore the expression '*moral* goodness' is not redundant. In his discussion of the next question in ethics, the question of the right (What ought we to do? What are the best means to the good?) Moore is led to reject the traditional distinction between duty and expediency. Both of them may be means to the good, to the best possible. 'Right' is identical with 'useful,' and we have here a revised non-hedonistic utilitarianism. Our duty is that possible action which in certain known circumstances will always produce better results or more good than any other action open to us. We can see that there is no absolute self-evidence in duty. We can indicate only a general tendency, such as leads us to trace the line of expediency or interest. These latter have also certain non-moral aspects, which distinguish them from duty.

Moore concludes that in morals we can attain to general rules but not to absolute conclusions. Though we are not reduced to unstable relativism, the question of likely ultimate unity, the whole of value, remains unanswered. He disavows any compelling interest in 'unity' and 'system,' and professes himself content to seek the truth of the varied and complex scene of existence.

Moore's intuitionism influenced, but not for very long, the ethical reflections of Bertrand Russell (1872-), a mathematical-scientific mind, possessed by a zeal for social reform and by utopian visions. Those who had known only the mathematical logician were moved by the essay on "The Free Man's Worship," in which the ultimate nullity of man in purposeless nature, as revealed by modern science, left no ground for the soul's habitation but "the firm foundation of unyielding despair." The supreme moral rule on which Russell has tended to settle is: "Act so as to produce harmonious rather than discordant desires." While not avowedly a hedonist, he has devoted much attention in his later writings, educational and social, to "the conquest of happiness." In this conquest he is ready to dismiss abiding duties and loyalties on which an institution like the family depends. His moral-social philosophy reveals a mind long accustomed to operations with many variables.

The thought of Samuel Alexander (1859-1938) moved from Bradley and Green, through utilitarian and evolutionistic approaches, in a realistic direction. His *Moral Order and Progress: an Analysis of Ethical Conceptions* begins by distinguishing three questions in morals: "(1) What is it that is good? (2) Why is it good, or what does its goodness mean? (3) How does goodness come into being, how is it maintained, how does it advance?" Considering the double meaning of 'good' as right and as perfect, he proceeds to define goodness generally as equilibrium of functions and sentiments. Later, in his major work, *Space, Time, and Deity*, this equilibrium of goodness is further described as a coherence of satisfactions or as a coherence of wills in adaptation of action to the environment under social conditions. While reaching towards evolutionistic naturalism and Comtist-positivistic ideas, Alexander does not surrender Green's emphasis on self-realization: "The foreign material is secondary. What is primary is the direction of personality itself." [23]

Through moral approval and disapproval, society cultivates right-social willing, promotes concern for the common good, and curbs or quite discards the unsocial. There is thus a positive and a negative note in duty and obligation. We should emphasize the positive. Kant's conception of a Kingdom of Ends is more vital to morality than his

Categorical Imperative. Alexander investigates moral dynamics, the evolution of moral values, the emergence and ascendency of social-mindedness, justice, good will. Towards the conclusion of his chief treatise he contemplates the cosmic fortune of values: "The universe works in experience so as to secure the survival of good, or rather that which survives in the long run in the contest establishes its value thereby and is good. . . . 'Morality is the nature of things.' "[24] It requires sturdy optimism, within the qualification of the second clause of this statement, to remain firm in its initial assurance and in the final conviction.

The questions engaging Alexander and Moore are taken up more informally in *The Meaning of Good: A Dialogue* by G. Lowes Dickinson (1860-1932). In skillfully guided discussion, Dickinson considers first the idea of a general good as a condition of any significant individual preference or valuation. Several proposed criteria of good are disqualified: the infallible instinct of intuitionism, the principle of good as the course of nature, the appeal to custom and general opinion, the hedonistic criterion of pleasure. No more satisfactory appear metaphysical methods and criteria. Despite these difficulties of definition, the idea of universal moral value cannot be surrendered. Candid discussion brings out a number of significant reflections: the contrast of spontaneity and self-discipline in the moral life, relative and absolute duty, the timelessness of values. The quest of the Good leads to the recognition of personal relations, and of love preëminently, as coming most nearly to absolute value in our experience.

In his essay, "Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" Harold Arthur Prichard (1871-) proceeded from a searching analysis of ethical fundamentals to a variety of intuitionism analogous to Moore's and to a position which was developed further but which has not received its full treatment. For Prichard, "the rightness of an action lies solely in the origination in which the act consists, whereas the intrinsic goodness of an action lies solely in its motive." So an act of mine is morally good not simply because it is right but because I have performed it on account of its rightness, dutifully.[25] Prichard's stimulus and the influence of Butler and of Kant are evident in *The Theory of Morals* by Edgar Frederick Carritt (1876-). That conduct can be judged morally, that there is a better and a worse way in action, is here declared to be not seriously open to question. The reality of moral obligation cannot be argued away. Whereas Moore had found 'good' to be immediate and indefinable, Carritt regards this predicate as ambiguous, prefers to avoid it in ethics, and regards rightness, the sense of moral obligation, as primary and underivative. To believe in the right-

ness or the wrongness of an act, and to perform or to avoid it for that reason simply, is moral conduct.

William David Ross (1877-) in his book *The Right and the Good* sets out by distinguishing 'morally good act' from 'right act,' which he takes to mean 'morally obligatory act.' It is quite clear to him that only acts proceeding from a good motive are morally good, and he further holds that a good motive is never morally obligatory. Moore's use of 'right' as meaning "optimific, productive of the best possible consequences," is in Ross' judgment unacceptable. Duty is not to be interpreted in any utilitarian or teleological sense. An act is right, not in that it yields or leads to certain good results; it is itself the right production, for instance, the keeping of a promise. Of good as a predicate, he points out three meanings: the intrinsically good, the ultimate good, and the contributively good. He emphasizes the ultimately good as the central and fundamental one; it is intrinsic *and* ultimate. Of things intrinsically good, Ross lists four: "virtue, pleasure, the allocation of pleasure to the virtuous, and knowledge (and in a less degree right opinion)." The grading of goodness involves difficulties. That virtue and knowledge are better things than pleasure seems clear, without proceeding to ascetic conclusions; and in ranking virtue over knowledge Ross affirms "the infinite superiority of moral goodness to anything else." Moral goodness he measures by the strength of dutiful devotion rather than by the intensity of the conflict with desires.[26]

We cannot examine here the more recent contributions to this discussion, in which Oxford thinkers especially have participated. Clear exposition in detail and critical comment may be found in Muirhead's *Rule and End in Morals*. Muirhead doubts the soundness of the emphatic reluctance to proceed towards an ultimate synthesis or general theory of value. 'Right' and 'good' may be unique in meaning and neither wholly resolvable into the other, yet as real attributes of actions and things they might be understandable only as standing in organic relation to each other. The course of all this serial analysis of concepts does not seem to have quite discredited the idealistic concentration on synthesis and on the ultimate.

This section may close with a brief note of some of the views of John Laird (1887-), who in his book *An Enquiry into Moral Notions* candidly proposes to renounce his former conclusions in ethics, as formulated in a number of works, and gives us perhaps the most recent extended examination of this moral analysis. Despite Laird's repudiation of his "shady past," we may venture to mention the general position maintained in his *Study in Moral Theory*. "Moral theory is concerned with the reasons that justify action; or else that condemn it." It

is not itself the study of pure theory of value, although it presupposes that study. Ethical naturalism emphasizes the use which we make of our opportunities to achieve values. While practically engaged in the more immediate pursuit of specific values, we are bound to recognize these values as having dominion within man and over him; we acknowledge their sovereignty. From this more ultimate prospect of a system of values, Laird turns uncertainly in his *Enquiry into Moral Notions*. In dealing with values, as he now thinks, "unity and . . . gradational order are likely to remain perplexing . . . with little hope of finality." He criticizes the theories that undertake a statement of the moral life in terms of some one exalted factor, whether it be sentiment or reason or will. Scarcely hoping for a single principle of obligation, he yet works out a classification of six general voluntary obligations: natural justice, veracity, philanthropy, obligations of special relationships, promise-keeping, and self-development. Laird would seem to be dubious about character being nine-tenths of life. He ventures to consider the separation of hygiene, medicine, eugenics, economics, civics, and politics from ethics as "one of the principal lessons modern man has learned." [27] But, as Muirhead remarks, does not recent political and social experience disclose "the fatal consequences of just such a separatism?" [28] Disavowing any general principle for the grading of obligations, Laird finds the comparison of goods perplexing. Alongside intrinsic goods and instrumental goods, we can recognize also relational goods. To declare that right has nothing to do with goodness seems intolerable and absurd. Perhaps we are here on the way to some sort of a synthesis, but it is not yet.

10. Crossroads

In the book of human thought each sentence might aim at the finality of a period, yet not the best of them get beyond a semicolon. Though our survey reaches the present moment, it yet comes short of completion, and to call this closing section of it "Conclusion" would be only naïve. The reference to one strain in contemporary discussion as "Transitional Thinking" might have been suitable as a more general description. All periods of active thought are periods of transition. What characterizes our age is the far-reaching extent of the unsettlement and the expressed readiness for radical changes of direction. Not merely the lure of bypaths engages today the traveler on traditional highways: thought is really at the crossroads.

Chroniclers of contemporary science have registered the disappearance of the old bulwarks in the flux of relativity. In religion and in social process likewise, "Whirl is King." The relaxing of formerly un-

questioned principles and scruples in moral practice, and the ethical relativism of some social historians and anthropologists are analogous manifestations of the present temper. That this sort of procedure is as imperative for a scientific ethics as are the new radical methods in physical science, is the claim of the sociological school. Lone heirs of "the Great Tradition" of absolutism might see in the present restless realignment only the evidence of sceptical confusion. But the contemporary mind is not the less zealous for finality because it has found the final principles of an earlier day no longer convincing. If our age is sceptical, its scepticism is not nonchalant, like Montaigne's; rather is it like Pascal's, sprung of a more exacting logic, but intolerable. (The rising influence of Pascal, notable in some Catholic modernists, in pragmatists like James, and before James in Renouvier, and more recently in Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann, Unamuno, is a significant aspect of modern thought.) The Reign of Relativity characterizes the logical turn in contemporary thinking, but its moving spirit may with equal justice be described as a Quest for Certainty, if we may borrow our phrase from John Dewey.

