AN EXAMINATION

OF

THE UTILITARIAN

THEORY OF MORALS,

BY THE

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PREFACE.

This little treatise is but an unpretending contribution in the department of Moral Science. Written by snatches amid the varied duties of ministerial life, it lays no claim either to be profound in matter, or complete in form. Much less does it pretend to any originality.

The practical importance of correct views on the questions of Moral Science may be underestimated. Sound ethical principles are closely related to religion, just as the Theistic position is vital to sound opinions touching ethical principles. An attempt is made to keep this in view in these pages.

The value of well-founded doctrines in morals, both to the individual and to society, is of great moment in this age of independent research, and almost restless enquiry, when some even venture to propose reconstruction in religion and morals. Reflection on such things led the writer to examine and compare the two leading opposite schools of Moralists, with a view to discover the merits of their respective claims to acceptance. The result, in the form of a brief summary, is contained in the following pages.

No one can be more sensible than the writer, of the many imperfections in the attempt he has made to carry out his purpose, yet it is felt that the careful reader can scarcely fail to be helped to see the inadequacy of the Utilitarian System, and the sufficiency of the Intuitional Theory, to answer all the demands of an ethical system. Ethical Empiricism is radically defective.

In regard to the plan of the work, it is proper to state that fault may be found with the *method* of treatment. It may be thought by some that to sketch the whole ground continuously in the first part of the treatise, and then to

review the same topics in the second part, is not in accordance with strict logical method. Some may have the feeling that it would have been better to have completed the statement and criticism of each topic by itself. Both methods were before the writer's mind, and after consideration he decided to adopt a plan which may be open to criticism, yet, which, it is believed, will best gain the end he has in view. If any reader prefers the other order, he can secure it by reading consecutively the corresponding chapters in the first and second parts

This prefatory note would be incomplete without mention of the aid received, and of the thanks due to some of the kind friends whose assistance has done much to make this treatise what it is. Professor Young, L. L D., of University College, Toronto, whose able teaching in Mental and Moral Science can never be forgotten, is mentioned, with grateful memory of profitable hours spent in his classes. Principal Caven, D. D., of Knox College, Toronto, whose valuable aid and wise counsel was so cheerfully given, deserves the warmest gratitude of the writer. To other friends who have encouraged him in various ways thanks are likewise tendered.

It may be added, that while the manner in which the topics are treated may render the book of interest chiefly to students in College or University, or to readers who have enjoyed some tuition in mental and moral science, it is hoped that the general reader may also be able to peruse its pages with intelligence and profit.

Such as it is, it is sent forth with the earnest hope that it may at least inspire in some minds a deeper interest in the great problems of Ethics.

F. R. BEATTIE.

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THE UTILITARIAN

THEORY OF MORALS.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of these pages is to discuss, in a somewhat general way, those views in regard to the questions of moral philosophy which, taken together, are now usually known as the Utilitarian System. It is clearly impossible in the narrow limits of this little treatise to give detailed exposition of the different phases which this system has assumed, or to enter into elaborate criticism of its various positions. The hope is cherished, however, that though only a very general survey can be taken, yet a somewhat concise and intelligent view of the system, in its strength and weakness, may be presented.

By way of introduction, a very brief historical outline of opinion in regard to the doctrines of moral philosophy may be given. Such a sketch will provide a basis of discussion, and will render historical reference less necessary as the exposition proceeds.

Moral philosophy really begins with Socrates (400 B C.), though we find attempts to explain ethical problems made by Pythagoras (550 B. C.), who was followed by Heraclitus (500 B.C.), but opposed by Democritus (410 B. C.). Socrates, the sage of Athens, opposed the subjectivity of the Sophists in general, and combated with all his might their conventionalism in regard to practical morality He also regarded ethical questions as quite distinct from cosmological and metaphysical problems ; and he further held that in the very constitution of things there is a real, permanent, and objective distinction between right and wrong. Virtue is not dependent on the caprice of the individual, but has universal validity. Plato (375 B. C.) treated the subject of Ethics rather from a speculative than from a practical point of view. He looked upon virtue rather as a matter of pure intelligence than in its bearing on human conduct. Ethical questions were discussed more in tneir relation to *knowledge* than

in their relation to *action*. Aristotle (350 B. C.) gave the study of Ethics a more practical turn, and connected it with the voluntary actions of men. The questions were treated in their bearing on human conduct, and the best interest of the individual and society. The true good for man is happiness, and virtue is to be found in the choice of the mean between extremes.

Subsequently to Plato and Aristotle we find various one-sided developments of Socratic doctrines. On the one hand Antisthenes (380 B. C) founded the Cynic school with which Diogenes is to be connected, and out of which the system of the Stoics grew (300 B. C.). In a general way, and with cold severity of spirit, this school held that virtue is the only good, and that the rule of human conduct is right reason, with its practical maxim—"Live according to Nature." On the other hand Aristippus (390 B. C.) founded the Cyrenaic school, in which we find a clearly defined Hedonism, and out of which the Epicurean system was developed, (300 B. C.). Here happiness, variously regarded, is the chief good of man, and its attainment is the proper end of human conduct. It is here that some of the leading principles which underlie modern Utilitarianism

first clearly appear, though their germs may be found in tbe sensual notions of Democritus; just as the germs of modern Materialism are to be found in his atomic doctrines.

During the early ages of Christianity moral philosophy was generally viewed in its connection with the doctrines of the Church, and in its relation to the life and conduct of the Christian. Occasionally it sought a rational basis in Neoplatonism on the one hand, or shaded off into vague Mysticism on the other. In the Scholastic philosophy of the middle ages (1100–1400 A. D.) we find Ethics bound up with Christian doctrine and the Aristotelian philosophy. The questions chiefly debated were, the nature of moral distinctions, and the foundation of virtue Aquinas (1250 A.D.) held that moral distinctions exist in the very nature of things, whilst Scotus (1350 A. D.) maintained that they depend on the will or authority of God In this latter notion we have the germ of one phase of the Utilitarian system, in which law, human or divine, is made the foundation of virtue.

As modern philosophy on its intellectual side begins with Descartes, (1620 A. D.) so on its moral side it may be said to commence with Hobbes (1650 A. D.), of whose opinions a good

deal will be said in explaining and reviewing the Utilitarian system. From Hobbes onward we find a two-fold development in moral philosophy. Along one line we find the various forms of the Inductive theory, and along another the different phases of the Intuitive system. As illustrations of the former the following names may be mentioned :—Bentham (1770 A.D.), with his fundamental principle of the greatest good of the greatest number; Paley, (1775 A. D.) who gives prominence to the Divine Law as the moral standard, as Hobbes does to the law of the land; Hume, (1760 A. D.) who found the rule of right in the principle of Utility; Mill (1850 A. D.), who endeavors to transform the principle of Utility into a doctrine of general benevolence, in which he is followed, in a general way, by the modern advocates of the most fully matured forms of Utilitarianism. As illustrating the Intuitive system we may mention :—Cudworth (1650 A. D.), who held that there is an eternal and immutable distinction between right and wrong, both in the Divine mind and in the human reason; Shaftesbury (1700 A. D.), who first gave the name *Moral Sense* to the ethical faculty; Butler (1730 A.D.), who emphasized the doctrine that

conscience is an original faculty, and showed its proper place and paramount authority; Hutcheson (1740 A. D.), who developed and gave more systematic form to the doctrines of Shaftesbury; Reid (1780 A D.) Stewart (1800 A. D.) and the Scottish School generally, who upheld the Intuitive system, alike in the intellectual and moral spheres.

There are some writers on moral philosophy who cannot properly be classified with the two Schools just outlined. We may name :—Smith (1750 A.D.), with his peculiar doctrine of sympathy; Clarke (1700 A. D.), with his theory of the *eternal fitness* of things. Others of lesser note might be named did space permit.

In France and Germany ethical problems have received some share of attention. In the former country Helvetius (1730 A. D.) and his followers maintained, along side of a most thorough going Materialism, a Hedonistic system of a selfish and sensual character. The pursuit and attainment of pleasure is all and all for man. Cousin (1840 A D) and the later Eclectics tend much more decidedly to the Intuitive doctrine. Amongst the Germans Leibnitz gave much attention to ethical questions, discussing especially the problem of evil; but it was not till the time of Kant (1780 A. D.)

that moral philosophy assumed definite systematic form in Germany. According to Kant we find in the Practical Reason, with its categorical imperative, the eternal and immutable principles of morality, and the authoritative rule of conduct, absolutely binding upon all. While modern Utilitarians impatiently declare that the word *ought* should be banished from the terminology of morals, Kant ascribes to this very notion fundamental importance and paramount authority. Later developments in Fichte *(*1800 A. D.*)* and Hegel *(*1820 A. D.*)* need not be followed out, and it may only be stated in passing that the Modern Positivist School, both in France and Britain, is to be ranked among the Inductive Moralists, and is more or less distinctly Utilitarian.

In America there are also names worthy of mention. At the head of the list stands Edwards *(*1740 A. D.*)*, whose labors both in Moral Philosophy and Theology have left an enduring monument for posterity; McCosh, who is an advocate of the Intuitive system both in the mental and moral spheres. Others we may merely mention—Wayland, Bowen, Hickok, and Haven, in the United States; and Young and Watson, in Canada.

Having given this brief sketch, it only re-

mains to be further stated that, in discussing the Utilitarian theory of morals, the task in hand will be two-fold in its nature. In the first place a general statement and exposition of the system will be given; and in the second place an analysis and criticism of its various positions will be offered. To this task we now proceed.

THE UTILITARIAN

THEORY OF MORALS.

PART I.

GENERAL STATEMENT AND EXPOSITION.

PRELIMINARY.

The facts with which any system of moral philosophy has to deal are those connected with man's moral nature, and those arising out of his conduct in its ethical relations. Such questions as the following at once arise:—What is the constitution of man's nature viewed as moral, and what the guiding principle of its activity? What is the essential nature, and what the origin of the conceptions of right and wrong? Wherein consists the obligation to do certain things, and to refrain from doing others? Why is it that approbation attends certain actions, and disapprobation actions of a different kind? What is the

motive which prompts men to act in any particular way, or is human conduct determined by a variety of motives? What is the fundamental relation of man to his fellow men, and how does he stand related to the Divine Being? Are the principles of morality *subjective* merely, and hence variable, or are they *objective* really, and hence immutable? Is man a free agent, or is he under the law of necessity, consciously or unconsciously? These and many similar questions arise when we look at the facts which come before us, and with these the ethical system has to deal, and endeavor to give satisfactory solutions to the various problems.

In seeking to deal with these questions moral philosophers have both approached them by different paths, and have sought the fundamental principles of the ethical system in widely different regions. The enquiry has been made upon two distinct lines, and along these the solution of the problems has been attempted. Some writers have directed their attention almost entirely to the inner sphere of human consciousness. These give prominence to our notions or conceptions of morality, and seek by analysis of these notions, as well as of the feelings and emotions connected with them,

to elaborate an ethical system. In this point of view the enquiry is directed chiefly into the nature and validity of the notions expressed by the words, *right*, *wrong*, *duty*, *obligation*, &c, and into the character of the emotions flowing from the exercise of the moral faculty in the conduct of life.

Others have viewed moral principles chiefly in an objective light, and hence such moralists seek the solutions of the problems of Ethics in some quarter beyond man's moral nature and consciousness. They deal specially with the standard of morals, and give prominence to something in the objective sphere, which may be regarded as the rule of right. One will give prominence to *Law*, human or Divine; another to the necessary relations, or eternal fitness of things; and another to General Utility in some of its forms. According to this point of view the explanation of all questions in morals is to be found in some external ground, or objective principle; either Law, General Utility, or some other feature in the nature of things. It will be observed that the enquiry here is directed chiefly to the question of the ethical standard, and to the question of the foundation of virtue, rather than to an explanation of the origin of our moral conceptions, or to an analysis of our ethical sentiments.

Examples, did space allow, could easily be given of both of these tendencies all along the history of speculation. Shaftesbury and Hutcheson may serve as examples of the former, while Hobbes and Clarke will suffice for the latter. As to these two ways of considering the questions which present themselves in morals, it may be remarked that both are true in a measure, but neither is complete in itself. Moral principles may be justly regarded as having an external ground and objective validity of a certain well defined nature; and yet our knowledge of these principles, as well as of all moral emotions, must in the very nature of the case be subjective, and must be studied on the arena of consciousness. Every system of Ethics to be complete must deal with both, and seek to present each in its proper place and relations.

It is necessary, in order to avoid confusion, to make another preliminary remark. Much obscurity has been imported into discussions on moral philosophy, by failing to keep quite distinctly apart two closely related questions. The question of the *nature* and *origin* of moral distinctions, and the question of the *ethical standard* should never be confounded. In answer to the former question, some theory

sufficient to account for the facts of man's moral nature, and ethical conduct and relations, must be propounded; while, as to the latter, some law, rule, standard, or principle, must be laid down, by the use of which the moral significance of actions may be determined. Any theory to be complete must discuss both the theory of the moral sentiments, and the question of the ethical standard; yet they are to be treated as quite different, though closely related questions. An adequate system of moral philosophy must account for the origin, and explain the nature of all moral facts; and at the same time it must announce such a clearly defined rule, or well understood standard, as will suffice to direct personal conduct aright.

It only remains to enquire in regard to the *method* to be pursued, whether we should proceed *inductively* or *deductively*. Must we from observed facts reason back to principles, by the ordinary methods of inductive enquiry; or must we start out from certain assumed, though it may be well founded principles, and from these principles explain the facts according to the rules of deductive reasoning? Whatever theory of morals is held, it is clear that the truly scientific method is the inductive, by

means of which the facts are observed, classified, and their laws or principles unfolded. This is true whether the field of observation be outward nature, human society, or man's consciousness. At the same time induction, to be complete, involves deduction, if not as a direct aid, at least as an instrument of verification. This then gives us the true method in morals as in any other science, and to employ induction and deduction in their proper relations will render our method complete, and our results assured.