The growing diffusion of scientific ideas, especially in the universal spread of their technical application in modern life, has accustomed even the uneducated to the naturalistic attitude. The old supernatural sanctities seem increasingly vague and remote. Though some leading scientists might seek religious assurance from the electron, it is not as a bulwark to piety that science really certifies itself to the modern mind. To be sure, it were a misleading overstatement to characterize contemporary philosophy as a negation of religion. The more recent survey which has been engaging us indicates how bright some of the old tapers still burn, though not always on the same altars. Nevertheless the present attitude is revealed when the critic of idealism calls it the religious strain in philosophy. What is significant is not so much the adequacy of the designation as this, that it is intended as a disparagement.

In transitional thinking, the 'gravers of new tablets' may turn out to be only the prophets of some new idolatry. The multitude may be moved to repudiate and to raze ancient shrines, but it must forthwith proceed to the erection of new ones, and so needs a new faith. In their utter bewilderment, like children lost in the woods, men may still push on, so long as they can grasp the hand of someone who steps ahead resolutely. But while people may be led by critical questions to destroy, they need positive answers if they are to build anew. It is not a matter of accident that the dictator's call has found greatest response precisely in the regions of the utmost social confusion and desperation.

To be sure, states as well as individuals might seek to dignify the accomplished fact by reasoned argument. Where the ascendency of the autocratic spirit has exalted the political and military principle above all other human rights and interests, to make the whole nation an armed camp, the social psychologist can understand and explain how even mature intelligence might be swept into the whirlpool. The historian of civilization cannot fail to record that, while a Croce does not surrender his reason to prevailing passion, others, even a Gentile, might try to make a philosophy of it; but he must leave the further reflection on this matter to the ironic moralist.

Is it owing to the inconstant rigor of our critical intelligence, or owing to the persistent and finally prevailing 'will to believe,' that many a searching refutation of older doctrine may be followed by confident assumption of some no better established belief? We need not speak of the occult-minded, who pronounce Christianity superstitious, but find no difficulty in any welter of Oriental theosophical mysteries. Nor can we do more than mention the sorry spectacle of entire nations, proud in having pierced the phantoms of democracy, yet infatuated with new dreams, of restoring the Roman Imperium, or of rearing a pure Nordic race of warriors, to awaken Wotan and rebuild Walhalla. But it is interesting to note how even sober and indeed masterly analysis, after exposing ruthlessly the dogmatic preconceptions and the final inconclusiveness of some rationalistic ethics, is apt to take possession of its own fundamentals by the sheer fiat of intuitive certainty. Surely the acknowledgment of real and imperative values, however intuitively known, does disclose a certain character in persons and in nature, of which reason must then take account in its view of the world. The rejection of the rationalist's ethical axioms may be justified, but the critic must then undertake to achieve final conviction in his own better way. The metaphysics of morals will still confront him in the end.

After these general reflections on the present scene we may, in closing, venture one or two more specific comments on the theory of moral value.[29] Two fundamental sources of confusion have vitiated much ethical thinking in the past. The first has been due to the concentration on some one element and aspect of moral experience, as if it were the sole or prime essential of good, and as if it alone could serve as a standard for the moral evaluation of the rest. Contemporary ethics manifests a growing emancipation from this sort of sectarianism, but further progress is needed towards a thoroughly balanced view and estimate of human personality. Thus the truth that moral experience and culture involve the progressive socializing of the individual becomes an error if we propose to define moral categories as social cate-

gories. The nature of virtue is not to be stated simply as social feeling or benevolence. Likewise pleasure, happiness or satisfaction of some sort is a genuine element in the life which we judge to have positive worth; but this element is insufficient to serve as a standard. Ethics requires not only measurement of enjoyments but also judgment of tastes. The real question cannot be simply, Am I happy or unhappy, but rather, Is it well that I am thus or thus happy or unhappy? Again, moral acts have a peculiar dignity in that they express active devotion to a principle. But while virtue is thus loyal to the moral law, it cannot be defined adequately as dutiful devotion. Duty cannot be ignored in the formulation of moral worth, but it alone cannot supply the moral standard. Genuine moral judgment concerns and respects the integrity of man, and must therefore be opposed on principle to any narrow partisanship in valuation.

If this first confusion is due to oversimplification and narrowness, the second is a confusion of categories and an irrelevance in ethics. It is the failure to recognize the character of moral evaluation as distinguished from factual statement. The gravity of this second confusion is characteristically modern. The very bringing of morality down to earth, as it gives us the historical social setting of human conduct and 'the evolution of values,' imposes on the modern mind the task of relating these facts of moral experience to the other facts of nature, in a thoroughly philosophical interpretation. This may become the Higher Naturalism of tomorrow. Surely an adequate ethical theory must be truly scientific in this, that it seeks knowledge of the thing to be known and not of some other thing. It cannot distort moral experience in order to make it fit the conceptual forms of factual science, nor can it set up morality as transcendent and exalted above actual human lives. It must grasp and express in its evaluation the living integrity of personal character, and it must also undertake to see morality in its cosmic perspective. Are not these the two main tasks, distinguishable but allied, of a scientific ethics and of a moral philosophy?

NOTES

PART I. THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR MORALITY

CHAPTER I. THE MORAL IDEALS OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

1. *Agamemnon*, 1563 f., Lewis Campbell's translation.
2. *Oedipus at Colonos*, 1565 f., Campbell's translation.
3. Hecuba, in *The Trojan Women*, 469 ff., Gilbert Murray's translation.
4. *Phaedo*, 98 f., Jowett's translation.
5. *Symposium*, 211 f., Jowett's translation.
6. *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 1103 b, Ross's translation.
7. *Ibid.*, II, 1109 a.
8. *Cf.* W. D. Ross, *Aristotle*, p. 206.
9. *Nicomachean Ethics*, V, 1129 b.
10. *Ibid.*, 1178 b.
11. Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, II, 7 f., Cyril Bailey's translation.
12. *Cf. Diogenes Laertius*, C. D. Yonge's transl., p. 267.
13. Epictetus, *Discourses and Manual*, transl. by P. E. Matheson, Vol. II, p. 140.
14. *Manual*, 27, 5; *Discourses*, I: 29; II: 5, 16.
15. Marcus Aurelius, V: 5; Long's translation.
16. *De Officiis*, III: xx, Walter Miller's translation.
17. From *De Finibus*, III: xxii; quoted here from W. G. Everett's *Moral Values*, p. 88.
18. Epictetus, *Discourses*, IV: 1; Marcus Aurelius, IV: 19; Seneca, *De tranquillitate animae*, Dial. IX: xi.
19. *Enneads*, V: i: 4; V: viii: 4; translations cited from Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, 3. edition, Vol. II, pp. 87, 86.
20. *Cf.* Inge, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 11.

CHAPTER II. THE CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF SALVATION

1. I Cor. i: 23.
2. Psalm cxi: 10.
3. Isaiah i: 16 f.
4. Jeremiah vii: 4.
5. Micah vi: 8.
6. Job xxiii: 3.
7. Matt. xix: 17.
8. A. D. Nock, *Conversion*, 1933, p. 210.
9. Mark ii: 27.
10. Matt. x: 37.
11. Matt. vii: 12.
12. Matt. xxiii: 10-12.
13. *Cf.* H. C. King's discussion of the Beatitudes, in *The Ethics of Jesus*, pp. 207 ff., to which we are indebted.
14. Mark viii: 36; Matt. xvi: 26; Luke ix: 25.
15. Romans vi: 15.
16. Coloss. iii: 5, 8.
17. *Cf.* Coloss. iii: 12 ff.; Philipp. iv: 8.
18. I Corinth. vii: 29 ff.
19. Matt. x: 34.
20. *The Christian's Defence*, transl. in F. A. Wright's *Fathers of the Church*, p. 38.
21. Quoted here from Hall's *History of Ethics within Organized Christianity*, p. 173.
22. *Cf.* G. B. Adams, *Civilization during the Middle Ages*, ed. of 1914, p. 48.

23. Lecky, *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*, ed. of 1913, Vol. I, p. 336; *cf.* his chapter on "The Pagan Empire."
24. "Le Procurateur de Judée," in the volume *L'Étui de Nacre*.
25. "The Virgin's Profession," transl. in Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 254.
26. *De Civitate Dei*, XII; 6; XIX: 13; translation, in part revised, from Augustine's *Works*, ed. by M. Dods, Vol. I, pp. 488 f.; Vol. II, p. 320.
27. St. Augustine, *De Moribus*, I: 15: 25; transl. of passage quoted from Henry Sidgwick's *History of Ethics*, 5. ed., p. 132.
28. *De Civitate Dei*, XX: 22; *Works*, Vol. II, p. 518.
29. Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

Chapter III. Medieval Culture and the Scholastic Method

1. *Cf.* Luthardt, *History of Christian Ethics*, Vol. I, p. 287.
2. *Cf.* Domet de Vorges, *Saint Anselme*, pp. 197 ff., 214 ff., 228; J. M. Rigg, *St. Anselm of Canterbury*, pp. 82 ff.
3. *Some Letters of St. Bernard*, selected by F. A. Gasquet, 1904, p. 120.
4. *Summa theologica*, Prima Secundae (I-II), Q. iii, Art. 2, 8; *cf.* E. Gilson, *Saint Thomas D'Aquin*, 4. ed., pp. 23 f.
5. *Summa theologica*, I-II, Q. lxxiii, Art. 3.
6. *Summa theol.*, I-II, Qq lv, lviii; lxiii, Art. 1; lxii.
7. Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore;
   Fecemi la divina potestate,
   La somma sapienza e il primo amore.
   (*Inferno*, iii: 4 ff., Fletcher's translation is quoted in the text).
8. Fatti non foste a viver come bruti,
   Ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza.
   (*Inferno*, xxvi: 119 f.).
9. *Life of St. Francis;* Chapter ix; E. G. Salter's translation.
10. *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, last chapter, quoted from H. O. Taylor's *Medieval Mind*, 3. ed., Vol. II, pp. 448 f.
11. *Theologia Germanica*, transl. by Susanna Winkworth, Golden Treasury edition, pp. 66, 73, 122, 193.
12. *Of the Imitation of Christ*, I: 1: 3.
13. *Cf.* Landry, *Duns Scot*, pp. 266 f.