This remark concerning *method* suggests another important point which concerns the nature and order of the facts, with which we shall have presently to deal, and an allusion to this point will pave the way for entering intelligently upon the consideration of the main topics to come under review. When the order of the facts and their real nature is considered, we find that the term Inductive stands over against the term Intuitive, as in a measure indicating the nature and order of the facts, as well as hinting at the only possible method available in ethical enquiry. According to the distinction which thus appears all ethical systems fall more or less completely into two classes. The one regards the conceptions of

right and wrong, of duty and obligation, as simple, ultimate, and underived, and as such, not capable of being resolved into any simpler conception. The other class maintains that these conceptions are not simple, and underived, but compound, secondary, and derived from some simpler notion, or fact. To theories of the former class the name Intuitive is generally given, and to those of the latter the term Inductive is usually applied. All forms of the Intuitive theory, however much they may differ in details, agree in holding that the conceptions denoted by the words, right and wrong, &c., are ultimate and underived, and as such, they are regarded as the primitive deliverances of an original faculty generally called Conscience, but sometimes known as the Moral Sense, or as the Practical Reason. This School may be traced from Socrates and Plato, down to Cudworth and the Scottish Intuitionalists, and it is found in Kant and his followers in Germany and elsewhere.

In like manner all phases of the Inductive system, however much they may differ in details, are at one in denying that ethical conceptions, or moral principles are simple, ultimate and underived. They further profess to show how, by association, education, external re-

straints, &c., all our moral conceptions may be derived from, and can be resolved into some simple conception or more fundamental principle. To this theory in its various modifications different names are given. The general term Inductive is the most comprehensive ; the name Associational denotes the prominent part which the laws of association play in the genesis of moral conceptions ; the term Experiental implies that on the field of experience this development takes place ; the word Development points to the fact that our ethical notions, as we find them, are the result of evolution ; and the name Utilitarian denotes that the fundamental principle or conception is that of General Utility. It is with the particular aspect of the Inductive theory indicated by the last mentioned name that we propose to deal. The term Utilitarianism is a very general one, and it embraces systems which differ not a little in their details. It may denote the happiness doctrine of Democritus, as well as the eudæmonistic system of the Cyrenaics and of the Epicureans. It is likewise applied to many modern systems such as those of Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, Bain, Spencer, Modern Positivists, and in a sense, Paley and Hume.

The term Utility, it need scarcely be ex-

plained, means usefulness, convenience, advantage. General Utility hence denotes that which is generally useful or advantageous, whether to the individual or to mankind. It is only in more recent and refined forms of the system that we find it identified with general benevolence. In the earlier and cruder forms of the doctrine, it is the good, happiness, or advantage of the individual, that is prominent, so much so in some cases, that the epithet *Selfish* is the only proper one to apply to them. Most Utilitarians hold that in General Utility we have the criterion of virtue, and in relation to this principle all moral facts may be satisfactorily explained. Those actions which are generally useful are right, and ought to be done; those actions which are not of general advantage to mankind, are wrong, and ought not to be done; and it is by the fact of their Utility that their moral character and our obligation to do them are determined. Utilitarians further contend that all the facts of our moral nature and ethical conduct can be fully explained without reference to an original faculty, whether it be called Conscience, Moral Sense, or Practical Reason. By the law of parcimony, therefore, they contend, no such faculty should be postulated.

CHAPTER I.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

We now proceed to a more detailed statement and exposition of the system under review. As the opinions held by Utilitarians have of late years undergone important alterations, it will only be fair to judge of them in their most matured forms. Very brief reference will therefore be made to earlier and cruder opinions, and attention will be directed chiefly to what may be termed Modern Utilitarianism, the great apostle of which is the late John Stuart Mill. The first topic is the Theory of Knowledge.

A Theory of Morals always involves and must presuppose a theory of Knowledge. The intellectual and moral are thus so closely related that our Psychology goes far to determine our Ethics. If the nature of the mind be such that it possesses no *a-priori* elements which are necessary, as the very conditions of

knowledge, then the Intuitional Theory of Morals can have no intellectual basis. If all our knowledge not only begins with, but arises from, experience, then our knowledge of moral distinctions must come from the same source, and we are necessarily thrown upon some form of the Inductive system of Ethics. If even Locke's doctrine of Innate Ideas, indefinite and often misunderstood as it is, be true, and if there be thus no innate principles either theoretical or practical, either intellectual or moral, then in the region of experience we must seek the only knowledge of ethical truths possible to us, and the only explanation of moral conceptions we can ever give.

Now if we trace the history of speculation in Moral Science, we shall find that Inductive Moralists of the Utilitarian type have all held sensational or experientalist doctrines regarding human knowledge. In some cases, of course, no distinct theory of knowledge is set forth, but so far as this is done, we find substantial agreement in empirical doctrines, and in every case a purely empirical Psychology is involved. In the sensualism of Democritus and in the Hedonism of Epicurus we find as pure Sensationalism touching the theory of knowledge as we find anywhere. Modern

Empiricists have improved but little on those old sensational doctrines. So in modern times, all the noted Inductive Moralists such as Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, Bain, and Spencer, to say nothing of Helvetius and the French Sensualists hold, more or less definitely, Sensational or Empirical doctrines. It is clear that if we begin with Intellectual Empiricism, it is impossible to get beyond Empiricism in Ethics; and as the intellectual element in any system is usually determined prior to the moral, the Theory of Knowledge necessarily determines the Theory of Morals, whether it shall be Empirical or Intuitional. The importance of this point is such as to call for a very brief outline of the main positions of the Empirical system in regard to the Theory of Knowledge.

The first position relates to the view to be taken of the mind in its original or precognitive state. Does it, or does it not possess an *a-priori* element? The position of the Empirical School in answer to this question is that the mind possesses no such element. Human knowledge is all *a-posteriori* in its nature, and Empirical in the manner in which it is acquired. The mind, they say, is without any original conceptions, necessary principles, or subjective forms; and the result in know-

ledge does not require the assumption of such an *a-priori* element All cognitive products come from without the mind, and take their rise from, as well as find their explanation in, experience.

The next important position of Empiricism refers to the attitude of the mind, as knowing subject, towards its object in cognition. Here Empirical philosophers maintain that the mind is substantially *passive*, or at most merely receptive. The cognitive process is determined entirely from without, and there is no primitive spontaneity of the mind, no subjective tribute brought by the mind to that experience, which is the occasion of knowledge. The beginning of the knowing process thus depends upon the object, and in cognition that object determines the cognitive subject, and produces all its states The mental attitude then is *receptivity* as distinguished from *spontaneity*.

A further point relates to *Sensation*. This is taken to be the effect which the impressions of the object produce in the subject through means of the sensitive organism. Sensation, according to the Empirical School, is the primitive fact in human knowledge. From Sensation all our mental possessions can be explained and the fabric of knowledge constructed.

By writers of this School very able expositions of the nervous system are given, and many acute remarks made upon the functions of the brain, and thus the physiology of sensation is clearly set forth, though it is admitted that in the psychological element of sensation the germs of all higher forms of knowledge are to be found. The basal fact in cognition, according to Empiricists, is sensation.

The next point to be noticed refers to the relation between Sensation and Consciousness, Empiricists usually identify these facts, and hence they do not allow the important distinction generally made between them by Intuitionalists. With Empiricists generally, the notion of *feeling* is made prominent in connection with sensation. Feeling is the generic idea; and to have a sensation, and to be conscious, are virtually the same thing. Both are phases of feeling, and in connection with this feeling we have knowledge, if indeed the feeling be not itself the knowledge. Hence to have the feeling of pain, to have the sensation of pain, to be conscious of pain, and to have a knowledge of it are regarded as identical facts by many Empiricists. Their position is that sensation and consciousneess are identical, and sensation is regarded as knowledge.

The next important point has reference to the higher forms of knowledge, and the manner in which these are reached. That which remains to the mind after sensation is termed an *idea*. This element is retained by the mind, and as it were recorded there, so that it may be reproduced by the exercise of what is called Memory. The process by which the higher forms of knowledge, and more purely intellectual results are reached, has been somewhat happily termed *Ideation*. To this process, viewed by itself, the direct operation of the senses is not necessary. Sensation leaves a certain result or effect with the mind, and in erecting the fabric of knowledge, the process consists essentially in reproducing, constructing, or reconstructing the mental product of sensation, thereby giving us all the cognitive results we are capable of.

The last point in this statement concerns the *law*, or method according to which this process of *Ideation* is carried on. Memory, as we have seen, has a very important function in retaining, and reproducing that which sensation leaves to the mind. Then the laws of mental Association are brought into play upon the product of sensation in order to work it up into all the forms of knowledge. Different views

are held in regard to the precise nature, number, and operation of these laws, but there is substantial agreement among writers of the Empirical School in regard to the results reached by the working of these laws. All our knowledge, even our highest conceptions both in the intellectual and moral spheres, are held to be fully explained and accounted for in this way. Even the conceptions of *necessity* and *universality*, which are felt to be connected with certain elements of our knowledge, are thought to be fully accounted for by the force of repetition and habit, under the working of the laws of Association. It is to be remarked, however, that Empiricists do not allow these conceptions absolute validity as mental principles. Whatever the fabric of knowledge is, it is reared from sensation alone, under the architecture of the laws of mental Association.

What has just been presented is believed to be a fair statement of the leading principles of the Empirical School, of which James Mill, J. S. Mill, Alexander Bain, and Herbert Spencer, with Auguste Comte and the Positivists generally, are the leading modern exponents. It need only be added that Inductive Moralists of the Utilitarian

type all lean towards, or distinctly hold, the Empirical Theory of Knowledge. It is clear, also, that if this theory be the true one the Intuitive Theory of Morals has no intellectual basis. Empiricism must rule throughout.

CHAPTER II.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF LIFE.

The question here relates to the highest good of human life, the nature of the desires and dispositions in the constitution of man, and the impelling power which leads men to action. What is the *summum bonum* of human life, and what is the motive which leads men to act, or deters them from acting?

Utilitarians of all shades of opinion are virtually at one on this point, and as their theory of morals is built on the theory of human nature and life now to be sketched, it will be necessary to give as clear an exposition as possible of this important point. The theory may be briefly stated in the following way:—Pleasure in some form is the only good, and pain the only evil. The one great motive which leads men to action is a regard for their own happiness; a desire to avoid pain, and secure pleasure. That there is in human nature a

variety of desires originally different in their nature, and going out to their respective ends, is not admitted by them. The one generic motive to action is a desire to secure personal happiness and to avoid pain, and to attain this end is to secure the highest good of human life. All human conduct, it is held, when analyzed, resolves itself into the principle just stated.

This doctrine appears all along the history of ethical thought. In ancient times Epicurus presented it in a somewhat crude, yet in a consistent, form. His is a purely selfish system; personal pleasure or happiness is the great end of human life. By some of the later Greeks and eclectic Romans, a distinction is made in regard to the *kinds* and *duration* of pleasures. Some pleasures are higher, and others lower, and the greatest result in happiness for the whole life is to be aimed at. In every case, however, happiness is the end of human action. Each man seeks his own happiness, and the happiness of others is taken into account only in so far as it conduces to his own.

In modern times, and specially in the selfish system as maintained by Hobbes, it is also assumed that a regard to self interest, a desire to attain as much happiness as possible, is the sole motive by which men are actuated. When

a man deliberates whether he shall do a certain thing, he simply debates whether it is for his own interest to do it, or not. If the evidence goes to show that his own interest or happiness will be advanced by doing it, then he will do it; if not, he will refrain. Then again, as self interest is the only motive or mainspring of action, so pleasure, in its most general sense, is the only good; and what is called *moral* good consists in conformity to some rule, law, or principle, by which self interest will be served, and the greatest amount of happiness secured. These general principles, touching the theory of life, are common to all moralists of the Inductive School; though various views are taken as to what constitutes the rule or principle which guides to the best interest of the individual, and hence leads to right action in life's activity.

In the system of Hobbes the law or rule to which men must conform their conduct, in order to secure the greatest happiness, is the *law of the land.* The civil code thus becomes the law of morality—the rule of right. According as the law of the land is regarded or disregarded in a community, morality prevails, and people are virtuous; and the most perfect state of a community is that in which the fountain of law is the will of an absolute sovereign.

It is evident that on this theory no proper ground is laid down for the guidance of the absolute sovereign, whose will is the source of the civil code. If it be his mere arbitrary will, unguided by any principle save self interest, then Dahomey and Ashantee are more perfect communities than Britain and the United States.

In Paley's system we find substantially the same thoery of life. He also assumes that even when we do what is right, a regard to our own personal interest is the sole motive by which we are influenced. Hobbes limits our views to the present life, but Paley takes into account, and gives prominence to, our interest in the life to come. Though Paley's system has thus a religious aspect as a theory of morals, its theory of life does not essentially differ from that of Hobbes. Our own interest, especially our happiness in the world to come, is the great motive which leads us to act. God will reward us in the future state if we obey him, and punish us if we do not, and it is for our interest to obey. Self interest is the real motive to action.

In the greatest happiness theory of Bentham we find it no less distinctly announced that pleasure and pain are the only possible motives

which impel men to act. Bentham endeavored, however, to lay a broader basis for his theory than mere self interest, and he would not allow the epithet *selfish* to be applied to his system. He sought to work it up to the form of general benevolence. Hobbes freely admitted that if pleasure and pain are the only motives of human action, then it must be the pleasure and pain of the individual, not of others, that is meant. Bentham, however, assumes, without any very clear explanation of how it comes to pass, that in our actions we take into account the pleasant and painful consequences of what we do to our fellowmen. Men, he says, are thus led to perform those actions which tend to produce the greatest happiness to the greatest number of individuals: hence emerges Bentham's fundamental principle. In order to make this greatest happiness principle available for practical life, Bentham endeavored to lay down the elements of what he called a calculus of morality, by means of which the pleasurable or painful results of actions might be determined; but this calculus is too clumsy to be of much practical use. It is clear that Bentham is less consistent than Hobbes; for he gives no sufficient explanation of the way in which we come

to take into account the interest of others. If self interest be the sole motive to action, and if there be not in man any natural disposition to act with a view to the happiness of others, the difficulty is in giving any sound reason why he should attach significance to the happiness of others, in determining his own conduct.

Coming now to more recent, and professedly more complete, expositions of the Utilitarian system, we find a number of eminent names, and much excellent writing. James Mill, J. S. Mill, John Austin, Herbert Spencer, and Alexander Bain, are especially worthy of mention. We cannot, of course, give a detailed account of the views of each writer, and so must content ourselves with a few general remarks, bearing on the theory of life, presupposed by them. The more recent forms of the system proceed upon substantially the same theory of life as the older ones. Pleasure is the only good, and pain the only evil; and the sole motive of human action is the love of pleasure and a desire to avoid pain. Later Utilitarians, however, make a distinction in the nature of pleasures; some are inherently more valuable than others. The pleasures of the intellect, and affections, for example, are intrinsically far more valuable than those of

sense, and apart altogether from any circumstantial advantages, are regarded as far more desirable. Though maintaining the theory of life just stated, Utilitarians like J. S. Mill protest emphatically against their system being called a *selfish* one. They seek to recognize what they call disinterested affections in man. Thus Mill speaks of the hero, patriot, or martyr, sacrificing his individual happiness for the sake of the welfare of others. He also says that not only does his system maintain that virtue is to be desired, but it is to be desired disinterestedly, that is, for its own sake. Mill strives earnestly to give his system the form of a carefully constructed theory of general benevolence, working out more definitely the hints which Bentham gave in this direction, yet never confessedly giving up the theory of life underlying all forms of the Utilitarian system. Here it will at once occur to the reader to remark that it devolves on those who hold these views of the theory of life, and who try to set forth a doctrine of benevolence, to show how a disinterested regard for the welfare of others, and a love of virtue for its own sake, can arise in men to whom pleasure is the sole possible end of action.

The Utilitarian theory of life, in general, is that pleasure is the only good, and pain the only evil; and the love of pleasure and desire to avoid pain, in other words, self interest, is the only motive which prompts men to action.

CHAPTER III.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MORAL CONCEPTIONS.

In this chapter we have to deal with questions of fundamental importance in the ethical system. As a matter of fact man possesses a moral nature, as distinguished from his purely intellectual nature. Connected with this we find certain peculiar facts. These facts consist in certain notions, conceptions, or sentiments, generically different from all others we possess. These are the notions of right and wrong, of duty or obligation, with the accompanying sentiments of approval or disapproval, according as our conduct is conceived of as right or wrong.

The question here is two fold. The first part points to the *nature* of these facts, and the second relates to the *origin* and *growth* of the sentiments which are admitted to have connection with our moral nature. The ques-

tions before us then are :—What is the precise character of moral conceptions; and how do they arise? How should we describe them as they actually are, and what account should we give of how they come to be what they are? The answer to these questions is usually known as the Theory of the Moral Sentiments, and is fundamental in any system of moral philosophy.

It is no easy matter to present in a few pages a clear and adequate statement of the general doctrine of Utilitarians on this important question in Ethics. There is considerable variety of opinion, and much of their writing is at best vague and indefinite, if not irrelevant altogether. Their fundamental intellectual principles limit their enquiry to the purely Empirical sphere, so that they cannot hold that moral conceptions are simple and ultimate in their *nature*, nor are they free to maintain that their *origin* is to be sought anywhere else than on the field of experience. It is evident, therefore, that the question of the *nature*, and the question of the *origin* of moral conceptions, are closely related, and their relation is such that from the standpoint of Utilitarians very great confusion is sure to arise. They deny that the notions of right, wrong, duty, &c., are simple

and ultimate in their nature ; and from this it follows that in regard to their origin they cannot be Intuitive. It follows, also, that if they be in no sense Intuitive, the field of enquiry must lie almost entirely in the external or objective sphere, and that from experience, in relation to some external fact or facts, the explanation of our moral notions and sentiments must be derived. The question will further arise whether there can be such a thing as absolute validity to our moral conceptions, or whether there can be any such thing as immutable principles in morals, if experience generates these notions, and if there be no Intuitive element whatever in them. In the light of these remarks it will be readily perceived what a difficult task the Utilitarians have before them, and how they naturally, and often ingeniously, evade the real problems of a proper theory of the moral sentiments, and busy themselves with discussions concerning the ethical standard ; thus confounding the two questions which should ever be kept distinct.

The facts are such, however, that they cannot be passed without an attempt at adequate explanation, and we now proceed to notice some of the main accounts which have been given of the nature and origin of our ethical conceptions.

We have already stated that the Utilitarian position involves the distinct conclusion that these conceptions are not original and simple, and that they must therefore be secondary, and derivative in their character. When, however, they come to state the fundamental fact or principle from which our moral possessions spring, and when they endeavor to give a philosophical account of *how* they are derived, we find such a variety of opinions as would require a whole volume to set forth even the outline of them. Some, having regard exclusively to an external or objective rule, take law in one form or other to be the fundamental fact; others, looking to the tendency and consequences of actions, find in General Utility the basal fact in the ethical system; and yet others, considering men as in society, find in some sociological fact the primitive principle of moral philosophy; while a few do not entirely neglect the subjective sphere in their system, but hold that the primitive notion is an intellectual judgment of some kind, not at first moral in its nature, but the moral element comes as a growth or development from an intellectual principle or judgment.

Hobbes, for example, finds the origin of our moral conceptions in the Civil Code, with its

penal consequences; while Paley ascribes their origin to the Divine Law, with its sanctions. Back of our ethical notions, and of all our sentiments connected with moral distinctions, lies *Law* in some form, and from this fundamental legal notion, the conceptions of right, duty, obligation, &c., have their origin and development. These moral conceptions are not themselves original or primitive, but spring out of the conviction we have that we will fall under the penalties of the Civil Code on the one hand, or of the Law of God on the other, if we act in opposition to the requirements of Law. With a knowledge of the Law, and by means of education or experience under it, the notion of moral distinctions is generated, and all the experiences of our moral nature arise. Paley's system is sometimes termed one of *Expediency*, but in its deeper analysis it is rather a legal system, differing from that of Hobbes in that it puts the Divine Law in the place of the Civil Code. Paley's system may be higher in its general character than that of Hobbes, but their fundamental principles really belong to the same category. With both the notion of Law is fundamental, and from that notion the conception of right arises.

Bentham, the great jurist, discovers the ori-

gin of the notions of right and wrong in the tendency of actions, as estimated by us, to produce happiness, or the reverse. Those actions whose general tendency is to produce the greatest good of the greatest number are right, and ought to be done; and those actions of an opposite tendency are wrong, and ought not to be done. Let the calculation be made in regard to any action or class of actions, and according as pleasure or pain predominates, the action is right or the reverse. In this tendency our moral conceptions have their origin. Thus Bentham's system, though connected chiefly with his able writings on Jurisprudence, involves a distinct ethical theory, which, on the one hand denies that our moral conceptions are original, and on the other, in the "greatest happiness" principle, discovers their origin, and by means of that principle accounts for their development. Bentham's theory is interesting, not only in itself, but because of its relation to modern Utilitarianism, for the same general principles underlie both. General Utility, rather than the notion of Right, is the basal fact in Ethics.

In the later forms of the Utilitarian system as sketched in the preceding chapter, there is not much clear *positive* statement in regard to

the nature and origin of our ethical notions. Its advocates are usually content with denying that they are ultimate and underived, and busy themselves with discussions concerning Utility as the ethical standard, and with an endeavor to show how, in relation to that principle or standard, all our moral ideas may arise and be accounted for, so that without the assumption of any original notions all moral facts and experiences may be explained. In general, later Utilitarians substantially agree with Bentham in regard to the nature and origin of our moral conceptions. They make the general good, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or General Utility in some form, the basal fact, and they proceed to show how, by education and association, working on the field of human experience, and guided by the tendency of actions to produce the greatest good or happiness, or the reverse, all our moral conceptions arise and are developed into definite form, and the character of the individual is formed. In the more refined phases of modern Utilitarianism, such as that advocated by J. S. Mill, we find great care taken to give the theory as decidedly as possible the cast of *general benevolence.* It will appear, however, that such writers must leave their fundamental

position as Utilitarians before they can find a sound basis for general benevolence. In all these doctrines the notion of Right is secondary and derived; the foundation principle in Ethics is General Utility. It will be observed that this theory does not so much provide a Philosophy of our moral nature, with its facts and experiences, as give us what may be termed a Natural History of these facts and experiences. It is one thing to account for the facts; it is another thing to arrange and describe them. Even if the facts are correctly arranged and described, their philosophy must still be given; unless we deny, as many Utilitarians do, the possibility of philosophy properly so called.

It may be added here that in much current literature found in modern magazines, and lighter publications, as well as in much political and social writing of the present day, there is a great deal of moralising which involves the fundamental principles of Utilitarianism. Questions in Jurisprudence and Sociology are discussed with much ability in certain quarters, but the ethical doctrines involved in the theories advanced for the elevation of the race, and the regulation of society, by such writers as Herbert Spencer and Auguste Comte, must be placed under the same category, as at

least belonging to the Inductive school, if not to the Utilitarian branch of that school. In these writings there are many things of value. There are many judicious remarks regarding society, and acute reflections upon the sociological aspects of man's nature, but the defect consists in the want of any sound and broad ethical basis for society itself. Sociological facts, not the notion ef Right, are made fundamental; and the Natural History of these facts, rather than a Philosophy of Morals, is given.

It is proper, in closing this chapter, to make a remark in regard to the way in which we obtain a *knowledge* of moral distinctions. This is a somewhat different question from that of the *nature* and *origin* of these distinctions, though they stand closely related. The latter leads us rather to look at moral facts as existing, and bids us ask what is their precise nature, and what their origin; the former leads us to look at the mental process involved in the knowledge of these facts at which we arrive, and bids us ask what is the knowing process. The question is:—How do we arrive at the knowledge of the distinctions which our moral conceptions imply? On the Utilitarian Theory this process must be entirely empirical.

There are no intuitive convictions original with the mind, and no *a-priori* processes possible in its exercise, and hence, in obtaining a knowledge of the moral qualities of actions, or of ethical distinctions in general, the mind must proceed by strictly empirical methods, and reach its results by means of inductive processes. As the two points above indicated are often confounded, this brief reference will serve to show their difference, and to indicate the position of Utilitarians in regard to each of them. Ethical Empiricism rules in both.

CHAPTER IV.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF CONSCIENCE.

Enquiry must now be made as to the Utilitarian doctrine in regard to the Moral Faculty. What account does it give of the facts of our moral nature and ethical conduct denoted by the term Conscience. Is there or is there not a faculty or power of our being, meaning thereby an original capacity by which we have our knowledge of moral distinctions, are conscious of moral obligation, and experience certain emotions consequent on our actions and mental states? If there be no such original faculty or primitive capacity of our nature, what view are we to take of Conscience, or are we justified in speaking of it as a faculty at all?

In this connection we make a remark which really belongs to the second part of the discussion, but which is of value here when we speak of the *faculties* of our nature, or of our mental or moral faculties. How are we to

think of these faculties in relation to the mind? In reply we express the opinion that we are not to think of the mind, however we may regard the brain as the organ of the mind, as parcelled out into a number of sections, each of which is called a faculty—memory, understanding, imagination, conscience, &c., as the case may be. By *faculty* we are rather to understand a capacity of the whole mind, its attitude and activity in relation to its object in its various experiences, mental and moral. We thus call memory a faculty, but it is the mind or ego which remembers; and we speak of the faculty of imagination, but it is the whole mind which imagines; and so with all our other so called mental faculties. The same thing holds good in the region of morals. When we speak of Conscience as the moral faculty we are to think of the mind as a whole, and to regard it as having a certain capacity by which it apprehends moral distinctions, and is the subject of certain sentiments in relation thereto. The mind is spiritual, one, and indivisible, and the entire mind is concerned in this particular activity in relation to its appropriate objects, mental and moral. Consciousness is a unit, and the whole mind, as conscious subject, is the seat of morals, just as it is the

mind which remembers, reasons, imagines, &c., though we speak, and speak properly enough, of the *faculty* of memory, of understanding, of imagination, &c. The question now is concerning Conscience, as the moral faculty, using the word faculty in the sense just defined, and not intending thereby to determine whether the capacity of mind denoted by the so called faculty of Conscience be original or acquired. What are the general views of the Utilitarian School in regard to Conscience or the moral faculty ?

Utilitarians deny that Conscience is an original faculty. They all agree in holding that the mental capacity which relates to moral distinctions is not original but, acquired through experience. They maintain that the assumption of such a faculty is quite unnecessary, inasmuch as our knowledge of moral distinctions can be accounted for, and all the facts of our moral nature and experience can be explained, without any such assumption. Not only do they assert that the hypothesis of an original faculty is unnecessary, but they urge certain things which they think render it quite unlikely, if not impossible, that any such original faculty is part of our moral furnishing. Holding, as we have seen, an empirical

psychology, they maintain that the nature and original capacity of the mind is such that there are no original faculties, no such primitive capacities as entitle us to speak of Conscience as an original faculty or capacity of our nature. Utilitarians further argue that the opinion that such an original faculty exists, is shown to be erroneous by the great diversity of moral judgments found among different men, especially on comparing the moral judgments of different nations, and ages. What is considered right in one age is held to be wrong by men in another; and actions which are praised in one country as highly virtuous are condemned by the people in another. This all goes to show, Utilitarians contend, that whatever view we are to take of Conscience it is at least not an original faculty of our nature.

As Utilitarians profess to show how Conscience is developed, the main enquiry will now be into the ways in which they seek to explain and account for the facts denoted by the term Conscience. By Utilitarians generally, Conscience is held to be a complex phenomenon of some kind, but different opinions are held as to the nature and extent of its complexity. The earlier advocates of the system scarcely broached the question as to

whether Conscience is an original faculty, nor did they enter into any very rigid analysis of basal facts in the ethical system. Later exponents of the theory, however, have endeavored to show, not only that Conscience is a complex phenomenon, but also to point out how its development takes place. Two or three of the leading attempts to do this may now be sketched, to serve as examples of the way in which attempts are made to explain Conscience and to show how it is developed, rather than to present a detailed view of all the theories that have been maintained by Utilitarians.