Chapter IV. The Renaissance: Revolt Against Authority

1. Translation quoted from H. O. Taylor, *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*, Vol. I, p. 36.
2. *Cf.* J. B. Fletcher, *Literature of the Italian Renaissance*, p. 188.
3. John Owen, *The Sceptics of the Italian Renaissance*, p. 13.
4. J. A. Symonds' translation.
5. *Cf.* Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, transl. by S. G. C. Middlemore, Harrap's illustrated edition, 1929, pp. 426 ff.
6. Quant' è bella giovinezza
   Che si fugge tuttavia!
   Chi vuol esser lieto, sia:
   Di doman non c'è certezza.
   ("Trionfo di Bacco ed Arianna"; transl. in text quoted from Fletcher, *op. cit.*, p. 132).

7. O. Dittrich, *Geschichte der Ethik,* Vol. III, p. 347.
8. Robert Browning, "Fra Lippo Lippi."
9. *Cf.* Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy: The Revival of Learning,* one-volume edition of 1908, p. 262; Fletcher, *op. cit.,* p. 99.
10. *De Voluptate ac vero bono,* edition of 1519, Book I, Chap. xxxiv.
11. Castiglione, *Il Cortegiano,* Book III, Sect. 5; Opdycke's translation is quoted.
12. *The Book of My Life,* transl. by Jean Stoner, 1930, Chapter xiii.
13. *Ibid.,* Chapters xiv, viii.
14. Al cor di zolfo, alla carne di stoppa,
All'ossa che di secco legno sieno,
All'alma senza guida e senza freno,
Al desir pronto, alla vaghezza troppa,
Alla cieca ragion debile e zoppa,
Fra l'esche tante di che 'l mondo è pieno,
Non è gran meraviglia in un baleno
Arder nel primo fuoco che s'intoppa.

(*Rime e Lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti,* ed. of 1914, Barbèra, p. 311). J. A. Symonds' translation.
15. Rabelais, Book I, Chap. lvii, Urquhart's translation.
16. *Ibid.,* Book II, Chap. viii.
17. Symonds, Article "Renaissance" in *Encyclop. Brit.,* 11. ed.
18. Rabelais, Book II, Chap. xxxiv.
19. Nisard, *Renaissance et Reforme,* Vol. I, pp. 95 f.

Chapter V. The Reformation: Protest of the Aroused Conscience

1. *Cf.* W. Walker, *A History of the Christian Church,* p. 249.
2. *Piers the Plowman,* C. IV, 199; C. VI, 71 f.; C. X, 72 f.; B. XIX, 415; B. XV, 92. Most of the passages, turned by the present writer into modern English, are cited from D. Chadwick's *Social Life in the Days of Piers Plowman,* 1922.
3. *Cf.* Vladimir Nosek, *The Spirit of Bohemia,* Chap. iv, from which the English translations of Huss's words have been cited.
4. Luther to George Spalatin, February, 1520; Engl. transl. quoted from Preserved Smith, *The Life and Letters of Martin Luther,* p. 72.
5. *Cf.* Dittrich, *op. cit.,* Vol. IV, 1932, pp. 53 ff., 58 ff.
6. *Cf. Instit. Christ. Relig.,* III; xxiii: 2.
7. From a sermon of Calvin's cited by Georgia Harkness in *John Calvin: the Man and his Ethics,* p. 107. We are indebted to Professor Harkness's work, especially to Part III, which deals in extensive well-chosen detail with Calvin's ethics.
8. *Cf.* Harkness, *op cit.,* p. 239.
9. *Cf.* T. M. Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation,* Vol. II, p. 313.
10. Translated into English by Talcott Parsons, with a Foreword by R. H. Tawney, 1930. *Cf.* in this connection Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism;* Ernst Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen,* III: 3.
11. Pascal, *Oeuvres,* Grands Écrivains ed., Vol. XIV, p. 343.

Part II. Modern Ethics: To the Time of the French Revolution

Chapter VI. The Beginnings of Modern Ethics

1. *Cf.* Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation,* p. 387.
2. Charron, *De la Sagesse,* 1. ed., 1601, pp. 371 f. The English version by Samuel

Lennard, *On Wisdome,* 1670, which is quoted in the text, does not contain this passage in its entirety, and some parts of it have been translated directly from the original.

3. As Bruno states explicitly in his dedicatory introduction to Sir Philip Sidney, the struggle of Zeus with the Titans, is "segno de la guerra continua, e senza triegua alcuna che fa l'anima contra gli vitii e disordinati affetti." *(Opere italiane,* ed. P. de Lagarde, Göttingen, 1888, Vol. II, p. 412).
4. First Dialogue, Lagarde's ed., Vol. II, p. 432; English translation, 1713 (credited in the Catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, to W. Morehead), p. 30.
5. *Cf.* the Table, cited from Lagarde, in J. L. McIntyre's *Giordano Bruno,* p. 259.
6. *The Heroic Enthusiasts,* transl. by Williams, Part I, 1887, p. 56.
7. *Op. cit.,* Vol. II, 1889, p. 50; *cf.* pp. 47 ff.; Vol. I, pp. 161 f.
8. Symonds' translation, cited in C. E. Plumptre, *Giordano Bruno,* Vol. I, p. xix. Symonds regards this sonnet as Tansillo's.

> Poi che spiegat'ho l'ali al bel desio,
> Quanto piú sott'il piè l'aria mi scorgo,
> Piú le veloci penne al vento porgo,
> E spreggio il mondo, e vers'il ciel m'invio.
> Né del figliuol di Daedalo il fin rio
> Fa che giú pieghi, anzi via piú risorgo.
> Ch'i' cadro morto a terra, ben m'accorgo;
> Ma qual vita pareggia al morir mio?
>
> La voce del mio cor per l'aria sento:
> —Ove mi porti, temerario? China,
> Che raro è senza duol tropp'ardimento.—
> Non temer, respond' io, l'alta ruina.
> Fendi sicur le nubi, e muor contento,
> S'il ciel si illustre morte ne destina.

(Giordano Bruno, *Opere italiane,* Vol. II, *Dialoghi morali,* ed. by Giovanni Gentile, 2. ed., 1927, p. 369).

9. Montaigne, *Essais,* ed. by E. Courbet and Ch. Royer, 1872-1900, Vol. III, pp. 239, 265; Vol. II, pp. 6 f. Cotton's translation is quoted in the text.
10. *Essais,* Vol. I, p. 184; Vol. II, p. 123.
11. *Cf.* E. Dowden's use of Montaigne's tower as "an allegory of the fabric of his soul," in *Michel de Montaigne,* pp. 292 f.
12. *Essais,* Vol. IV, p. 189.
13. *Essais,* concluding passage.
14. This brief section on Pascal is necessarily limited to the ethical issues which engaged his thought. A somewhat more extended examination of his tragic career is undertaken in the third chapter of the present writer's work, *The Nature of Evil:* "Pascal's Despair of Reason."
15. *Pensées,* 63. The numbering of passages follows Professor Brunschvicg's edition, published by Hachette.
16. *Pensées,* 82, 205; *cf.* 219, 194, 72.
17. *Pensées,* 348, 347.
18. *Pensées,* 425, 233.
19. *Pensées,* 233, 277, 793, 435.
20. *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon,* reprinted from the edition of Ellis and Spedding and edited by John M. Robertson, 1905, p. 140.

21. Kuno Fischer, *Francis Bacon und seine Schule* (*Geschichte der neuern Philosophie*, Vol. X), pp. 262, 266.
22. *Henry VI*, Third Part, Act III, Scene ii.
23. *Works*, p. 613.

Chapter VII. Moral Principles and Social Order

1. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters xvii, xviii. *Cf.* Francesco de Sanctis, *History of Italian Literature*, transl. by Joan Redfern, Chap. xv.
2. Bodin, *De la République*, ed. of 1580, p. 67.
3. Grotius, *De jure belli ac pacis*, Prolegomena, viii; the English translation by F. W. Kelsey and others, in "The Classics of International Law," 1925, is quoted.
4. *Op. cit.*, II, xvii: 2: 1. A good example of his combination of *a priori* and *a posteriori* methods may be found in his treatment of the laws governing marriage and consanguinity, *Op. cit.*, II: v: 12, 13.
5. *Cf.* J. O. Hertzler's *History of Utopian Thought*, esp. Chap. iv.
6. More, *Utopia*, ed. by J. Churton Collins, Oxford, p. 138.
7. *Utopia*, p. 84. *Cf. The Wisdom and Wit of Blessed Thomas More*, collected and edited by T. E. Bridgett, 1892, pp. 102 f.
8. *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Robertson, p. 727.
9. *Op. cit.*, p. 722.
10. Campanella, *The City of the Sun*, Engl. transl. in Henry Morley's *Ideal Commonwealths*, 10. ed., p. 238.
11. Io nacqui a debellar tre mali estremi:
tirannide, sofismi, ipocrisia;
ond' or m'accorgo con quanta armonia
Possanza, Senno, Amor m'insegnò Temi.
Questi principi son veri e sopremi
della scoverta gran filosofia,
rimedio contra la trina bugia,
sotto cui tu piangendo, o mondo, fremi.
Carestie, guerre, invidia, inganno,
ingiustizia, lussuria, accidia, sdegno,
tutti a que' tre gran mali sottostanno,
che nel cieco amor proprio, figlio degno
d'ignoranza, radice e fomento hanno.
Dunque a diveller l'ignoranza io vegno.

(Tommaso Campanella, *Poesie*, ed. Gentile, 1915, p. 18. The English translation in the text is by J. A. Symonds, in *The Sonnets of Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Tommaso Campanella*, London, 1878, p. 125).

Chapter VIII. Hobbes' Leviathan

1. Hobbes, *English Works*, ed. Molesworth, Vol. III, p. 672; *cf.* Vol. IV, p. 62.
2. Hobbes, *Opera Latina*, ed. Molesworth, Vol. I, p. 321: "Sentire semper idem, et non sentire, ad idem recidunt."
3. *English Works*, Vol. IV, p. 53.
4. Wordsworth; quoted here from Leslie Stephen's *Hobbes*, p. 185.

5. *English Works,* Vol. III, p. 111.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 113.
7. *Loc. cit.*
8. Compare the list of Laws of Nature in the *Leviathan* with those in the *De Cive* and the *De Corpore Politico.*
9. *Works,* Vol. III, p. 318.
10. *Cf.* A. F. Scott Pearson, *Church and State,* p. 81.