The first attempt finds an able exponent in J. S. Mill. In the chapter on the nature and origin of moral distinctions, it has already been hinted that association and education working on the field of experience, and in relation to the principle of General Utility, by degrees generates the notion of duty. In this way a habit of mind is produced, in which a violation of what we conceive to be duty is attended with a feeling of pain more or less intense. This feeling, Mill holds, grows more and more definite under the influence of habit, association, and education, and eventually reaches the stage of disinterestedness. When it attains

this stage and connects itself with the pure idea of duty, and not with some particular form of it, and not even with any accessory circumstances, this feeling is the very essence of conscience as it actually exists. He adds that this primitive fact is all encrusted over with collateral associations which analysis cannot easily remove. The difficulty lies in being unable to make the necessary observations when Conscience, as understood by Mill, is making its appearance in the experience of a child; and the difficulty is scarcely less when we endeavor to make an analysis of Conscience as it exists when fully developed. According to Mill, therefore, Conscience is not an original faculty, but a feeling of the mind more or less clearly defined, and the result of association and education working on the field of experience. Mill will serve as the type of a large class of Utilitarian Moralists who find the origin and explanation of Conscience in *personal feeling.*

A second general class finds a leading modern advocate in Alexander Bain. With Bain the notion of law, or external authority, is prominent. Our moral nature may be regarded as a kind of commonwealth within us, corresponding, in a general way, to some govern-

ment or recognized authority without us. Under this external authority, with its law prescribing the rule of duty, a certain educational process goes on, resulting in the formation of a habit within us, which is Conscience, according to Bain. In its development fear plays an important part; and Bain professes to show how, along the line of obedience to some outward authority, and influenced by a kind of dread within us, Conscience is developed stage by stage. A mental association arises between disobedience and the pain or punishment which follows. At first the moral element is very small, but it gradually develops; and when the mind is able to understand and approve of the prohibitions and requirements of the external authority, we have conscience in its fully developed state. Bain thus agrees with Mill in rejecting the opinion that Conscience is an original faculty, but he gives prominence to law and the discipline of obedience, in generating the notion of duty and producing Conscience.

Herbert Spencer may be taken as representing a third attempt to explain the facts of our moral nature which are grouped under the term Conscience. The point of view here taken is entirely sociological, and the question

of Conscience occupies a somewhat subordinate place. Society exists; and it is necessary for the individual to act in such a way that the best interests of the social fabric may be secured. By degrees there grows up within the individual certain notions, and the habit of acting in such a way as is best for society, and of avoiding those courses of conduct which are hurtful to society. There are in our nature certain social dispositions, but these are not originally moral in their character. The moral is a development from these dispositions resulting from the conditions of society, and our sociological relations therein. This will be sufficient to indicate the general position of many modern writers who give great attention to social science, incurring the danger of overlooking the important ethical elements which underlie, rather than grow out of, society.

According to Utilitarians, therefore, Conscience is not an original faculty, but the result of a development process on the field of experience, by means of association, habit, and education, working in relation to some principle, and under its guidance. Mill makes Conscience consist in personal feeling, Bain connects it with external authority, and Spencer gathers it from the essential conditions of human society.

CHAPTER V.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF THE ETHICAL STANDARD.

Here the enquiry relates to the Law, or Rule, which constitutes the standard of right. What is the rule whereby the moral quality of actions may be determined, and the conduct of practical life rightly directed? In short, what is the criterion of virtue?

In giving a brief summary of the Utilitarian position here, it is proper to remark that writers of this school usually give great prominence to the question of the ethical standard, and import much confusion into their discussions by confounding the question of the standard with the theory of the moral sentiments. It is one thing to supply a rule of conduct; it is another to explain the nature and origin of our moral conceptions. Utilitarians being on Empirical ground are, of course, limited largely to the sphere of experience, and are led to observe

the results of actions, rather than to enquire into the notions which lie back of our conduct. The result is that the standard by which our conduct is to be directed comes into prominence, for it is from the relation of actions to some external rule or law, that their moral character is determined, and our conceptions of right, wrong, duty, &c., arise. The question of the rule of right is really fundamental with Utilitarians; and they do not admit the view that, in order to the existence and application of such a rule to our conduct, the notion of right must be presupposed.

Though Utilitarians thus agree in giving much importance to the question of the standard, yet when they proceed to state in detail what really constitutes the standard, there is considerable diversity of opinion. Some objective rule or law is generally regarded as the standard, though in some cases the subjective side is not altogether overlooked in this connection. Those, again, who agree in viewing the standard as something objective, differ widely as to that which is to be regarded as the criterion of right. Some, as already hinted, fix upon Law—either the Civil Code or the Divine Law. Others fix attention chiefly on external actions, and observing in them certain

inherent tendencies to produce happiness or the reverse, find in these tendencies, as they think, the ethical standard.

Thus Hobbes maintained that the standard of right is the law of the land. Society is necessary to the well-being of mankind, and in order to preserve society civil enactments are necessary. The State, through its properly constituted head, legislates, and the subject should yield obedience to the Civil Code thereby enacted. Paley, again, holds that the Law of God, with its rewards and punishments especially in the world to come, is the moral standard. Virtue, according to Paley, "consists in doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." In acting according to this standard a man may have to deny himself a present gratification, it may be in the first instance for the good of his neighbor, but ultimately to avoid future punishment, or to secure future reward. It may be remarked in passing, that there is much to be said in favor of regarding the Divine Law, as an expression of the Divine will, in the light of the rule of right, yet the way in which Paley views the matter, and the prominence given by him to our own interest, clearly places him among the Utili-

tarian moralists. Though his system has a distinctly religious cast about it, yet it is as clearly *legal* as the system of Hobbes, and partakes decidedly of the selfishness of Utilitarianism in general.

From the earliest times we find many who hold some more or less clearly defined form of the happiness theory, and who profess to find in the tendency of actions to produce the greatest measure of happiness, or to be of the greatest general utility, the test of their moral character, in other words, the ethical standard. In a purely selfish form this view appears in the system of the Cyrenaics and Epicureans. The maxim of Epicurus is "live while you can." The happiness of the individual is the end to be attained, and whatever conduces most to the happiness of the present moment is right and should be sought after. The ethical standard is the happiness of the individual at the present moment.

Then, in modern times, Bentham substantially reproduces a similar view, though he seeks to give it a wider application in his well known principle of "the greatest good of the greatest number." General Utility, understood in the light of this principle, is the standard by which the ethical character of

actions is to be determined, and the rule according to which moral conduct is to be directed. The advocates of modern Utilitarianism give great prominence to General Utility as the ethical standard. Mill, and those who think with him, emphatically repudiate the term *selfish*, and do not admit that it is properly applicable to their form of the system. They even struggle heroically to place their theory on the basis of General Benevolence, and endeavor to explain General Utility in such a way as to involve the principles of benevolence. In this sense, they maintain that General Utility is the criterion of the moral character of our actions, and the true and sufficient guide of conduct.

The difficulty of making practical use of such a rule, and of applying it conveniently and correctly to our conduct, in the various circumstances in which we are placed, is evidently felt very keenly by writers of the Utilitarian School. A pressing sense of the indefiniteness of their ethical standard painfully rests upon them. To give General Utility greater practical value as the rule of conduct, and to render it of easier application to given cases, Bentham took the pains to draw up a kind of scheme or *moral calculus*, as he

called it, by means of which *useful* actions might be known, and so their moral significance determined. Mill and many of the later sociologists dwell on the importance and value of the accumulated experience of the race, in enabling us to decide as to the utility of any given course of conduct. The complexity of the facts, and the extent of the induction necessary in such cases, very clearly appear in connection with this view of the ethical rule.

It is not necessary to discuss at greater length their doctrines on the point before us, nor to sketch other views of the standard held by writers whose general doctrines are Utilitarian. It would be interesting to notice Hume's view of Utility, Smith's doctrine of Sympathy, Mackintosh's judicious remarks on this important point, and the opinions of other modern writers, such as Grote, who deal with the question. It would be no less interesting to trace in France, Germany and America, some of the chief shades of opinion which have been held by various writers of the Utilitarian School, touching the ethical standard, but our space forbids us. What has been sketched, in this brief chapter, will suffice to show that Utilitarians give prominence to the question of the ethical standard, and that modern leading

advocates of this system agree in regarding General Utility, in some form, as the test by which the morality of human conduct may be determined, and as the guiding principle by which the highest good of mankind is to be attained.

CHAPTER VI.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

We now come to deal with the significant facts of our moral nature and conduct which are expressed by the words *ought*, *duty*, *obligation*. These facts are very important elements in the ethical system, and they call for careful consideration.

What is the source of obligation? On what ground do I feel bound to do certain things, and to refrain from doing others? Wherein consists the binding nature of the moral standard, whatever that may be? Why is it that we feel we ought to do certain things, even when inclination is against doing them; and not do other things, towards which our natural impulses draw us? It will be here observed that the question of obligation is quite distinct from that of moral distinctions. The former is the notion of *oughtness*, and belongs to the

agent; the latter is the notion of *rightness*, and pertains to actions and mental states. The question now to be considered is, why am I bound to do right? Why do I feel self-condemnation if I do wrong? Why has the moral standard the absolute authority which consciousness says it has? It is evident when we ask the question—what is the source of personal obligation? that we are brought face to face with one of the deepest problems in morals, and any system which fails to provide a clearly defined and well grounded explanation of duty or obligation, is sadly defective.

We have now to see what explanation Utilitarians give of the facts now under review. Suppose we grant what they assert, that right actions are those which are generally useful, the question then is, wherein lies the obligation to do that which is generally useful? Does the notion of General Utility carry with it that of obligation? If not, where is it to be found? Can Utility have the binding authority of law, or can it ever afford an absolute rule of duty? The Utilitarian theory of life being that pleasure is the only good, and the desire to secure it and avoid pain the sole motive by which human action can be influenced, it must be held that the only obligation of which we

are conscious arises from the pleasure connected with a discharge of duty, and the pain that would attend its violation. The only alternative would be to deny the reality of obligation altogether. The difficulty which Utilitarians evidently feel in facing this question, even on their own fundamental principles, has led to a geat variety of opinion, touching the source of moral obligation. They cannot but feel that in making the pleasurable or painful feeling connected with the performance or violation of duty the source of obligation, the question still remains unanswered, why am I bound to perform the duty with which the feeling in question is connected?

Though the opinions of Utilitarians differ greatly in regard to the particular source of obligation, these opinions really fall into three classes. The first either denies the fact of obligation altogether, or virtually explains it away. The second places it in *subjective feeling*. The third finds it in *objective law*, or external authority.

Of the first class Bentham and many Positivists may be taken as representatives. Bentham thinks the word "obligation" a very disagreeable one, and in the work entitled Deontology, published after his death, he

regards it as idle to talk about duty. Indeed, he quite loses his temper, and presumptuously asserts that the word *ought* is "the talisman of arrogance and ignorance." There are others, chiefly among the Positivists, who not so much deny obligation of a certain relative kind, as explain it away, or resolve it into some other notion altogether. But it is clear that the conception of *oughtness* is either to be taken as absolute, and as universally binding, or rejected altogether. Bentham and those who reject the notion, have at least the virtue of consistency, however far they are from the truth.

Charles Darwin and J. S. Mill may be taken as representatives of the second general class of opinion, which finds the source of obligation in the *subjective* sphere. Darwin thinks that the notion expressed by the word *ought* is to be connected with the existence of a "persistent instinct," of which, he asserts, we are conscious. This instinct, however, is not really an original part of human nature, but the result partly of inherited tendency, and partly of acquired habit. In the course of time we come to feel that it is best for us to obey our most persistent instincts, and this he lays down as the ground of obligation. Mill's account of the matter connects the fact of moral obliga-

tion still more distinctly with *subjective* feeling. His doctrine here may be stated in a few words. "The ultimate sanction of all morality," he says, "is a subjective feeling in our mind." While Mill, and the recent Utilitarians who agree with him, deny that the principle of Utility has or might have all the *external* sanctions any other principle possesses, they consider that it is the *internal* sanctions with which we specially and properly connect the notion of moral obligation. This internal sanction, Mill says, is necessarily the same in all ethical systems, and consists essentially in *a feeling of the mind.* To use Mill's own words, "it is a pain more or less intense attendant on a violation of duty which in properly constituted natures rises, in the more serious cases, into a shrinking from it as an impossibility." In all such explanations moral obligation is made to rest on personal feeling, and the question will still readily occur to the reader, whence comes the notion of *oughtness* connected with the performance of the duty, from which the feeling in question arises?

The third general class of explanations finds typical examples in Hobbes, Paley, and Bain. Hobbes finds the ground of obligation in the sanctions of the penal code—the law of the

land—together with the infamy one would incur in public opinion by wrong doing. Paley, again, says that obligation rests in the hope of reward and the fear of punishment in the future life. Bain substantially agrees in principle with Hobbes, only he gives prominence to the restraints upon wrong actions. External authority, however, is the source of personal obligation, and the idea of *oughtness* is not to be applied to those actions which are not enforced by the sanctions of punishment. When a man does his duty he escapes punishment, and the sphere of obligation extends no further than this restraint applies. Here external authority in the form of civil, parental, or any other kind of outward law or restraint, is the source of obligation. Two questions will arise in the mind of the reader in this connection. Does not this theory shut off the larger and nobler part of morality, the entire positive part, from the sphere of obligation altogether? Does not the notion of law presuppose the notion of right, and since it is with the latter that the idea of duty or obligation stands related, how then can it rise out of the former?

This outline will present the leading views of

the Utilitarian system in regard to the source of moral obligation. It is either denied or explained away by some, and those who admit it find its source or ground either in *internal feeling*, or in *external authority*.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF DISINTERESTED AFFECTIONS AND BENEVOLENT ACTIONS.

There are certain facts now generally admitted, even by Utilitarian writers, to have a connection of some kind with our moral nature; and there are certain actions to which the name benevolent may be properly applied. Any adequate ethical system must afford an explanation of these facts, and account for benevolent actions. A philosophical account of disinterested affections is therefore required. How are we to understand a man's voluntarily enduring suffering for the sake of others; and on what reasonable ground is the conduct of the man based, who will face danger and death in the performance of duty? What leads the patriot to bleed and die for his country and his home; what prompts the strong man to rescue perishing ones from fire or water; what sends the philanthropist with helping hand on

an errand of mercy; and what moves the mother to self-sacrifice and devotion towards her offspring?

It will be readily observed by the reader that, in dealing with the problem raised by such questions as the foregoing, we are brought very close to the discussion on the theory of life, found in a former chapter. Is there or is there not in our nature, and in our conduct, any such a thing as disinterested affections, or benevolent actions? If happiness be the chief good for man, and the desire to secure pleasure and avoid pain, in other words, self interest, be the mainspring of our activity, then the question arises how can disinterested affections exist, or benevolent actions possibly have a place in our conduct. If it be denied that there are any primitive or intuitive dispositions or tendencies leading us to regard the welfare of others, how can we come to take into account the interests of others in determining our own conduct? How can the *self-interestedness* of the Utilitarian theory of life ever be transformed into the *disinterestedness* which they admit in the ethical conduct of the individual? This question, though so closely related to the chapter on the theory of life that it might have been discussed there, is yet of such significance

in relation to the subject in hand, as to call for brief statement in a separate chapter. A very general view of the Utilitarian doctrine on this point will now be given. What is their philosophy of Benevolence?

The earlier upholders of the system did not very distinctly raise the question of disinterested affections, but their general position involves the denial of the existence of any such dispositions, and of such a thing as benevolent action. In the systems of Democritus, Aristippus, and Epicurus, self interest is the Alpha and Omega; and the welfare of others is ruled out of the problem, save in so far as it may conduce to our own. Whether we take the crude form of the theory held by Democritus, or the more refined Hedonism of Epicurus, self is the centre of the system. Benevolence is excluded altogether, and so it calls for no explanation.

Later advocates of the Utilitarian doctrine, especially J. S. Mill and those who think with him, readily admit the existence of the dispositions that have regard to others, and the reality of benevolence as pertaining to certain of our actions. They also show very elaborately how these dispositions arise, and how those actions which look to the good of others come to be performed. Their system at least uses the termin-

ology of a theory of general benevolence, and every effort is made to give it that complexion. We cannot enter into great detail here, and sketch the various forms of the theory set forth by different writers. Nor indeed is this necessary, for they all agree in denying the original nature of these affections, and in professing to give a satisfactory history of their origin and growth. Most writers of this school give great prominence to the sociological aspects of the question, and man is viewed as a factor in society, rather than as a personal free agent; and the so called benevolent conduct of the individual grows out of his social relations.

The following summary of modern views on this point will present a concise outline of the doctrine. As has been shown, pleasure is the only end possible to man; happiness is his chief good; self interest is the great motive power of his activity. These pleasures are many in number, and varied in their nature. Man, however, exists in society, and amongst other things pleasant to him is sympathetic unity with his fellow creatures, to whom he stands in certain definite relations. Now, because the desire of unity and sympathy with other sentient beings is a natural sentiment, by means of the operation of habit and the

laws of association, a certain bond of union is formed on the ground of which the happiness of others is linked to that of the individual. The foundation of benevolent sentiment and action being thus laid, the repetition of habit and the power of association, builds up by degrees, as the coral insect builds its reefs, till the rocks of benevolence rise above the waves of self interest, and are clad with the waving palm trees of unselfish conduct.

The whole account here is sociological rather than primarily ethical. Man is a social being. Society is natural to, and necessary for, him; and hence an essential part of his happiness. Society is impossible, however, under any other conditions than that the interests of all are to be consulted. Hence, men living in society grow up unable to conceive as possible to them a state of things, or a course of conduct, where they totally disregard the interests of the other members of society. In co-operating with others in society, our ends and aims are identified with those of others, and theirs with ours; and hence arises the conviction and feeling that our interests and theirs are identical. Gradually, through such means, we come, as though instinctively, to be conscious of ourselves as beings who, of course, pay regard to the interests of others in

determining our own conduct. The smallest germs of such feelings are laid hold of and nourished by association, education, public instruction, and religion, and a complete web is woven round it by the external sanctions of morality. Hence at length we experience pleasure in acting with a view to the good of others, and of doing good to them irrespective of any advantage to ourselves, save the satisfaction of seeing others happy. Such is the substance of the Utilitarian explanation of the disinterested affections and benevolent actions. The existence of any such sentiments as an original part of our nature, or as an element in that which leads us to action, is denied; and Utilitarians endeavor, along sociological rather than ethical lines, to give the natural history, rather than the philosophy of Benevolence. There is no doubt much that is true in what they say regarding society, and its effect on the life and conduct of the individual, but the question will ever recur, what is the ethical basis of society, and the ground upon which the very possibility of the development of the benevolent sentiments rests?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF MOTIVE AND ACTION.

We now come to one of the most perplexing and difficult questions in Ethics, and we also reach a point in our exposition where a good deal of confusion seems to exist in the writings of moral philosophers. That there should be confusion here is scarcely to be wondered at, because it is no easy matter to ascertain the precise facts, and after the facts are ascertained it is by no means a simple task to give an adequate explanation of them. Let us look at the facts, and at the Utilitarian mode of explaining them.

As to the facts: we find in our nature certain impulses. These are various in their character and operation. Some of them are connected with the physical or lower part of our nature, and are as a rule instinctive and involuntary. These impulses are usually

known by the names—appetites and desires. Others are connected rather with the higher or mental part of our nature, and are more closely related to the emotional and voluntary in us. These are generally termed the affections and emotions. The question here is, how do these impulses stand related to our actions? What is the real nature of these impulses in themselves, and how far do they properly possess moral quality? If they do not in the first instance possess moral qualities, at what stage and under what conditions do they assume them? Then again, the question comes, what really constitutes *motive*? Is it something objective, attracting the agent towards it, and thus inducing him to act; or is it something subjective, impelling the agent, and thus urging him to action; or is it partly both? Then, finally, in regard to motive, the question is raised whether motives differ in kind, each one leading out to its particular end, or are all motives but modifications of some one fundamental or generic impulse to action.

Then in regard to actions and their moral quality, vital questions arise. What really constitutes action and wherein lies its morality? Is all action moral in its nature, or does moral quality pertain only to certain kinds of

actions? Does not the true idea of action involve the notion of ethical character? Wherein consists the difference between spontaneous movement, and moral action? Then in regard to action in itself, we have to enquire whether the external movement, for example, of the arm, or the internal determination of the mind which precedes it, is the real action, and the seat of the ethical element? If it be in the mental determination that the action really consists, how does motive, as inward impulse or as direct intention, stand related to action in this sense? Or, finally, if the morality of an action be in the intention, denoting thereby the motive from which it is done, are we justified in indentifying motive and action, and regarding them as only the same thing under different aspects? Such questions bring before us some of the facts to be explained.

Let us next enquire what explanation Utilitarians supply in regard to these facts. It is not easy to get very definite views or opinions on these topics. Concerned as Utilitarians chiefly are with the tendency of actions to produce happiness on the reverse, or considering the relation of actions to law in some outward form, they do not very formally discuss the general question of motive and action. Their

notion of action is very vague, and but ill defined, whereas it is of vast moment to know clearly what we mean by such an action as possesses moral quality, and with which the ethical system has to deal.

The enquiry into the Utilitarian position in regard to motive brings again into view the Utilitarian theory of life. The desire of pleasure, and the avoidance of pain being the sole motives by which we can be influenced, to speak in general of motives of various kinds, and of the morality of an action depending on its motive, is scarcely intelligible on the Utilitarian system. Here are two distinct points. First, as to motive in itself: Self-interest with Utilitarians is the generic motive which leads men to action, and when they speak, as they do, of various motives, they merely refer to the various forms in which self interest may be regarded as influencing us. Different motives are but different forms of happiness. That there are motives or ends generically different in their nature, as for example desire for knowledge, love of home, or longing for fame &c., is distinctly denied by later Utilitarians. Every impulse which prompts to action is only self interest in some of its varied forms.

The second point relates to the connection

of the morality of an action with its motive. The position of Utilitarians here is substantially that the morality of an action does not necessarily depend on the motive from which it is performed. The motives, that is, the different modes of self interest, from which men act may affect our opinion as to their character, but it does not affect the morality of their actions. If one man seeks the higher kinds of pleasure, or the nobler forms of self interest we put a higher value on his character as a good man. If another man follows after the lower or less noble forms of self interest or happiness, we put his character down as of lower rank than the other man's. The morality of an action is hence determined, not by its motive, but by its conformity or non-conformity with the principle of General Utility, or the rules which are deduced from that principle. He, says Mill, who saves a fellow creature from drowning does what is morally right, because generally useful, whether the motive be a sense of duty, or the hope of being paid for his trouble.

It is not necessary, and our space will not admit it, to give the views in detail of the various advocates of the Utilitarian system. It is clear that their doctrines here are very confused, and radically defective; and, as we will

return to a consideration of them again in the criticism to be given in another chapter, we will simply leave the general statement just made with the concluding remarks, that the Utilitarian notion of moral action is not clearly defined, though it deals chiefly with action as something external; that all possible motives influencing human action are but modifications of self-interest; and, finally, that the morality of an action has no necessary dependence on its motive.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UTILITARIAN THEORY OF THE WILL.

We now reach the last main topic which requires consideration, and in this chapter have to treat of the Will, dealing especially with the views Utilitarians take of its nature, its exercise, its relation to our other powers, and the question of Freedom. We are thus brought to what Hume termed "the most contentious question in Metaphysics, the most contentious science." The problems here involved have ever puzzled philosophers, and opposite views have been advocated by good and able men. The question of the Will, its essential nature, and its relation to our natural impulses on the one hand, and to the rational part of our nature on the other, as well as the relation of motives to its exercise, must be taken up and discussed in the moral system. It would be too much to conclude that the validity of moral distinctions depends upon any particular doctrine of

the Will, for we find good men possessing deep philosophical insight taking the Necessitarian and Libertarian side respectively, in regard to the question of Freedom; and we also find many able writers, who have no sympathy with Utilitarianism, take the Necessitarian position, though we find that Utilitarians usually concur in holding, in some form, Necessitarian principles. But since morality is connected largely with voluntary action, though it also pertains to mental states and dispositions, it is of importance to know as fully as possible what voluntary action involves, and what part the Will plays in the determination of our actions, and the production of our character.

The problem is an exceedingly deep and difficult one, as will at once appear if we think for a moment of the questions involved in it. What is the nature of Will power? Is it an originating, or merely a controlling power; or is it partly both? Does it exercise its influence towards external things in the way of choice, or does it merely exert a controlling function over our faculties or activities within? Is its nature and exercise, in the first instance, purely mental, or does it belong primarily and essentially to the realm of morals? Then follows the question of the relation of the Will to our

other faculties. Does it stand above them all, as their governor ; or is it conditioned on some of them in its activity ? What is its precise relation to our natural impulses, and what its bearing in regard to our rational nature ? Do the former affect its exercise ; if so, how ? Does the latter guide it, by supplying to it an intelligent law of action ?

Then what about the problem of freedom and necessity ? Is man free in his action, or does he act under moral necessity ? How should the problem itself be stated ? Should we enquire whether *the will*, *the soul*, or *the person* is free ? If necessity be the law under which man acts, how are we to regard this law ? How does the fact or law of causation stand related to the Will and its exercise ? How do motives stand related to the Will ? Is there between the Will and its motives, a connection which may be termed *moral* causation ? Or must we shut off the mental or spiritual sphere from the reign of natural or physical law, and find for it a law of its own ? And this final important question comes up—is the agent in acting self determined, or is his action determined invariably by motive, just as *antecedent* determines *consequent*, invariably, according to causation under physical law ?

These interrogations will suffice to show, to some extent, the sphere of the enquiry, and to indicate, as well, how profound the problem of the Will is. It will also help us to see the bearing of the Utilitarian doctrine here, and to give a general sketch of this we now proceed. We may confine remark almost entirely to modern forms of the system, so that we will have little to say concerning the opinions of either ancient or mediæval times on this point. Our survey can be but brief.

In regard to the *nature* of the Will, Utilitarians say but little. In regard to its relation to our other faculties, they generally make its exercise depend on our desires or aversions; and in regard to the bearing of our rational nature towards the Will, they do not lay down any definite doctrine, further than that the Will may be educated, and that a clear intellectual standard of right and wrong is required for its proper exercise.

The problem chiefly discussed by Utilitarians, and in some respects the most important problem connected with the Will, is that of its Freedom. We will now see what treatment it receives at their hands. It may be stated that modern Utilitarians are generally Necessitarians. Those who hold the

doctrines of Positivism are necessarily so. There are some who, while virtually necessitarian, do not reject freedom; but when we ask what they mean by freedom, it is simply freedom from restraint; in acting the agent is free from compulsion. The majority, however, explain the facts relating to the Will and its exercise, in such a way as really to exclude freedom, in the proper sense, altogether. We may take Mill as the exponent of Utilitarian doctrine here, as he has more formally than almost any other dealt with this question, and the treatment it receives at his hand, however defective in principle, has many marks of fair-mindedness and ability.

Mr. Mill does not like the title *Necessitarian*, and proposes *Determinist* as a much better one. We may cheerfully allow the use of this name, for the thing is always more important than the name; and an exposition of the doctrines held by Mill and the later Utilitarians will, we believe, go far to show that they really involve necessitarianism of a very rigid kind, it matters not by what name we are pleased to call it. Mill holds that human actions come under the same laws as the uniformities in the natural or physical world. Human actions are hence phenomena connected with antecedent

phenomena, and they result as invariably from these antecedents, and in the very same way, as the falling of a stone results from its relation in space to the earth, by which it is popularly said to be attracted. His words on this point are as follows—"A volition is a moral effect which follows the corresponding moral causes as certainly and as invariably as physical effects follow their physical causes. Whether it *must* do so, I acknowledge myself to be entirely ignorant, be the phenomenon moral or physical; and I condemn, accordingly, the word necessity as applied to either case. All I know is, that it always does."