Chapter IX. The English Reaffirmation of Principle and Law

1. Jeremy Taylor, *Ductor Dubitantium (Whole Works,* 1862-64, Vols. IX and X), IV: i: 3.
2. *Cf.* Herbert of Cherbury's professed lifelong veracity, in his *Life,* edited by Horace Walpole, 1764, p. 23. See also his survey of pagan cults, *De Religione Gentilium, Errorumque apud eos Causis.*
3. *Cf. De Veritate,* 1645, pp. 113, 215
4. *The True Intellectual System of the Universe,* 1. Amer. ed., 1837-38, including the *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* and the *Life of Cudworth* by Thomas Birch. Passage quoted in text, Vol. I, pp. 34 f.
5. *System,* Vol. II, 351, 354, 358.
6. Henry More, *Enchiridion Ethicum,* I: i, ii, iii; Engl. transl. by Edward Southwell, 1690, quoted here from the reprint by the Facsimile Text Society, New York, 1930.
7. *Enchiridion,* I: iv.
8. *Ibid.,* I: v.
9. *Ibid.,* II: ii.
10. *Ibid.,* II: x.
11. *Ibid.,* III: v, viii.
12. Cumberland, *De Legibus Naturae Disquisitio Philosophica,* 1672, *Prol.* xvii; *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature,* Engl. transl. by John Maxwell, 1727, p. 23.
13. *De Leg. Nat.,* II: 3, 7; Maxwell, pp. 97, 106.
14. *De Leg. Nat.,* V: 16, 1; Maxwell, pp. 215, 189.
15. *De Leg. Nat.,* V: 9; Maxwell, pp. 203 f.
16. *De Leg. Nat.,* V: 41, 42; Maxwell, pp. 262 ff.

Chapter X. The Ethics of French Rationalism

1. Descartes, *Passions of the Soul,* Part I, Art. 50. Engl. transl. quoted from *The Philosophical Works of Descartes* by E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross.
2. Descartes, *Oeuvres,* ed. Adam and Tannery, Vol. IV, p. 277.
3. *Passions of the Soul,* Part III, Art. 153.
4. Arnold Geulincx, *Opera Philosophica,* ed. J. P. N. Land, 1891-93, Vol. II, p. 150; *cf.* Vol. III, pp. 205 ff.
5. *Opera,* Vol. III, pp. 164, 33, 35, 211; *cf.* pp. 222, 225 f., 237, 243 ff., 252. Descartes, *Oeuvres,* Vol. IV, p. 307.
6. Pascal, *Pensées,* 347; translation of passage quoted is by Albert Guérard, in his *Reflections on the Napoleonic Legend,* p. 268.
7. Malebranche, *Traité de Morale,* I: x: 13.

8. *Recherche de la Vérité,* V: x; Engl. transl. by T. Taylor, *The Search After Truth,* 2. ed., 1700.
9. *Traité de Morale,* II: xiv; *cf. Conversations Chretiennes,* X.

Chapter XI. The Ethics of Spinoza

1. Spinoza, *Opera,* Heidelberg Academy edition, Vol. II, pp. 6 f.; *On the Improvement of the Understanding,* transl. Elwes, pp. 4 f.
2. *Short Treatise,* Part II, Chap. iv.
3. Elwes' translation of the passages is quoted.
4. *Short Treatise,* II: xviii.
5. *Ethics,* IV: Def. viii; Elwes' translation.
6. Wer Wissenschaft und Kunst besitzt,
   Hat auch Religion;
   Wer jene beiden nicht besitzt,
   Der habe Religion. (*Zahme Xenien,* ix).
7. *Political Treatise,* Chap. v, *ad fin.*
8. *Cf.* Brunschvicg, *Spinoza et ses contemporains,* 1923, p. 209: "amour qui comprend Dieu: *amor Dei intellectualis.*"
9. *Ethics,* IV: Appendix, xi; Boyle's translation. *Cf. Ethics,* IV: xlvi.
10. *Ethics,* IV: lxvii; White and Stirling's translation.
11. *Cf.* Hoffding, *Spinozas Ethica,* 1924, p. 107: "Das Ethische war für Spinoza nur ein Durchgangsstadium."
12. *Ethics,* II: iii; Boyle's translation. *Cf. Ethics,* V: xl.
13. *Cf.* Fr. Pollock, *Spinoza, His Life and Philosophy,* 2. ed., 1899, p. 133, Note: "Belief in God is philosophical; belief in *a* God is absurd."
14. *Ethics,* V: xix; White and Stirling's translation; *Ethics,* V: xxxvi; Boyle's translation; *cf. Ethics,* V: xxxiii.
15. *Ethics,* V: xv; Elwes' translation.
16. *Short Treatise,* II: ii.
17. *Cf.* Victor Delbos, *Le Spinozisme,* 2. ed., 1926, pp. 176 f.: "Dieu cause de soi, Dieu cause des êtres, Dieu sauveur des âmes: y a-t-il là simple développement d'un même concept? n'y a-t-il pas là un enrichissement du concept premier, enrichissement accompli peut-être au dépens de la pure logique de la doctrine, mais sous la pression de nécessités que Spinoza avait impliquées dans sa façon de poser le probleme du salut?"

Chapter XII. Scepticism and Optimism: Compromising Orthodoxy

1. Bayle, *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique,* ed. of 1734, Vol. IV, p. 719.
2. *Oeuvres Diverses,* Vol. I, p. 335.
3. *Cf.,* for instance, *Oeuvres Diverses,* Vol. II, pp. 223 f.; Vol. IV, p. 265. *Cf.* also Hegel's comment, in *The Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 118, *Note.*
4. *Oeuvres Diverses,* Vol. III, p. 410.
5. *Op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 368 f.
6. Leibniz, *Principles of Nature and Grace,* 13; Leibniz, *The Monadology and other Philosophical Writings,* transl. by Robert Latta, 1898, p. 419.
7. *Discourse on Metaphysics,* Sect. xiv; Montgomery's transl., p. 23.
8. *Op. cit.,* Sect. xxxvi.

9. *New Essays*, II: xxi: 36; Langley's transl., p. 195.
10. *On the Notions of Right and Justice;* Latta, *op. cit.*, pp. 283 f.
11. *Principes de la nature et de la grace*, Sect. 17; Latta, *op. cit.*, p. 424.
12. *Cf.* Foucher de Careil, *Nouvelles lettres et opuscules inédits de Leibniz*, 1857, pp. 7 f.
13. *Théodicée*, I: 20; Erdmann's edition of Leibniz, *Opera*, 1840, pp. 509 f.
14. *Théodicée*, I: 21; *Opera*, p. 510.
15. *Théodicée*, I: 13, 14; *Opera*, p. 507.
16. *Cf.* the further discussion of Leibniz's theodicy, particularly in relation to Bayle, in the fourth chapter of Tsanoff's *Nature of Evil.*
17. *Monadology*, Sect. 41, 42; transl. in Latta, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

Chapter XIII. The Proverbs of Misanthropy

1. La Rochefoucauld, *Réflexions ou sentences et maximes morales*, 263, 254, 180, 298, 223, 138, 389, 176, 173, 417, 328.
2. *Maxims*, 218, 169, 93, 171.
3. *Oeuvres*, Grands Écrivains ed., Vol. I, pp. 308, 310.
4. Gassendi, *Opera*, Lyons ed. of 1658, Vol. II, p. 703 A; *cf.* G. S. Brett, *The Philosophy of Gassendi*, pp. 191 ff.
5. Saint-Évremond, *Oeuvres*, ed. René de Planhol, Vol. I, p. 5.
6. *Oeuvres*, Vol. III, p. 197; Vol. I, pp. 25, 10; Vol. III, p. 196.
7. La Bruyère, *Oeuvres*, Grands Écrivains ed., 1912, Vol. I-2, p. 347. In citing La Bruyère, I have profited sometimes from Henri van Laun's translation, and also from Professor Henri Chamard's versions of certain passages, quoted in his "Three French Moralists of the Seventeenth Century," in the *Rice Institute Pamphlet*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1.
8. *Oeuvres*, Vol. I-2, pp. 264, 339, 380.
9. *Oeuvres*, Vol. II, p. 61; Vol. I-2, pp. 261, 254.
10. *Oeuvres*, Vol. II, p. 162.
11. Balthazar Gracian, *Oraculo Manual.* The English version used and quoted is that by Joseph Jacobs, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, in the Golden Treasury Series, but occasionally also Savage's translation, *Art of Prudence*, 2. ed., 1705. Jacobs' valuable Introduction should be acknowledged. Maxims 243, 94, 95, 113, 26.
12. Maxims 267, 40, 54, 70, 66, 155; *cf.* 191.
13. Maxims 280, 181; *cf.* 219.
14. Maxims 276, 101.
15. La Rouchefoucauld, Maxim 182.
16. Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by F. B. Kaye, Oxford, 1924, Vol. I, p. 36.

Chapter XIV. Eternal Principles and Divine Providence

1. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Fraser's edition, Vol. I, pp. 73, 477, *Note.*
2. *Essay*, Vol. I, p. 303.
3. *Essay*, Vol. I, p. 474.

4. *Essay*, Vol. I, p. 347.
5. *Essay*, Vol. II, p. 208.
6. *Essay*, Vol. II, p. 156; *cf.* Vol. I, pp. 430, 485.
7. Fox Bourne, *Life of John Locke*, Vol. II, pp. 280 f.; *cf.* Locke, *Works*, ed. of 1812, Vol. VII, pp. 141 ff., 158; Vol. IX, p. 176; Vol. X, p. 306; Vol. III, p. 271.
8. Samuel Clarke, *Works*, ed. Benjamin Hoadly, 1738, Vol. II, p. 22; Vol. I, pp. 144, 696 ff; Vol. II, pp. 117, 193, 616, 620.
9. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 619.
10. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 622.
11. *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 622 f.
12. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 609.
13. *Works*, Vol. I, p. 144; *cf.* p. 698.
14. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 630; *cf.* pp. 41, 646.
15. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 646.

Chapter XV. Conscience and Moral Law

1. Butler, *Works*, ed. by Gladstone, 1897, Vol. II, p. 58.
2. *Works*, Vol. I, p. 77; Vol. II, p. 65.
3. *Works*, Vol. I, p. 337.
4. Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, 3. ed., Vol. I, p. 130.
5. Wollaston, *The Religion of Nature Delineated*, 6. ed., 1738, p. 38.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
7. Price, *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals*, 1787, p. 133.
8. *Review*, p. 269.
9. *Review*, pp. 385, 390, 467 ff.
10. Reid, *Works*, ed. Hamilton, 8. ed., 1895, Vol. I, p. 480.
11. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 579.
12. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 587.
13. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 592.
14. *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 637 ff.