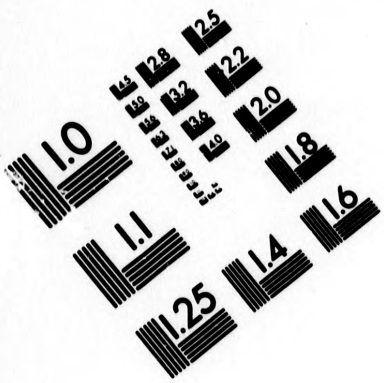
Mill thus makes substantially no difference between physical and mental phenomena, and the invariable connection between cause and effect is the same in both cases. That which precedes action, and which is generally called motive, whether it be disposition, desire, impulse, or anything else which influences us, along the line of the Utilitarian theory of life, is an antecedent or cause, and the action which follows is a consequent or effect, and the connection is invariable. The antecedent being so or so, the consequent will be so or so. The character of the cause determines the nature of the effect. The motive determines the ac-

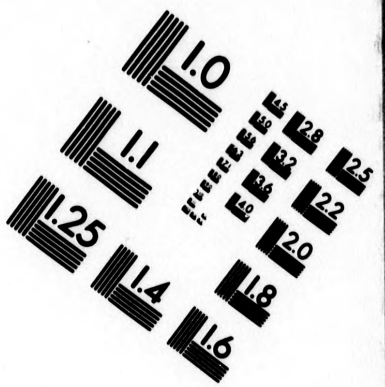
tion, and self determination is thereby excluded. The Will does not possess what may be termed inherent spontaneity. It will be seen that this is the necessary outcome of the general empirical principles held by Utilitarians. If the object determine the subject, then spontaneity of the intellect, of the conscience, and of the will is excluded. Each is what it is, as determined by something outside of itself; all of which goes to show that a rigid necessitarianism prevails in the Utilitarian system. It also gives warning that the morass of Materialism may not be far away.

Another point to which we may properly allude here has reference to the verdict of consciousness in regard to Freedom. Libertarians generally take that verdict as in favour of their view, but Determinists like Mr. Mill deny that consciousness testifies to the fact of Freedom. His argument may be stated as follows: In saying that we are free we can only mean that, in any given case in which we act in a certain way, we feel that we could have acted otherwise had we so pleased. To be conscious of free will, Mill says, must mean to be conscious before we have decided that we are *able* to decide either way. Consciousness, he says, only tells me what I actually do, or feel; what

I might otherwise have done, can never come within the grasp of consciousness. We only know that we can do a thing by having done it. Of course, Mill admits that we might act in another way *did we prefer it*, but he denies that we can choose one course while performing another. He, hence, rejects the opinion that we are conscious of being able to act in opposition to the strongest present aversion or desire. The difference between a bad man and a good man, according to Mill, is not that the latter acts in opposition to his strongest desires, but that his desire to do right and aversion to do wrong are strong enough to overcome any other conflicting desire. In regard to the Will, it may further be added, that Mill also holds that it can be educated through the aversions and desires, and that herein lies the sphere of moral education.

It may be remarked here that Mill's position in regard to consciousness and the fact of Freedom is in some respects the strongest in his whole system. It will still remain, however, to enquire whether he states the problem properly, or no ; and whilst we may freely admit that his criticism bears severely on the doctrines of some leading Libertarians, yet it may still be maintained that a more accurate state-





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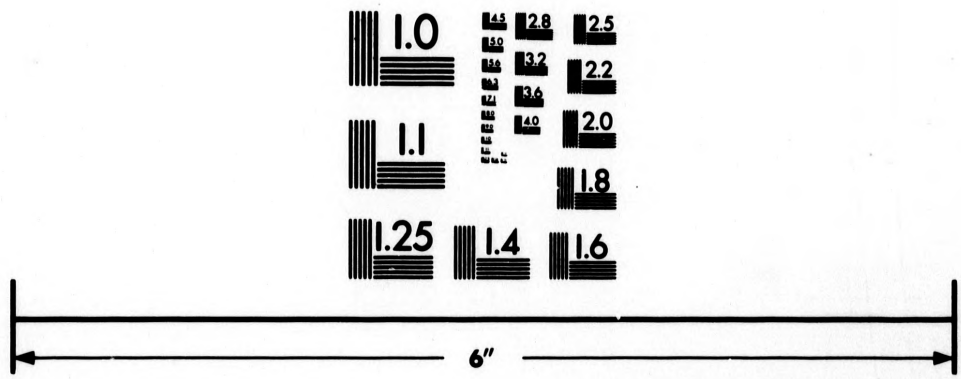

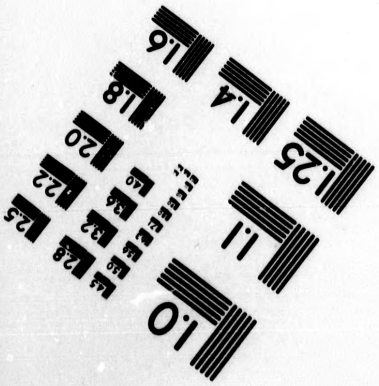

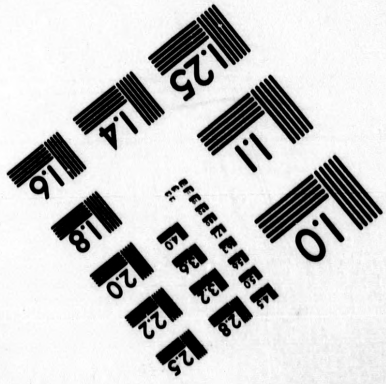

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ment of the problem, will shield Freedom from this strong assault. In regard to the necessitarian or determinist doctrines of Utilitarians in general, two questions will naturally arise in the mind of the thoughtful reader. How can a valid ground for human responsibility be provided on their theory; and how is education of the will possible, of the strongest desire or aversion always rules it?

CONCLUSION.

The first part of our task is now completed. We have endeavored to give a general statement, and exposition of the Utilitarian system of morals. In doing so we were unable to go into great details on any point, and our space compelled us to be content with a very general survey, even where a more complete statement might have served a useful purpose. It is hoped that a fair, and somewhat clear, presentation of the opinions of Utilitarians on each of the topics discussed has been given. The various leading problems entering into the ethical system have been passed under review, and a very brief summary may gather up results, and prepare the way for the analysis and criticism to follow.

Utilitarians generally hold an empirical Psychology, and a sensational theory of Knowledge. Their theory of human nature, life, and activity may be termed Eudæmonis-

tic. In regard to the nature and origin of moral conceptions they hold that they are not simple and ultimate, but complex and derived; and that our knowledge of moral distinctions is acquired by purely empirical processes. Conscience is not an original faculty, but a development; the product of education and association working on the field of experience. The ethical standard is General Utility; this is made prominent in their system. The source of obligation is either subjective feeling or objective authority. They generally hold a doctrine of benevolence, and endeavor to show how we take into account the interests of others in determining our own conduct. They maintain that there is but one generic notion, self interest, which prompts men to action, and there is no necessary connection between motive and action. Finally, in regard to the Will and freedom, their doctrine is necessitarian, or, as they prefer to say, determinist. The second part of the treatise will contain a critical review of the results thus gathered up, with some indication of the true doctrine on each topic.

PART II.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM.

PRELIMINARY.

In entering upon the second part of our task, a few introductory remarks are necessary to indicate the general position from which the survey of Utilitarianism we are now about to take will be made, and to mark out the main lines along which our critical review will be undertaken. There are certain questions, rather metaphysical than ethical in their nature, which stand so related to the problems of Ethics that they must be kept in view all the time, and tacit, if not expressed, opinions regarding them held. We wish to note three of these related questions, and to express the opinions touching them, which we will carry with us in our analysis and criticism of the doctrines of Utilitarianism, as already sketched.

The first of these questions relates to *the*

foundation of morality. What, in the last analysis, is the basis of virtue or of morals? It is found in man's moral nature, or must we go beyond that nature to find it? Is man, as a moral being, self-contained and independent? Are the facts of conscience, especially that of obligation, and that of the authority of the moral faculty, such as to supply in themselves their own adequate explanation, or do these facts necessarily imply a deeper and a broader foundation?

The opinion is ventured, with some degree of confidence, that our moral nature and conduct, with their varied phenomena, do not supply in themselves their own complete explanation. Conscience cannot be itself the source of the authority it admittedly possesses. This authority demands an objective ground. The moral faculty asserts the obligation under which we are to do the right. This assertion is the echo within us of a voice coming to us from without, and calls for an external basis on which it may rest.

Admitting, then, that we must go beyond our moral nature for the fundamental explanation of its phenomena, the question arises, what beyond that nature is the foundation of morality—the basal fact in Ethics? We answer at

once that in the nature of the Divine Being we have laid the foundation of morality. The fact of the Divine existence is necessary to the possibility of moral philosophy, as, on the other hand, the phenomena of our moral nature afford one of the strongest proofs of the existence of the Divine Being. The position here may be thus stated. Conscience, or the moral faculty, makes known to us the distinction between right and wrong. This distinction implies the existence of moral law. This law is engraved on our nature, but it also exists without us, as ruling over us. As thus existing, moral law involves the existence of a personal Being, with a moral nature, who is the author of the law and the source of its authority. This Being is God. Hence, from the facts of our moral nature, we reason to the existence and moral attributes of the Divine Being, and in that Being as moral governor, we find the answer to the question what is the foundation of Ethics? Moral philosophy is only possible on the presupposition of the existence of God, as a personal Being and as the moral governor of the universe. Man's moral nature demands this pre-supposition, in order to an adequate explanation of all its facts. Neither man's

own moral nature, with its varied resources and wonderful furnishings, nor mere impersonal law, of which many make so much at the present day, affords a sufficient basis from which to explain all the facts. The foundation of morality is in the Divine nature, and hence our criticism will be made from the Theistic standpoint.

A second point has reference to the view the ethical system requires us to take of the relation of man, as a moral being, to the Divine Being, whose existence and moral character is predicated by the facts of man's moral nature. The question thus raised is very closely related to, if not identical with, that of man's position and powers under the Divine Sovereignty. If God be sovereign moral Ruler, has man any distinct personality? If he has, how does his distinct personality stand related to the absolute and sovereign personality of God, who, by the voice of man's consciousness, is distinctly declared to have paramount authority over him? This, of course, is a question which cannot now be viewed in all its bearings, nor dare we ever hope to fathom the deep problems raised by it; yet it is of some importance in regard to the ethical system to have a clear conception of the relation of man's moral

nature, whose facts are the chief subject of study, to the Divine Being in whose nature, as moral, the foundation of morality for man is to be discovered.

Here the opinion is ventured that the absolute sovereignty and independent personality of the Divine Being must be held fast; and at the same time the distinct, though dependent, personality of man is to be as firmly maintained. How the independent personality of God, and the dependent personality of man; how the absolute sovereignty of the moral governor, and the subordinate activity of the moral nature of man, under the divine government, stand related or are to be harmonized, may be very difficult to state; but as to the reality of the two sides of the problem there can be no doubt. They stand in the relation of distinctly correlated facts, as a smaller circle stands related to a larger when contained within its sphere. Each is a circle and has its properties, and is self-contained, but the larger embraces or contains the smaller within it. So in regard to the Divine Being and the moral nature of man. The former is the vast circle which contains all else; the latter is the smaller circle contained within the larger. In viewing the vast realm over which the Divine Sovereignty thus ex-

tends, we find various orders of existence, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, moral and non-moral. Each of these has its peculiar constitution, and its definite laws of existence and action. This constitution and these laws are given to each by its Creator. According to these laws and in keeping with its nature the Divine authority and control is exercised. Man has reason, conscience, and will, as well as distinct personality. The Creator has given him these and has prescribed the laws of their operation, and in accordance with these laws the Divine Sovereignty is exercised; and the dependent or subordinate personality of man, with its various faculties, performs all its operations under these conditions. What we have specially to hold fast in moral philosophy, is the distinct though dependent personality of man, as a being endowed with a moral nature, which is the counterpart of the moral nature of the Supreme Being. This view is entirely consistent with the facts of the problem both from the human and the Divine side. It is a view, moreover, which leaves no room for a hopeless Fatalism that would regard man as a mere machine in the hand of the Almighty; it saves us from the cold shade of Pantheism, which obliterates man's distinct

personality, and renders moral philosophy impossible; and it protects us from the conclusions of Materialism, which robs man of his brightest crown, and declares morality no more necessary for him than for a stone or a dog. In the ethical system man is to be regarded as a distinct but dependent personality, and from this point of view we have to study the facts of his moral nature, and at the same time bear in mind that, in the last analysis, these facts find their basis in the Divine Being.

The third preliminary remark relates to the disorder of man's moral nature. The fact of such disorder is admitted by almost all moralists, but various opinions are held as to its precise nature and extent. While some go so far as to say that this disorder renders it impossible to construct a moral philosophy, a few really deny that there is any disorder other than that which necessarily belongs to the imperfection of finite existence. The question which thus emerges is but one phase of the far wider problem of the existence of moral evil in the universe. This fact shows how profound the question itself is, and how useless it must be to attempt to explain it. The problem of evil in the domain of a Holy and Almighty Being, is one before which we

must ever stand with bowed head and silent lips.

All we now venture to do is to assert the fact that there is something wrong in man's moral nature, and that for this disorder we must make allowance in our ethical system, even though we cannot tell just how it arose, and may not be able to define its exact extent, or state its precise results. We carefully avoid venturing any positive theory in regard to the origin of evil in general, or of the disorder of man's nature in particular. We do not even hint any estimate of its degree or extent. We are inclined to think that any theory which limits the disorder to, or locates it in, one particular faculty, whether it be in the will, or the conscience, or in the impulsive part of our nature, is too narrow to cover the whole ground. The better opinion regards the whole moral nature as affected by the disorder which has befallen it. And as the whole soul is the seat of morals, so the whole soul as moral suffers under the disaster. It is better to locate this disorder in the moral nature than to place it in any particular faculty. Intellect is the soul viewed as knowing; conscience is the soul perceiving the distinction between right and wrong, and sensible of obligation to

do the right; will is the soul exercising under suitable conditions its determining activity; the impulses are just the soul affected or impelled to act in a certain way. Moral disorder, having its seat in the soul viewed as moral, thus affects all its faculties or powers, in themselves, and in their relation to each other. Each, however, will be affected in accordance with its peculiar nature, and special functions. In every ethical system this disturbing influence must be allowed for, rather than fully explained. Hence in the usurpation of lower over higher motives; in the failure of conscience always to secure obedience to the right; and in the impotence of the will always to choose what is right, and secure action according thereto, we have examples of what we mean.

These three points, viz:—That the foundation of morals is to be found finally in the Divine nature; that man is to be regarded as a distinct though dependent personality; and that allowance must be made in the ethical system for the moral disorder of our nature, are to be borne in mind, as we proceed to the analysis and criticism of Utilitarianism. They supply a distinctly Theistic standpoint on the one hand, and give an anthropologically sound position on the other, for such a critical review

as we wish now to make. Our endeavor will be to point out as fairly and fully as possible the truth and error, the defect and the strength, of the system under review; and it is hoped that such criticism will enable us to see, in part at least, the true explanations of the main problems in Ethics, even if the result may be the evident inadequacy of the Utilitarian theory of morals to supply such explanation.

CHAPTER I.

THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

The best order to follow in our criticism may be that in which the various topics were presented in the exposition already given. Adopting this order, we have first to consider the theory of Knowledge, which the vast majority of Utilitarians distinctly adopt. That theory; as already seen, is the sensational, empirical, or associational, according to which all our knowledge arises from, and originates in, sensation; and the loftiest fabric of human knowledge is built up by habit and association from this beginning. The very highest mental product is a development from sensation, and there are no intuitive elements, even in the very highest possessions of our minds. In ancient times this theory appears in a crude form in Democritus and Epicurus. In modern times we find it held in a variety of forms by the Lockian School, and Empiricists generally.

Locke, far more effectually than he ever dreamed of, became the father of a Sensational School, which developed into a thorough-going Materialism in certain quarters, and laid the foundation for many opinions now held by Positivists. As probably the most fully developed form of the Empirical theory appears in Mr. James Mill, and as the general outline of his views was followed in our exposition, we will now critically review the main points of the Empirical theory of Knowledge, as set forth therein. If we find that the Empiricist doctrines in regard to human knowledge are not valid, then we are justified in holding that the ethical system involving these empirical principles has no secure basis in the intellectual sphere.

In examining the theory of Knowledge which is implied in Utilitarianism, the first point we have to consider is the state of the mind in its pure or precognitive condition. In opposition to the Empirical doctrine here, which denies that there is any *a-priori* element, and holds that the mind is entirely *vacant* at first, it is maintained that the mind has *a-priori* principles, and that these form a very important contribution to all human knowledge. In opposition to those of the extreme Sensational

School, who question the separate existence of the ego or mind, or explain it in such a way as to destroy its spirituality and personal identity, it is held as indubitably true that the ego or mind is spiritual, and has an existence quite independent of, though related to, the material organism. The mind thus viewed as prior to cognition, and necessary to it, is regarded as having, as part of its very constitution, certain intuitive principles, subjective forms, or mental categories, according to which the knowledge it comes into possession of is attained. These principles, forms, or categories, it is also held, are the conditions of the possibility of experience in general, or of the attaining of knowledge in any of its forms. Plato, the Scottish Intuitionalists, and the Kantian School, are undoubtedly right in this fundamental position. The mind as knowing subject brings its own spontaneous subjective tribute to all the knowledge it attains, and the representation that the ego, previous to experience, is empty, or like a sheet of unwritten paper, is far from correct. So far as the philosophy of cognition is concerned, the mental element is fundamental, inasmuch as the *a-priori* in the order of nature always precedes the *a-posteriori*. As examples of the *a-priori* principles which the mind gives

to cognition, as the very condition of its possibility, we may take the conceptions of space, time, cause, &c. These are not the products of experience, but its fundamental conditions.

Another important point to consider here is the *attitude* of the mind in cognition. In opposition to the view of Empiricists, who hold that the mind is substantially *passive*, it is maintained that the mind possesses *spontaneity*, and that in cognition this is its essential characteristic. It is not admitted that the object absolutely determines the subject, and that the knowledge the ego attains is entirely conditioned on the non-ego. Even if we admit that there may be reciprocal determination between object and subject, yet it is held that the non-ego is *passive*, while the ego has spontaneity of operation. And further, it is believed that no view which leaves this point out of sight can provide a sound Psychology, or present a full and adequate doctrine of cognition. The mind has spontaneity, and this lays the foundation for the process by which knowledge is acquired. This point need not be elaborated, but it will be seen how hard it bears against the Empirical theory of Knowledge held by Utilitarians.

Another important point alluded to in our exposition, is the view of sensation taken by

Empiricists, and the very important place they give it in their theory of Knowledge. In regard to their position, that sensation is the fundamental fact out of which all our knowledge is developed, it is denied that sensation is really knowledge or cognition at all. Leaving out of view the physiological side of sensation, which is both interesting and important in its place, and regarding the psychological side, which is the real sphere of the enquiry, for affections of the nerves and brain must be transformed into, or at least must result in, affections of the mind or ego before they fall under the domain of Psychology, the following summary commends itself as containing the correct view: Sensation, as a simple mental affection, in which both ego and non-ego unite, only supplies the material of our knowledge. As mere sensation, it is yet simply the raw material of knowledge. To become knowledge it must be worked up into definite form by the spontaneous subject. In order to this process of the mind, there must be a group or a series of sensations, and in this group or series the sensations are contrasted, and bound together in a single consciousness, by the spontaneous unifying power of the mind. Only when sensations are thus grasped in the unity of a single

consciousness, is there knowledge in the proper sense of the term. Sensation is not knowledge; it merely supplies the "stuff" of cognition; then the mind by its own action, and according to its own laws, reduces this material to definiteness, and the result is knowledge. Now observe here that, even to the very first step in knowledge, a mental process of a certain kind is necessary, and that sensation, not being knowledge in itself, could never become knowledge were there not an element, not in sensation but given to it by the mind, thus supplied. By this very brief criticism the Empirical position will be seen to have no real foundation. A mental act of comparison, and a mental process of unification in a single consciousness, is absolutely necessary before sensations become knowledge; and this act and process is not in sensation, but contributed to it by the mind itself.

What has just been said opens up the way for the criticism of the Empircal doctrine of the identity of sensation and consciousness. The leading writers of the Sensational School, such as Mill, Bain, and Spencer, labor hard to make this point good, but their success is not at all equal to the efforts they put forth. Over against their doctrine we would present

the opinion that sensation and consciousness are not identical; and that consciousness contains an element which sensation neither contains, nor can supply to consciousness. The sensation is one thing, and the consciousness is another; and they are so different in their nature also, that they are not even to be regarded as the same thing under two different aspects. Sensation, as such, gives us no knowledge of the ego; in consciousness the ego is apprehended, and the sensations grasped therein are viewed in relation to the mind, and declared to belong to it. It will thus be seen that consciousness involves more than sensation, and that there is in consciousness an element which cannot come from experience. This element is that of self-consciousness, which involves the reference of certain sensations to the subject to which they belong. Sensation and consciousness are therefore quite distinct.

The next point leads us to enquire whether the Empirical explanation of the way in which the higher forms of knowledge are built up is the correct one. It is maintained that in every stage of this building process, there is an assumption quite inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Empiricism. In

order to record and reproduce the result of sensations, *Memory* is called into service, and *Expectation* in regard to the future, is also relied on. The series of sensations, they say, would have no continuity without memory. No matter how carefully the theory is stated, elements are imported into the explanation which do not belong to sensation, and which cannot come from sensation. Memory itself is a purely mental exercise, and not consistent with Empirical principles. Sensation should contain in itself, according to these principles, the explanation of all the higher forms of knowledge; and in so far as other principles, such as memory or expectation, are drawn upon and the need of them felt, there are defects in the sensational theory. Memory, view it as we may, is something over and above sensation, and its assumption confesses the inadequacy of the fundamental principles of Empiricism to explain the higher forms of knowledge.

From the same point of view the position and functions assigned to the laws of Association by Empiricists, may be shown to be equally vulnerable. These laws are not to be regarded as something merely objective, ruling from without our mental processes. They are

also to be viewed as subjective principles, and as such they do not belong to sensation considered in itself, but are superadded by the mind. The laws of Association, even if we allow them all the efficacy that Empiricists do, cannot flow from experience, and the process by which Knowledge is acquired, for they are necessary to the process, and must be presupposed in order to knowledge. Hence these laws regarded as mental principles render the experience itself, in its particular form, possible, and they determine the form of the process according to which Knowledge is acquired. This criticism it appears is fundamental, and goes far to show that, however much depends on the laws of Association in the knowing process, these laws are not found in sensation, nor in anything that sensation leaves to the mind, but they are superadded by the mind itself, and as such are by no means purely Empirical principles.

From this brief critical review it would appear that the Empirical theory breaks down at every point, and that not a single step upwards in the knowing process can be taken, save by the introduction of an element contributed by the mind itself to the product. It may be added that Empiricists generally give

to certain of our conceptions such as necessity, cause, &c., a modified meaning. Instead of allowing them *absolute* validity, they have attached to them only a *relative* significance. This fact of itself is a confession of the impotence of the Empirical theory to explain some of our most deeply rooted mental furnishings.

In closing our criticism here we would most cheerfully testify to the invaluable service later Empiricists have rendered to Mental Science, especially along the lines of Physiological enquiry relating to sensation. The work of Mill, Bain, Spencer, and Carpenter is here of deep interest, and great value. All they have done, however, only brings out into bolder relief the problem of the relation between the Physiology and Psychology of sensation, but does not of itself explain how an affection of the nerves or brain is translated into an affection of the mind. Sensation is *in* and *of* the mind, and hence its full explanation must be Psychological. Nerve movement and mental action, however they are related as facts, are quite different in their nature ; and Empiricists, in their ardor for the Physiology of sensation, have often overlooked its Psychology, or but imperfectly treated of it. The conclusion we therefore reach is, that we must rely on some form of the Intuitive doc-

trine for the true theory of Knowledge. In all human knowledge there is an *a-priori* as well as an *a-posteriori* element; transcendental as well as empirical factors. Experience may be the occasion, but it is not the fundamental source of knowledge. In order to this very experience certain *a-priori* conditions are requisite. Without unfolding any definite form of Intuitionalism, we have the conviction that in its general principles we obtain a full and competent explanation of all our knowledge. The importance of this conclusion in relation to the theory of Morals is, that there is thereby laid a solid intellectual foundation for the Intuitional theory of Morals in some form, as over against Utilitarianism, or any form of the Development theory.

CHAPTER II.

THE THEORY OF LIFE.

We have now to enquire whether the theory of Life laid down by Utilitarians is the true one. Is Eudæmonism the true philosophy of human life? Is pleasure the only good, and pain the only evil, in the moral sense; and is the sole motive by which men are influenced to act, a desire to secure the former and avoid the latter? In other words, is self-interest the only motive which leads men to act? In discussing this question the appeal must be made to the facts of consciousness, and of observation. It matters not whether we make the distinction which recent Utilitarians make between pleasures as lower or higher, which is proper enough, the problem is substantially the same so long as pleasure is regarded as the end or motive of human action. Nor does it really affect the nature of the question, whether we regard this pleasure as connected with, or

springing from, our physical activities, our mental operations, our voluntary actions, or even from our conduct towards others, so long as pleasure or self-interest in any form is made the principle of action, the same criticism will lie against each case, inasmuch as the same general principle is involved in all. With this principle, rather than with its different forms or particular applications, we will now deal; for if the principle itself be unsound then its various applications will be invalid.

Is pleasure the end at which we deliberately aim in all our voluntary actions? Do we never put forth volition or perform an action without having in view some form of pleasure which we expect to gain by what we are doing? Does a mother never do an act of kindness to her child without thinking of the pleasure which she expects to derive from what she does? Do truly philanthropic men and women go on their errands of mercy under the prompting of the desire of pleasure, or of self-interest in any form? We do not hesitate to deny the Utilitarian Theory here. It neither is the verdict of consciousness, nor is it true to the facts of observation. It is held that men are conscious of other motives than the love of pleasure in any form, and it is maintained that observation

constantly shows cases of which the Utilitarian Theory of Life affords no adequate explanation. There are facts in the experience of the martyr, the patriot, the philanthropist, and of the devoted mother, of which this theory gives no sufficient account.

The following exposition may show the unsoundness of the happiness theory, or selfish principle, in any of its phases, and may indicate the proper place of pleasure in relation to the theory of Life. Instead of there being one general end of human conduct, that is, the love of pleasure, there are many motives or ends leading man to voluntary action. The love of pleasure is not the only motive to human action. These motives are indefinite in number, and as varied in our nature as are our different faculties and activities. There are in our nature various original desires, tendencies, and impulses leading our activity out toward their respective objects. These desires and tendencies are not only of various kinds, but they are quite distinct in their nature from the mere love of pleasure, and in many cases cannot be reduced to that principle in any possible form. Thus the desire for knowledge leads out to one end along one line of activity; the desire of wealth to another; the desire of power to another,

and so on. This view of human nature, and of the principle of its activity in life, is confidently presented as the only one which accords with the facts of experience and observation.

The proper view to take of pleasure in relation to human activity also clearly emerges. It is simply an *accident* or concomitant of action, which may or may not attend it. When our powers and faculties, bodily, mental, and moral, are in proper harmonious action, pleasure will usually accompany their normal exercise; yet as these powers lead our activity out to their respective ends, unpleasantness, and even pain, may have to be encountered. The desire of knowledge may lead to efforts which are quite irksome, the pursuit of those things which conduce to the welfare of family and home may call for much that is full of self-sacrifice, and so with many other things. In these cases, and they are as numerous as our original desires and tendencies are, the end sought is not pleasure, but knowledge for its own sake, or for its usefulness; or family welfare for its own sake, or the sake of others, &c. It is admitted that some men may make the pursuit of pleasure their chief aim, but even on the ground of this admission it is still maintained that pleasure is not the only end which

leads them to action; and with the majority of men a great variety of ends is sought. As activity is put forth towards these, pleasure or pain may be the concomitants. If pleasure be made the end then the normal exercise of our faculties will be disturbed, whereas if our faculties are in proper and harmonious exercise pleasure will usually be the result. Another element—that of duty—comes in, and may often call us to do that which is irksome, though the approbation of our moral nature will in the end give satisfaction; but, as this point will come up in another connection, we simply mention it here. Such, then, is the position we would give pleasure in the theory of Life.