Chapter XVI. Moral Sense Optimism

1. *Characteristics*, ed. Robertson, 1900, Vol. II, p. 83; Vol. I, p. 74.
2. *Characteristics*, Vol. I, pp. 292 f.
3. *Characteristics*, Vol. I, p. 294; Vol. II, pp. 67, 150, 29.
4. *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. by B. Rand, 1900, pp. 54 f.
5. *Characteristics*, Vol. II, pp. 268 f.
6. *Characteristics*, Vol. I, p. 76.
7. *Life, Letters, and Philos. Regimen*, p. 21.
8. *Characteristics*, Vol. II, p. 22.
9. Voltaire's *Oeuvres complètes*, Vol. XVII, p. 584; *Characteristics*, Vol. II, p. 22; *cf.* Vol. I, p. 245.
10. Hutcheson, *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, 2. ed., 1726, pp. 194 f., 187; *cf.* pp. 183 ff.
11. For an extended account of the later development of Hutcheson's philosophy, *cf.* W. R. Scott, *Francis Hutcheson*, 1900, pp. 182-256.

Chapter XVII. The Early British Utilitarians

1. Berkeley, *Works,* Fraser's edition, 1901, Vol. IV, p. 106.
2. *Works,* Vol. IV, p. 159; Essay VI in the "Guardian."
3. Gay's Dissertation is quoted from the reprint of the fifth edition in Selby-Bigge's *British Moralists,* Vol. II. The definition of virtue cited in the text is on p. 272.
4. Selby-Bigge, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 273.
5. *Cf.* Sully, *Pessimism,* 1877, p. 58.
6. Hartley, *Observations on Man,* 5. ed., 1810, Part II, Prop. iv, p. 29.
7. Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century,* Vol. II, p. 66.
8. *Observations on Man,* Part II, Prop. lxxii, Scholium, p. 341.
9. Tucker, *The Light of Nature Pursued,* 2. ed., 1805, Vol. III, pp. 428-645.
10. *Op. cit.,* Vol. IV, p. 502.

Chapter XVIII. The Ethics of Sympathy

1. Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature,* p. 457. The *Treatise* and the *Enquiries* are quoted from Selby-Bigge's edition, Oxford.
2. *Treatise,* p. 469.
3. *Enquiries,* pp. 290, 289, 294.
4. *Enquiries,* p. 295.
5. *Treatise,* p. 471.
6. *Treatise,* p. 574.
7. Albee, *History of English Utilitarianism,* pp. 112, 111; *cf.* Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century,* Vol. II, pp. 86 f. In the critical statement of E. A. Shearer's *Hume's Place in Ethics,* pp. 5 ff., *cf.* the citation of passages in this connection.
8. Leslie Stephen, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 92.
9. Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* Bohn edition, 1911, pp. 441, 271.
10. *Op. cit.,* pp. 461 f.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 26.
12. *Ibid.,* pp. 164, 186, 187, 166.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 176.
14. *Wealth of Nations,* ed. by Edwin Cannan, 2. ed., Vol. I, p. 16.
15. *Op. cit.,* Vol. I, pp. 342, 419.
16. *Ibid.,* p. 80.
17. *Moral Sentiments,* p. 62.

Chapter XIX. The French Enlightenment

1. John Morley, *Voltaire,* Eversley ed., p. 250.
2. Voltaire, *Oeuvres,* ed. Moland, Vol. XIII, p. 181.
3. *Oeuvres de Vauvenargues,* ed. D.-L. Gilbert, pp. 305 f.
4. *Cf.* M. Paléologue, *Vauvenargues,* pp. 139 ff.
5. *Cf.* Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois,* XV: 2 ff.; VI: 9 ff.; XXV: 13.

6. D'Alembert, *Oeuvres*, ed. of 1805, Vol. II, p. 197; *cf.* pp. 195 ff.
7. Diderot, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Assézat, Vol. XVI, p. 301, Article "Plaisir"; Vol. XV, p. 403.
8. Helvétius, *Oeuvres complettes, Liège*, 1774, Vol. I, pp. 9, 11.
9. *Cf. Oeuvres*, Vol. I, pp. 100, 155; Vol. II, p. 144; Vol. III, p. 172.
10. *Cf. Oeuvres*, Vol. III, pp. 362 ff.

Chapter XX. On the Eve of the French Revolution: Materialistic and Romantic Morals

1. La Mettrie, *Oeuvres philosophiques*, Berlin, 1775, Vol. I, p. 295. *Cf.* Vol. III, pp. 94 f.; G. C. Bussey's translation of *Man a Machine*, ed. of 1927, pp. 68 f.
2. *Cf.* Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries de lundi*, 4. ed., Vol. IV, pp. 555, 539.
3. *Oeuvres choisies de N. Chamfort*, ed. Lescure, Vol. I, pp. 4, 59, 167, 201.
4. Holbach, *Système de la nature*, London, 1770, Vol. I, p. 315.
5. The translation of the passage is John Morley's, in his *Diderot*, Eversley ed., Vol. II, pp. 186 f.
6. H. Höffding, *Rousseau und seine Philosophie*, p. 105.
7. *Cf.* Morley, *Rousseau*, Eversley ed., Vol. I, p. 243.
8. *Cf.* Fr. Jodl, *Geschichte der Ethik*, Vol. I, pp. 455 f.
9. Respectable conservative minds have judged Rousseau harshly. Dr. Johnson did not mince words: "Rousseau, Sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation, than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years. Yes, I should like to have him work in the plantations." (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill, N.Y., Harpers, Vol. II, p. 13).
10. Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Hachette in 13 volumes, Vol. XII, p. 147; *cf.* Vol. V, p. 33.
11. *Oeuvres*, Vol. II, p. 262. *Cf.* Charles W. Hendel, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau Moralist*, 1934, Vol. I, pp. 312 f.

Part III. The Nineteenth Century and Ours

Chapter XXI. Kant's Reconstruction of the Moral Problem: The Ethics of Duty

1. *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant's *Werke*, Prussian Academy edition, Vol. IV, p. 48; Engl. transl. by Norman Kemp Smith, 1929, p. 93.
2. Outside of Germany the development of Kant's ethical views has been traced in detail by Victor Delbos in his *Essai sur la formation de la philosophie pratique de Kant*, 1903. For more recent work, *cf.* P. A. Schilpp, *Kant's Pre-Critical Ethics*, 1938.
3. The volume is based on a manuscript notebook of a certain Th. Fr. Brauer, dated 1780, compared with two other students' notebooks. These *Lectures on Ethics* were edited by Professor Paul Menzer, to whom the task was entrusted by the *Kant-Gesellschaft* on the occasion of Kant's bicentenary. The English translation, by Louis Infield, was published in 1931.
4. *Lectures on Ethics*, Engl. transl., pp. 42, 44.
5. *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 410;

Abbott's translation, *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason and Other Works on the Theory of Ethics*, 6. ed., p. 26.

6. *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 393; Abbott's transl., p. 9.
7. *Werke*, Vol. IV, pp. 397, 402, 412; Abbott's transl., pp. 12 f., 18, 29.
8. *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 407; Abbott's transl., p. 24.
9. *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 429; Abbott's transl., p. 47.
10. *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 431; Abbott's transl., p. 49.
11. *Werke*, Vol. V, p. 86; Abbott's transl., p. 180.
12. Spinoza's *Ethics*, IV: 35; Boyle's translation.
13. In the preparation of this section I have utilized my paper, "Freedom as an Ethical Postulate: Kant," contributed to the *Philosophical Essays in Honor of James Edwin Creighton*, 1917.
14. *Cf.* C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, 1930, pp. 137 f.; Arthur Buchenau, *Kants Lehre vom kategorischen Imperativ*, 1913, pp. 109 f.
15. *Werke*, Vol. VI, p. 382; *cf.* p. 407.
16. *Werke*, Vol. VI, p. 93; J. W. Semple's translation, *Religion within the Boundary of Pure [Mere] Reason*, 1838, p. 115; *cf. Werke*, Vol. VI, p. 484.
17. *Werke*, Vol. V, p. 110; Abbott's transl., p. 206.
18. *Werke*, Vol. V, p. 124; Abbott's transl., p. 221.
19. *Werke*, Vol. V, p. 125; Abbott's transl., p. 222.
20. *Werke*, Vol. IV, p. 414; Abbott's transl., p. 31.
21. *Werke*, Vol. VI, p. 153; Semple, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
22. Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant, His Life and Doctrine*, Engl. transl., p. 330.

Chapter XXII. From Lessing to Goethe

1. F. H. Jacobi, *Werke*, Vol. IV-i, 1819, p. 54.
2. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, III: i; I: ii.
   Wem eignet Gott? Was ist das für ein Gott,
   Der einem Menschen eignet?—

   Wie viel *andachtig schwärmen* leichter, als
   Gut handeln ist?
3. *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, Sections 32, 85.
4. *Cf.* William Hamilton, *Metaphysics*, Lecture I, citing an array of similar views from Aristotle to Jean Paul Richter.
5. *Ideen*, IX: i, in Herder's *Sammtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan, Vol. XIII, p. 354; *cf.* pp. 154, 159 ff.
6. *Ideen*, XIV: vi; *Werke*, Vol. XIV, p. 203.
7. *Schriften J. G. Hamanns*, ed. Karl Wildmaier, 1921, p. 298.
8. *Cf.* Lévy-Bruhl's examination of Jacobi's two accounts of reason, in the third chapter of his searching book, *La philosophie de Jacobi*, 1894.
9. *Cf. Allwills Briefsammlung, Werke*, Vol. I, 1812, pp. 194 f.; Jacobi's letter to Fichte, *Werke*, Vol. III, 1816, pp. 37 f., cited by Edward Caird, and Caird's critical comment, in *The Critical Philosophy of Kant*, 2. ed., Vol. II, pp. 200 f., Note.
10. Fr. Schlegel, *Philosophy of Life*, tr. by A. J. W. Morrison, 1847, p. 39.
11. Novalis, *Schriften*, ed. Paul Kluckhorn, 1928, Vol. III, p. 68.
12. *Schriften*, Vol. I, p. 223; *cf.* Vol. II, p. 325; Vol. III, p. 265; Vol. I, p. 164.
13. *Schriften*, Vol. III, pp. 123, 318, 162; Vol. II, pp. 268, 356.

14. *Schriften,* Vol. I, Introduction, p. 80; *cf.* Vol. I, p. 41.
15. Gern dien' ich den Freunden, doch tu' ich es leider mit Neigung;
Und so wurmt es mir oft, dass ich nicht tugendhaft bin.
—Da ist kein andrer Rat! Du musst suchen sie zu verachten,
Und mit Abscheu alsdann tun, wie die Pflicht dir gebeut.
("Die Philosophen," translated by Edgar A. Bowring, *The Poems of Schiller,* in Bohn's Libraries).
16. *Über die aesthetische Erziehung des Menchen,* xii, in Schiller's *Werke,* Grossherzog Wilhelm Ernst Ausgabe, Vol. IV, p. 409; Engl. transl. in *Essays Aesthetical and Philosophical,* Bohn's Libraries, issue of 1916, p. 62.
17. *Über Anmut und Würde, Werke,* Vol. IV, p. 274.
18. *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft,* Kant's *Werke,* Pruss. Acad. ed., Vol. VI, pp. 23 f., Note; Abbott's translation, in *Kant's Theory of Ethics,* 6. ed., pp. 330, 331.
19. Letters xviii, xxiii, xxvii; *Werke,* Vol. IV, pp. 428, 446, 467 f.; Engl. transl, pp. 78, 93, 112.
20. Natur hat weder Kern,
Noch Schale,
Alles ist sie mit *einem* Male.
("Allerdings: Dem Physiker.").
21. *Dichtung und Wahrheit,* Book xi, in Goethe's *Werke,* Weimar ed., Vol. XXVIII, p. 68.
22. Fühlst du nicht in meinen Liedern,
Dass ich *eins* und doppelt bin?
("Gingo biloba," in *West-östlicher Divan*).
23. Dich im Unendlichen zu finden,
Musst unterscheiden und dann verbinden.
("Gott und Welt: Atmosphäre"; quoted here from H. S. Chamberlain, *Goethe,* 1912, p. 605).
24. Im Anfang war die *That.*
(*Faust,* I. Theil: Studierzimmer).
25. Ja! diesem Sinne bin ich ganz ergeben,
Das ist der Weisheit letzter Schluss:
Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben
Der täglich sie erobern muss.
(The translation of this passage cited in the text is by George M. Priest, 1932).
26. Quoted here from Calvin Thomas, *Goethe,* pp. 193 f.
27. Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird's Ereignis . . .
28. Um Gut's zu thun braucht 's keine Überlegung.
Thoas: Sehr viel! denn auch dem Guten folgt das Übel.
Iphigenie: Der Zweifel ist's, der Gutes böse macht.
(*Iphigenie auf Tauris,* V: iii).

Chapter XXIII. The Idealistic Quest of Spiritual Unity

1. *Sämmtliche Werke,* ed. I. H. Fichte, 1845-46, Vol. I, p. 434; transl. from J. F. Brown, *The Doctrine of the Freedom of the Will in Fichte's Philosophy,* 1900, p. 6.

2. *Science of Rights; Werke,* Vol. III, p. 8; Engl. transl. by A. E. Kroeger, p. 18.
3. *Cf. Appellation an das Publicum gegen die Anklage des Atheismus; Die Anweisung zum seligen Leben; Werke,* Vol. V, 214 ff., 470 ff.
4. *Science of Ethics; Werke,* Vol. IV, p. 283; Kroeger's transl., p. 299.
5. *Cf.* A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, *Hegelianism and Personality,* 2. ed., pp. 58 f.; E. B. Talbot, *The Fundamental Principle of Fichte's Philosophy,* 1906, pp. 56 f.
6. This translation of selected sentences from the closing sections of the *Vocation of Man* is cited from Frank Thilly's *History of Philosophy,* 1914, pp. 447 f.
7. Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke,* I-i, 1856, p. 255.
8. *Cf.* Baader, *Sammtliche Werke,* 1850 ff., Vol. V, p. 28; Vol. XII, p. 431, Note.
9. "Religiosität und Sittlichkeit sind dasselbe." (Kuno Fischer, *Schelling's Leben, Werke und Lehre, Geschichte der neuern Philosophie,* Vol. VII, 3. ed., 1902, p. 657). *Cf.* Vladimir Jankélévitch, *L'Odyssée de la conscience dans la dernière philosophie de Schelling,* 1933, espec. Chap. vii.
10. Schleiermacher, *On Religion; Sämmtliche Werke,* I-1, 1843, pp. 245, 188; J. Oman's translation, 1893, pp. 85, 39; *Cf. Der Christliche Glaube,* 6. ed., Vol. I, pp. 15 ff. *Cf.* also Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers,* Vol. I, 2. ed. by Hermann Mulert. Dilthey's uncompleted work remains the best account not only of Schleiermacher's life and thought but of the whole Romantic-Critical circle in which Schleiermacher was active.
11. *Monologen; Werke,* Vol. III-i, 1846, pp. 345-420; transl. by H. L. Friess as *Schleiermacher's Soliloquies,* 1926.
12. Jodl, *Geschichte der Ethik,* 1. ed., Vol. II, 1889, pp. 178 f.; *cf.* Schleiermacher's *Sittenlehre,* Sect. 305.

Chapter XXIV. Social Realization of Personality: Hegel's Philosophy of Right

1. *Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 46. In Georg Lasson's edition of Hegel's *Sämmtliche Werke,* Vol. VI, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts,* the Additions, *Zusatze,* are printed separately at the end of the volume. References to Hegel's writings in this chapter are generally to sections rather than to volume and page. In quoting, the following English translations have been used: S. W. Dyde's *Hegel's Philosophy of Right,* William Wallace's Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind,* J. Sibree's version of the *Philosophy of History.*
2. *Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 124, Addition.
3. *Cf. Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 124, Note; *Philosophy of History,* Introduction, Sibree's transl., issue of 1914, p. 33. Hegel remarks that Goethe repeated this epigram ten years after him.
4. *Philosophy of History,* Sibree, pp. 40 f.
5. *Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 268, Note. *Cf.* Wallace, in Introductory Essay V to his translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind,* p. 154: "It is more than love *to* fatherland, and nation, and laws:—that still implies a relation to something and involves a difference. . . . The absolute morality is *life in* the fatherland and for the nation."
6. *Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 318, Addition.
7. *Ibid.,* Sections 324, Note; 338, Addition.
8. *Ibid.,* Sect. 340; *cf.* Schiller's poem "Resignation," penultimate stanza:
   Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.
9. *Philosophy of Right,* Sect. 35, Addition.

Chapter XXV. The Moral Gospel of Pessimism

1. Schopenhauer, *Sämmtliche Werke,* ed. Paul Deussen, Vol. II, pp. 664 f.; Haldane and Kemp's translation of *The World as Will and Idea,* Vol. III, 6. ed., p. 392; cited below as *H.-K.*
2. *Werke,* Vol. I, p. 380; *H.-K.,* Vol. I, 7. ed., p. 416.
3. *Werke,* Vol. III, p. 576; *The Basis of Morality,* transl. by A. B. Bullock, cited below as *B.,* p. 2.
4. Recognizing the dependence of his theory of knowledge and of reality to Kant's, Schopenhauer published his "Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy" as a necessary Appendix to his own *World as Will and Idea.* For an examination of this Appendix in English, the reader may be referred to the present writer's monograph, *Schopenhauer's Criticism of Kant's Theory of Experience,* 1911. *Cf.* also his work, *The Nature of Evil,* Chapters x and xi, and his paper on "Schopenhauer's Criticism of Kant's Theory of Ethics," in *The Philosophical Review,* 1910. Occasional passages from them have been incorporated in the present discussion.
5. Kant's *Werke,* Pruss. Acad. ed., Vol. IV, p. 403; Abbott's translation, *Kant's Theory of Ethics,* 6. ed., p. 19; Schopenhauer's *Werke,* Vol. III, p. 626; *B.,* p. 84.
6. *Werke,* Vol. III, p. 613; *B.,* p. 63.
7. *Werke,* Vol. III, p. 671; *B.,* pp. 157 f., translation slightly revised.
8. *Werke,* Vol. II, p. 688; *H.-K.,* Vol. III, p. 417.
9. *Werke,* Vol. III, pp. 742 f.; *B.,* p. 278.
10. For further discussion of Bahnsen's philosophical views, *cf.* Tsanoff, *The Nature of Evil,* Chapter xiii; *cf.* also Chap. xii, dealing with Hartmann.
11. First edition, 1879, 871 pp; we use the second, revised edition, *Das sittliche Bewusstsein,* 1886; *cf.* A Drews' summary in his *Eduard von Hartmanns philosophisches System im Grundriss,* 1902, pp. 358-442.
12. *Grundriss der ethischen Prinzipienlehre,* p. 146; *cf. Das sittliche Bewusstsein,* p. 472; *Zur Geschichte und Begrundung des Pessimismus,* 2. ed., pp. 349 f.

Chapter XXVI. The Realistic Reaction in German Thought

1. *Cf.* Herbart, *Sämmtliche Werke,* Hartenstein's ed., 2. impr., Vol. VIII, 1890, p. 39.
2. *Cf. Werke,* Vol. IX, p. 392.
3. Beneke, *Grundlinien der Sittenlehre,* Vol. I, 1837, p. 472.
4. Windelband, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie,* Vol. II, 3. ed., p. 374.
5. Feuerbach, *Sämmtliche Werke,* ed. W. Bolin and Fr. Jodl, Vol. II, 1904, p. 340.
6. *Werke,* Vol. X, 1911, p. 22; *cf.* Vol. I, 1903, pp. 55, 134.
7. *Werke,* Vol. X, pp. 278 ff., 282 ff.
8. Moleschott, *Der Kreislauf des Lebens,* Vol. II, p. 599.
9. Büchner, *Force and Matter,* Engl. transl., 4. ed., reprinted 1913, pp. 382, 387.
10. In *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie,* published in the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart,* 1913, p. 577.
11. Lotze, *Microcosmus,* IX: i; Engl. transl., 4. ed., Vol. II, p. 575.
12. *Microcosmus,* concluding chapter.

Chapter XXVII. Revision of Ideals After the French Revolution

1. Condorcet, *Oeuvres complètes*, 1804, Vol. VIII, p. 557; Vol. IV, pp. 226, 370.
2. *Cf.* Antoine Guillois, *Le Salon de Madame Helvétius*, 1894.
3. Volney, *Oeuvres*, Vol. I, p. 307.
4. *Cf. Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*, 1824, Vol. II, pp. 399-433.
5. Bonald, *Pensées, Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Migne, Vol. I, cols. 1349 f.; *cf.* Vol. III, col. 949; Victor Delbos, *La philosophie française*, 1919, pp. 292 f.
6. *Cf.* George Gogordan, *Joseph de Maistre*, 1894, p. 41; see the conclusion of Bonald's *Théorie du pouvoir, Oeuvres*, Vol. I, cols. 949-954.
7. Joseph de Maistre, *Du Pape, Oeuvres complètes*, Vol. II, 1928, p. 512.
8. Lamennais, *Paroles d'un croyant*, xxxi.
9. *Cf.* Marius Couailhac, *Maine de Biran*, 1905, pp. 232 ff., 279 ff.
10. Cousin, *Cours de 1815; cf.* Paul Janet, *Victor Cousin et son oeuvre*, 1885, p. 158.
11. Cousin, *Fragments philosophiques*, Vol. I, p. 102.
12. *Cf.* Janet, *Victor Cousin*, pp. 82 ff., esp. 90 f.
13. *Cf.* Ravaisson, *La Philosophie en France au XIX^e^ siècle*, pp. 17 f., for a list of the more important historical works by members of Cousin's school. Regarding Cousin's influence as leader and director of university studies in philosophy, see J. Simon, *Victor Cousin*, espec. Chapter iii.
14. Jouffroy, *Nouveaux mélanges philosophiques*, 2. ed., pp. 84 f.; *cf.* William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 30. impr., pp. 176 f.
15. J. Simon, *Le devoir*, 13. ed., p. 9.

Chapter XXVIII. The Growth of British Liberalism

1. Burke, *Select Works*, Oxford ed., Vol. I, 1904, p. 192.
2. *Cf. Shelley's Literary and Philosophical Criticism*, ed. John Shawcross, 1909, pp. 72 ff.
3. *Prometheus Unbound*, end of Act iv.
4. *Literary and Philosophical Criticism*, p. 131.
5. Byron, *Cain*, I: i: 138 ff.
6. Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey," 91 ff.
7. *Cf. Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, later expanded by Stewart as the second and larger part of his *Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man, Works*, ed. Sir William Hamilton, 1877, Vol. VI, pp. 20 ff., 219 ff.
8. Whewell, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, 1862, pp. 277 ff.
9. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, Bohn Library, ed., issue of 1905, p. 114.
10. Regarding Coleridge's relation to Kant and to the Post-Kantians, *cf.* René Wellek, *Kant in England*, 1931, Chapter iii.
11. *Cf. Aids to Reflection*, Bohn Library ed., 1913, p. 30.
12. Newman, *Selections*, ed. Gates, p. 98.
13. Clough, "The Questioning Spirit."
14. Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, 1. Series, ed. of 1916, p. 346; *Literature and Dogma*, Popular ed., 1900, pp. 15 f., 229, 17, 225.
15. *Cf.* Benn, *History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century*, 1906, Vol. II, p. 71; J. E. Courtney, *Freethinkers of the Nineteenth Century*, 1920, p. 53.
16. *Cf.* Courtney, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

17. *Cf.* Wellek, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
18. Carlyle, "Shooting Niagara and After," *Works*, Centenary ed., Vol. XXX, p. 29; Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Conclusion, Abbott's translation.
19. *Sartor Resartus; Works*, Vol. I, p. 156.
20. *Cf.* J. Nichol, *Thomas Carlyle*, ed. of 1904, p. 165; "Characteristics," *Works*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 7.
21. *Cf.* Nichol, *op. cit.*, p. 226.
22. Quoted from J. A. Froude, *Thomas Carlyle, A History of the First Forty Years of His Life*, ed. of 1914, Vol. I, p. 228.
23. *Sartor Resartus, Works*, Vol. I, p. 157.
24. Ruskin, *Unto This Last*, Pocket ed., p. 156.
25. *Unto This Last*, p. 65; *The Crown of Wild Olive*, Brantwood ed., pp. 32, 46.

Chapter XXIX. The Moral Outlook of New England and the Spreading American Scene

1. From Captain Edward Johnson's *History of New England, or Wonderworking Providence of Sion's Saviour*, 1654, quoted here from H. W. Schneider's work, *The Puritan Mind*, p. 8.
2. Royce, Introduction to Father L. van Becelaere's book, *La Philosophie en Amérique*, 1904, p. xiv.
3. *Cf.* V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vol. I, *The Colonial Mind*, 1927, pp. 27 ff, 62 ff., 98 ff.
4. Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," *Works*, Hickman's 12. ed., London, 1879, Vol. II, p. 10.
5. Holmes, *Pages from an Old Volume of Life*, Riverside ed., p. 393; *cf.* p. 372.
6. Edwards, *Works*, Vol. I, p. 125; *cf.*, p. 122.
7. *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 100, 101.
8. Franklin, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, 1725, reprinted by the Facsimile Text Society, New York, 1930.
9. *Autobiography*, Riverside Bookshelf ed., pp. 134 ff.
10. *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. A. H. Smith, Vol. II, pp. 168, 169.
11. Emerson's *Journals*, October, 1852; Bliss Perry's edition of *The Heart of Emerson's Journals*, 1926, is quoted.
12. Thoreau, *Walden*, "Economy."
13. Emerson, *Journals*, Oct. 17, 1840.
14. Quoted by S. M. Crothers, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1921, p. 142.
15. *Journals*, February, 1855.
16. *Cf.* Bliss Perry, *Emerson Today*, 1931, p. 52.
17. From a letter to an unknown correspondent, July 3, 1841, quoted by Bliss Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 59; *cf.* "Character," "The Sovereignty of Ethics."
18. *Essays*, "Experience."
19. Whitman, *Complete Prose Works*, Appleton ed., 1910, p. 277, Note.
20. *Prose Works*, p. 292, Note.
21. *Leaves of Grass*, David McKay ed., 1900, p. 290.
22. *Prose Works*, p. 295.
23. *Leaves of Grass*, p. 354.

Chapter XXX. French Positivism in Morals

1. *Religion Saint-Simonienne. Recueil des prédications,* Vol. I, 1832, pp. 303, 97, 335, 344, 381, 597.
2. A vivid account of Fourier's character and ideas is that of Ernest Seillière, in the fourth volume of his *Philosophie de l'impérialisme,* entitled *Le mal romantique,* 1908, p. 1-188.
3. *Cf.* George Boas' citation and analysis of the more important relevant evidence, in his *French Philosophies of the Romantic Period,* pp. 263-276.
4. "Toute l'éducation humaine doit préparer chacun à vivre pour autrui, afin de revivre dans autrui." (*Politique positive,* Vol. II, p. 371).
5. *Cf.* Fouillée, *Critique des systèmes de morale contemporains,* 1883, pp. 39 ff.
6. Proudhon, *De la justice,* Vol. III, p. 317, quoted here from Marcel Bernès, "La morale de Proudhon," in the coöperative volume, *Études sur la philosophie morale au XIX^e siècle,* 1904, p. 136.
7. *Cf.* Fouillee, *op. cit.,* p. 57.
8. Matthew Arnold, "Haworth Churchyard"; quoted here from Benn, *History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century,* Vol. II, p. 56; *cf.* Janet E. Courtney, *Freethinkers of the Nineteenth Century,* Chap. vi.
9. Harrison writes: "I do not confine my language to the philosophy or religion of Comte—for this same conception of man is common to many philosophies and many religions. It characterizes such systems as those of Spinoza and Shelley, as much as those of Confucius and Buddha." (*The Philosophy of Common Sense,* p. 192).

Chapter XXXI. Utilitarianism and Social Reform

1. John MacCunn, *Six Radical Thinkers,* 2. impr., 1910, p. 18.
2. J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism,* p. 91. The edition used is that of Charles Douglas, *The Ethics of John Stuart Mill,* 1897, which contains also chapters "On the Logic of the Moral Sciences" from the *System of Logic,* extensive footnotes and quoted passages from Mill's other writings: a useful topical anthology, from which the present discussion has profited.
3. *Cf.* J. S. Mill, *Dissertations and Discussions,* Vol. I, p. 414.
4. *Utilitarianism,* pp. 92, 93, 95, 97.
5. *Utilitarianism,* p. 96.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 110.
7. *Ibid.,* p. 148.
8. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics,* 7. ed., p. 200.
9. *Ibid.,* p. 383.
10. *Ibid.,* p. 411.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 503.
12. Mill, *The Subjection of Women, cf.* Douglas, *op. cit.,* p. 139.

Chapter XXXII. Ethics and the Theory of Evolution

1. Darwin, *The Descent of Man,* American Edition, 1896, p. 97.
2. *Descent of Man,* p. 110.
3. *Ibid.,* p. 121; *cf.* p. 132.

4. *Social Statics,* 1851, p. 56.
5. *Principles of Ethics,* Amer. ed., 1897, Vol. I, p. 20.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 279.
7. Fiske, *Through Nature to God,* pp. 108, 115.
8. Quoted by J. E. Courtney, *Freethinkers of the Nineteenth Century,* p. 168.
9. Kropotkin, *Ethics: Origin and Development,* transl. by L. S. Friedland and J. R. Piroshnikoff, ed. of 1934, pp. 30 f.
10. Leslie Stephen, *Science of Ethics,* 2. ed., 1907, p. 208.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 44.
12. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil, Works,* Engl. transl. ed. by Oscar Levy, Vol. XII, pp. 227, 228, 230.
13. *Die Unschuld des Werdens, Der Nachlass,* ed. Alfred Baeumler, 1931, Vol. II, p. 273.
14. *The Will to Power, Works,* Vol. XIV, p. 46.
15. *Genealogy of Morals, Works,* Vol. XIII, p. 43.
16. *Thus Spake Zarathustra, Works,* Vol XI, p. 268. Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence and earlier expositions of this idea in the history of thought are reviewed in the fifth chapter of Tsanoff's work, *The Problem of Immortality,* 1924.
17. *Zarathustra, Works,* Vol. XI, pp. 6, 9, 8.

CHAPTER XXXIII. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CRITICISM IN ITS MORAL BEARINGS

1. *Cf.* Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory,* 3. ed., Vol. II, p. 266:

LOWEST

1. Secondary Passions;—Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, Suspiciousness.
2. Secondary Organic Propensions;—Love of Ease and Sensual Pleasure.
3. Primary Organic Propensions;—Appetites.
4. Primary Animal Propension;—Spontaneous Activity (unselective).
5. Love of Gain (reflective derivative from Appetite).
6. Secondary Affections (sentimental indulgence of sympathetic feelings).
7. Primary Passions;—Antipathy, Fear, Resentment.
8. Causal Energy;—Love of Power, or Ambition; Love of Liberty.
9. Secondary Sentiments;—Love of Culture.
10. Primary Sentiments of Wonder and Admiration.
11. Primary Affections. Parental and Social;—(approximately) Generosity and Gratitude.
12. Primary Affection of Compassion.
13. Primary Sentiment of Reverence.

HIGHEST

2. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil,* 1907, Vol. II, pp. 243, 288, 250 ff.
3. *Cf.* Guyau, *Esquisse d'une morale,* 13. ed., esp. pp. 83 ff., 140 ff., 244 ff.; *L'irreligion de l'avenir,* 20. ed., pp. 82 ff., 339 ff.; *cf.* also Guyau's *Vers d'un philosophe,* 1881, esp. "Illusion féconde."
4. *Cf.* Fouillée, *La morale des idées-forces,* 2. ed., pp. 67 ff., 24, 192 f., 214, 361 f.; *cf.* also *Critique des systèmes de morale contemporains* and *Le moralisme de Kant et l'amoralisme contemporain.*

5. Durkheim, *On the Division of Labor in Society,* transl. by George Simpson, 1933, p. 402.
6. . . . Cosí tra questa
Immensità s'annega il pensier mio:
E il naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare.
(Leopardi, "L'Infinito").
7. Reference may be made to Chapters viii and ix of Tsanoff's *Nature of Evil,* where the pessimism of Leopardi and of Vigny has been considered at greater length.
8. Some of the topics considered in this section have been treated by the present writer more extensively in "The Problem of Life in the Russian Novel," published in *The Rice Institute Pamphlet,* Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 117-272.
9. *Cf.* Maurice Baring, *Landmarks in Russian Literature,* 2. ed., p. 99.
10. Solovyof, *The Justification of the Good,* transl. by N. A. Duddington, 1918, p. 35.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 459; *cf.* Ossip-Lourié, *La philosophie russe contemporaine,* 1902, pp. 9-34.
12. Tsanoff, *The Nature of Evil,* pp. 165 f.
13. Cited here from Thomas Kirkup, *History of Socialism,* 5. ed., p. 268.
14. *Cf.* Max Stirner, *The Ego and His Own,* transl. by S. T. Byington, pp. 5, 85 f., 225, 360 f.; Albert Lévy, *La philosophie de Feuerbach,* 1904, pp. 339-379, examining Feuerbach's influence on Stirner; Victor Basch, *L'Individualisme anarchiste: Max Stirner,* ed. of 1928. See also the satirical *Sankt Max,* mostly by Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, published in Marx, *Der historische Materialismus; die Fruhschriften,* Kröner ed. of 1932, Vol. II, pp. 82-182.
15. *Cf.* Kierkegaard, *Entweder-Oder,* in his *Gesammelte Werke,* German ed. by H. Gottsched and Chr. Schiempf, Vol. II, 1922, pp. 133, 159; *Der Begriff der Angst, Werke,* Vol. V, 1923, p. 156; D. F. Swenson's Introduction to his version of Kierkegaard's *Philosophical Fragments,* 1936; Walter Lowrie, *Kierkegaard,* 1938.
16. *Cf.* Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit,* Vol. I, 3. ed., pp. 180 ff., 235 ff., 274 ff.; concerning Jaspers and Heidegger and their relation to Kierkegaard, *cf.* Werner Brock, *An Introduction to Contemporary German Philosophy,* 1935, pp. 95-117.
17. Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man,* transl. by Douglas Horton, p. 168.

Chapter XXXIV. The Ethics of Socialism

1. Quoted from Max Eastman's edition of Marx's *Capital, the Communist Manifesto and Other Writings,* 1932, p. xxiv.
2. Bastiat, *Harmonies économiques,* p. 568, quoted in Charles Gide's essay, "La morale de Bastiat," in the *Études sur la philosophie morale au XIX^e siecle,* ed. by Belot and others, 1904.
3. Mazzini, *The Duties of Man,* Engl. ed. in Everyman's Library, p. 19; *cf.* pp. 7 f., 15 f.
4. *Ibid.,* pp. 117 f.
5. From Engels' Preface to the *Communist Manifesto,* Max Eastman's edition cited above, p. 318.
6. *Cf.* Sorel, *Matériaux d'une théorie du prolétariat,* 1919, pp. 132 f.; *Reflections on Violence,* transl. by T. E. Hulme, 1925, p. 35.

7. Benrubi, *La philosophie contemporaine en France*, Vol. II, pp. 865 f.; *cf.* Sorel's lecture, "La science et la morale," in *Questions de morale*, ed. by Belot and others, 1900, pp. 7, 9 f., 24 f.
8. G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, 1937, p. 741; *cf.* p. 735.
9. Quoted by S. Hook, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx*, 1933, pp. 107 f.
10. *Cf.* Labriola, cited by Benedetto Croce, *Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx*, transl. by C. M. Meredith, 2. ed., pp. 24, 109.
11. N. Bucharin, *Theorie des historischen Materialismus*, German transl. by Fr. Rubiner, 1922, pp. 178, 278.
12. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Chap. xv, Sect. 3-a; *cf.* Sect. 8-c.
13. *Cf.* Sorel, *Théorie du prolétariat*, p. 125.
14. *Cf. Lenin y Tolstoy*, Moscow, 1928, pp. 69, 83.
15. Butler's *Works*, ed. Gladstone, Vol. II, 1897, pp. 242, 243.

Chapter XXXV. Revival of Idealism. The Ethics of Self-Realization

1. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 4. ed., p. 218.
2. *Cf.* J. H. Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy*, 1931, pp. 228, 229.
3. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, 1876, p. 157, Note.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
5. Bosanquet, *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, 1913, p. 64.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 218.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
8. "Tests of Right and Wrong," 1880; *cf.* Royce, *Fugitive Essays*, ed. J. Loewenberg, 1920, pp. 209, 215 f.
9. Royce, *William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life*, 1911, p. 292.
10. Royce, *The World and the Individual*, Vol. II, ed. of 1913, p. 340; *cf.* p. 430.
11. Royce, *Philosophy of Loyalty*, ed. of 1924, pp. 16 f.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. viii f.
13. Royce, *The Problem of Christianity*, Vol. I, 1913, p. xviii.
14. Bowne, *Principles of Ethics*, p. 69.
15. Taine, *History of English Literature*, Engl. transl. by H. Van Laun, Vol. I, 1907, p. 11.
16. Croce, *Filosofia della Pratica. Economica ed Etica*, 1909, p. 281; translated into English by Douglas Ainslie as *Philosophy of the Practical. Economic and Ethic*, 1913, p. 401.
17. Gentile, *Teoria generale dello spirito come atto puro*, 4. ed., p. 203; transl. by H. Wildon Carr, *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, 1922, p. 237.

Chapter XXXVI. Ethical Issues in Contemporary Thought

1. *Cf.* D. Parodi, *La philosophie contemporaine en France*, 1920, pp. 494 f.
2. Adler, *An Ethical Philosophy of Life*, 1918, pp. 208, 102.
3. Cited by I. Benrubi, *Les sources et les courants de la philosophie contemporaine en France*, Vol. II, p. 989.
4. *Cf.* Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, transl. by A. H. C. Downes, 1936, pp. 33, 127, 272, 325, 340.

5. Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion,* 13. ed., pp. 23, 57, 64, 94; Engl. transl, 1935, pp. 18, 46, 52, 76.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 219; Engl. transl., p. 175.
7. James, *The Will to Believe,* 1897, pp. 50, 211, 213; *cf.* pp. 17 ff., 179.
8. Spengler, *The Hour of Decision,* transl. by C. F. Atkinson, 1934, pp. 21, 185, 230.
9. *Cf.* Unamuno, *Essays and Soliloquies,* transl. by J. E. Crawford Flitch, 1925, pp. 55, 61, 74, 94, 107, 118.
10. Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life,* transl. by J. E. C. Flitch, 1921, pp. 262, 263; *cf.* pp. 184 f., 130.
11. Quoted by Fite, *Moral Philosophy,* 1925, p. 115; *cf.* p. 3.
12. *Ibid.,* p. 185.
13. A. K. Rogers, *Ethics and Moral Tolerance,* p. 301.
14. Santayana, "A Brief History of My Opinions," in *Contemporary American Philosophy,* Vol. II, 1930, p. 244.
15. Santayana, *Three Philosophical Poets,* 1910, p. 33.
16. Santayana, *The Realm of Essence; cf. The Philosophy of Santayana, Selections,* ed. by I. Edman, 1936, p. 474.
17. Brentano, *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong* transl. by Cecil Hague, 1902, p. 29; *cf.* pp. 15 ff. See also Howard O. Eaton, *The Austrian Philosophy of Values,* 1930, pp. 52 f., 62 ff., Oskar Kraus, *Franz Brentano,* 1919, p. 63.
18. Urban, *Valuation: Its Nature and Laws,* 1909, pp. 22, 54.
19. Varisco, *The Great Problems,* Engl. transl. by R. C. Lodge, 1914, pp. 339, 338.
20. Sorley, *Moral Values and the Idea of God,* 2. ed., p. 73; *cf.* pp. 78 f., 184, 188 ff.
21. S. Hook, "A Critique of Ethical Realism," in the *International Journal of Ethics,* Vol. XL, p. 199.
22. N. Hartmann, *Ethics,* transl. by Stanton Coit, Vol. II, p. 458; *cf.* pp. 444 ff., 462.
23. S. Alexander, *Beauty and Other Forms of Value,* 1933, p. 236; *cf. Space, Time, and Deity,* 1920, Vol. II, p. 277; *Moral Order and Progress,* 4. ed., 1906, p. 132.
24. *Space, Time, and Deity,* Vol. II, p. 413.
25. *Mind,* 1912, pp. 22, 27, 30.
26. Ross, *The Right and the Good,* 1930, pp. 3 f., 34, 46 f., 74, 104, Note, 130 ff., 140, 152 f., 159 ff.
27. Laird, *An Enquiry into Moral Notions,* 1936, p. 161; *cf.* pp. 25 f., 10, 85, 135 ff.
28. Muirhead, "Unionism and Separatism in Ethics," in the *International Journal of Ethics,* Vol. XLVI, p. 487.
29. In the remainder of this discussion I have made some use of my essay on "The Theory of Moral Value," contributed to the volume *Contemporary Idealism in America,* ed. by Clifford Barrett, 1932.

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