Modern Utilitarians, like Mr. Mill, who regard pleasure as the only end, and the desire to attain it the only motive to voluntary action, admit that men may aim at the good of their neighbors, or may seek to injure their enemies, without ever thinking of the pleasure they shall obtain thereby. But they deny that, in such cases, the action is voluntary. They say it is spontaneous, and the result of habit. This position, however, is untenable. It is admitted that we come to do many things spontaneously, which at first were performed

voluntarily; but this supposition of spontaneous action will not explain every case. Has the Good Samaritan, for example, stopping on his way to bind up the wounds of the unfortunate traveller, his own pleasure in his mind's view, as the end to which his action is directed? Mr. Mill admits that such a person does not think of himself at all, in other words, that the desire of pleasure is not his motive, but attempts to escape the conclusion which seems so naturally to follow, by asserting that such actions are not performed from motive at all, but are merely the result of habit. The man is one in whom the habit of Benevolence has been formed, and when, therefore, he has a glimpse of woe, it is a quick stimulus to action. But surely it is far from correct to set motive and habit over against each other in the way of opposition, as this view does. Motive consists in an end, desirable in the mind's view; and habit here can only mean, that the effects of the Good Samaritan's previous course of life have been such as to make the relief of a suffering neighbor a more desirable end in his view than it is to others, or might otherwise have been to him. Then, too, it may not be forgotten that habit is largely the result of voluntary action; and in order to the forma-

tion of the Good Samaritan's habit of life, voluntary action looking to the good of others must have had a place, and, in the initial stages, a prominent place; otherwise habit could not be formed.

Those, again, who represent pleasure as the only end of human action attempt to show that, by assuming the desire of pleasure to be the primitive desire of the mind, the formation of all the variety of desires which appear in mature life can be explained. For example, a child begins by desiring pleasure. This is its first and only incentive to action. But it finds that the acquisition of knowledge, even its first germs, is attended with pleasure, and then by means of association it is led to desire knowledge for its own sake, and to aim after its acquisition, even when the thought of the pleasure to be obtained thereby may not be present to the mind at all.

This reasoning though very plausible can be shown to be beside the question at issue, and does not relieve the theory of the difficulty which meets it here, but rather shows its inherent weakness on this point. Of course, it is exceedingly difficult to go back to the first dawn of intelligent activity in child life and experience, and any theory of the way in which

particular desires first spring into exercise must of necessity be, in a great measure, conjectural. The burden of proof, however, here rests with Utilitarians. But for the sake of argument let it be admitted that the theory of Life they propound is the true one, what then is the conclusion? In order to make its claim good, and its conclusion from the conditions of child life valid, it must show that the desire of knowledge is a modification of the desire of pleasure. Utilitarians do not succeed in this, nor does their theory provide for any harmonizing of these two desires, if the desire of pleasure be made the fundamental one. It only shows that the desire of knowledge comes into exercise under particular circumstances. If, then, a motive consists in a desirable end in the mind's view, and if by any means whatever the acquisition of knowledge comes to be desired for its own sake, without any thought of the pleasure arising therefrom, then whatever may have been the history of our being so led to desire knowledge for its own sake, the desire of knowledge is a motive to action, radically different from the desire of pleasure. It may be added that a similar line of reasoning in regard to any of our specific desires would show that their respective ends may

be sought for their own sake. This, then, is a principle generically different from the love of pleasure, and wherever this principle comes upon the scene and impels to action, the Utilitarian theory proves to be defective. This, it will be seen, brings us back to the former position that in our nature there are many desires leading our activity out to their respective ends, and that these, by no possible alchemy, can be reduced to the love of pleasure alone.

One other remark will close this chapter. It relates to the indefinite or ambiguous way in which Utilitarians use the word *good*, and regard pleasure in relation to the good. They often use it in a way that does not necessarily imply *moral* good, that is, the Right. Pleasure may be called a good of a certain kind, but not necessarily *good*, in the ethical sense. When it is said that pleasure is the only good, and the desire to attain it the sole motive of human action, the word *good* is evidently used in a wider sense than that of moral good. Many things are good, in this general sense, and amongst these pleasure may in many cases take rank, which have no proper ethical significance. In Moral Philosophy we have to do with *moral* good,

and the remark here made is that Utilitarians use the word *good* in a very ambiguous way.

We conclude that the Utilitarian Theory of Life is not the true one, and the attempt to build an Ethical Theory on their conception of pleasure and pain must be a failure. It is a house built on the sand.

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MORAL DISTINCTIONS.

Our task here is to enquire whether the explanation which Utilitarians give of the nature and origin of our ethical notions and moral sentiments is the correct one. They hold that in their *nature* these notions are not simple and original, but complex and capable of being resolved into some simpler idea; and in regard to their *origin* they maintain that they are not ultimate, but derived from some more general and fundamental idea. The question is—Are they right? Is their analysis of our moral nature and possessions sound and sufficient? Are our conceptions of *right*, *wrong*, *obligation*, &c., and our feelings of approval and disapproval, and, indeed, our moral sentiments generally, simple and underived, or are they complex, and derived or developed from something else. This, it is

evident, is one of the deepest questions of Moral Philosophy, and as the views we hold on this point will virtually determine the character of our whole system, our examination of it must therefore be made with some care.

The question of the *nature*, and the question of the *origin* of our moral ideas, are so closely related that it is scarcely possible to treat of them separately. Moreover, the conclusions we reach in regard to the one, will virtually determine our opinions concerning the other. If in their *nature* our moral conceptions are simple, then in their *origin* they are derived; if in their *nature* they are complex, then in their *origin* they are derived. In the criticism we are now about to offer it may be well to consider each question, as far as possible, by itself, and afterwards to advert to the closely related question alluded to in the exposition already given, viz. :—The nature of the mental process by which our knowledge of moral distinctions is attained.

Before entering on these questions in detail a general critical remark may be made, which ought to lead us to regard, with a measure of suspicion almost, the correctness of the fundamental principles of Utilitarianism, as indeed of the Development Theory of Morals in gen-

eral. The remark is this : There is such want of agreement amongst Utilitarians themselves in regard to the nature of our moral conceptions, as well as in regard to the degree of their complexity, and such variety of opinion as to what is really to be taken as the fundamental principle in Ethics, that it is very difficult to come to any satisfactory conclusion as to which of them correctly represents Utilitarianism. In addition to this we cannot surely be severely blamed, or accused of the least unfairness, if we withhold our acceptance of the Utilitarian position, at least till its advocates have themselves come to some sort of agreement on the main questions involved. Hobbes, Paley, Bain, &c., look to Law as the ground notion in morals. Bentham, Mill, Darwin, Spencer and the later Sociologists proclaim that happiness, general utility, or some sociological fact, is the ground notion in the Ethical system, from which all other facts in our moral nature and conduct may be explained. Now surely when we find such able advocates of the system holding such radically different views, we may very reasonably decline to accept any of their opinions, touching such a vital point in Ethics as we are now dealing with, at least till such time as

they have reached substantial agreement amongst themselves, as to the primary principle, fact, or conception, from which all our moral possessions are developed or derived. This remark, it may be added, applies not simply to the question now under review, but to the questions of the origin and nature of Conscience, and of that which constitutes the Ethical Standard. The allusion we now make to it, and the remark here offered upon it, will be sufficient, so that it will not be necessary to repeat it when we reach the chapters which treat of these topics.

In regard to the *nature* of moral conceptions it is held, in opposition to the Utilitarian view, that they are simple in their nature, and incapable of being resolved into any simpler notion. As there are in the intellectual sphere ultimate principles or intuitive convictions, which cannot be further explained than that they are what they are, so in the realm of Morals there are certain simple and ultimate notions, which are incapable of further analysis. The Intuitional Psychology outlined in a former chapter lays the foundation of a sound Ethical Psychology as well. According to this the notions of right, wrong, obligation, &c., are original, and primitive, simple and ultimate;

and they are what they are by virtue of their own essential nature. They are also generically different from all our other notions or mental possessions, in that the one cannot be resolved into the other. An intellectual judgment and a verdict of the moral faculty are very different things, however they may stand related as facts. The mind viewed as cognitive purely, and as moral as well, gives us very different results. Understanding and Conscience are diverse. The conclusion reached in the chapter on the theory of knowledge, provides a proper intellectual basis for this view, and we rest in the conclusion that the notion of right is such that no further account of it can be given than that it comes to us as the natural and simple deliverance of our moral nature. It is not necessary to adduce detailed proof of this position here, inasmuch as what we may have to say, concerning the attempts made by Utilitarians to explain how our moral conceptions are derived from some other principle or notion, will go far to show what their true nature is, and to entirely destroy the claim put forth that they are complex and derivative. To this point we at once proceed, and in the criticism upon which we enter the two closely related questions of the *nature* and *origin* of

our moral conceptions will both be considered, and our general conclusions reached.

In our exposition of the Utilitarian doctrine on this point, we saw that certain writers found the explanation and source of our moral conceptions in some form of Law, either human or Divine; while others discovered the same in General Utility, either in its individual or sociological aspects.

In regard to the former of these views, which regards either the Law of the land or the Divine Law simply, as the fundamental principle of Ethics, we would offer the criticism that every one of these theories necessarily makes the assumption that the notion of *right* is already in our possession. The notion of moral distinctions is presupposed, before the conception of Law is possible. Without the notion of *right* underlying it, Law can have no real significance, and must be devoid of its chief characteristic of rational authority. Instead of founding moral conceptions on any form of Law we would advance the view that the notion of Law involves the assumption of these conceptions; and, hence, the notion of Right is the fundamental one. The notion of Right then appears as the basis of Law; not Law the ground of the idea of Right. Utili-

tarians of the Legal School, therefore, confound the notions of Law and Right, and make Law the basal fact, whereas the notion of Right is presupposed in that of Law, and hence cannot be derived from it.

Another critical remark naturally follows. If Law be taken as the fundamental fact in Ethics, then Right, and Obligation too, must depend on the mere will of the person who promulgates the Law. The only way to avoid this conclusion is to maintain that this Law is the outcome of moral principles pertaining to the nature of the Lawgiver; but it will be observed that this supposition involves the existence of a moral nature, and of the notion of Right prior to that of Law and as its ground. The Utilitarian position here evidently makes moral distinctions depend on the will of the author of the Law, without providing any Ethical guide to the exercise of that will from which the Law flows. This is a view which all but destroys morality, leaving it at best but variable, and without proper foundation. The conception of Right, as we take it, is not only fundamental, but it is of something which is eternal and immutable. Not even the will of God, in itself, *constitutes* anything right. The Divine will, it is true, will always be found

coincident with what is right, and our conduct will be coincident too, if we obey the Divine will; but the basis of the Divine will expressed in the Divine Law is the essential rectitude of the Divine nature, so that the notion of Right lies deepest of all. What is true of the relation of Law as the expression of Will, and Right as connected with nature in regard to God, is, in a measure at least, true in the case of man; so that both in the Divine Being and in human nature the fundamental notion, the ground principle, in morals is that of *Right*. When we thus say that the foundation of morals is in the nature of God, we should also add that we carefully guard against the view that it is the Divine will that is meant. The final ground of Ethics is the inherent rectitude of the Divine nature, from which the Divine Will springs, and of which the Divine Law is the correct expression. Corresponding to this we have, in our moral nature, a reflection of the Divine Nature, Will, and Law; and with us, too, the notion of Right is the deepest of all, and springs up as an original deliverance of our moral nature. The Utilitarian view we are now dealing with, derives the notion of Right from that of Law, which is an expression of Will, whereas we would connect the

notion of Right with the nature of the Law-giver, and regard it as fundamental, and as giving the Rule to Will, and the Authority to Law; and hence it is simple and underived.

In regard to those forms of Utilitarianism in which Self-interest, or General Utility, is made the foundation and source of the principles of the Ethical system, much the same lines of criticism may be followed. The notion of Utility, individual or general, can only possess ethical significance under the assumption that the principles of morality already exist. The generally useful and the morally right are entirely different conceptions; and, instead of the former determining the latter, the latter rather determines the former. That which is right will, in the long run, turn out to be the generally useful, and the generally useful will, in the end, coincide with the right; but we are not thereby to conclude that the notion of right grows out of that of general Utility. The idea of Utility will have no ethical basis, nor can the generally useful ever be transformed into the ethically right, unless we presuppose the conception of right already existent in the mind. Thus, while no possible process in the ethical laboratory can ever transform the *Useful* into the *Right*, the conception of Right

affords a solid philosophical basis on which the useful may be founded, and from which it may be derived. The conception of Right, we again conclude, is seen to be the fundamental one in the Ethical system, and we are as far as possible from admitting that moral conceptions can ever be evolved out of any considerations of Utility. Unless we presuppose the moral element, the useful must ever remain without ethical significance, if indeed we might not be entirely unable to speak of anything as *useful* at all. The conception of Right is hence one of the root notions of our nature, not capable of being resolved into anything other, or simpler, than itself.

Those Sociological forms of the Utilitarian theory which find many able advocates at the present day, can in like manner be shown to be entirely deficient as ethical systems, inasmuch as they fail to supply an adequate account of the nature and origin of our moral conceptions and sentiments. Instead of seeking to evolve an ethical system out of the conditions and demands of society, it is maintained that these very conditions and demands of society are such as to involve, of necessity, the supposition of moral principles, and that these principles really lie at the foundation

of the social fabric, and do not grow out of the conditions of society. It is not a sufficient account of society to say that the individual possesses certain feelings, desires, and sympathies, and that, from the operation of these in the relations of society, there by degrees grows up the idea of moral distinctions, and that thus their origin is fully accounted for. On the contrary, it is held that unless we presuppose ethical principles pertaining to the individual, no philosophical basis is provided for society. Though there is much that is true and valuable in recent sociological writings, and many things said, pertaining to society, that we can freely accept; yet it is distinctly maintained that, unless the principles of morality are presupposed, the fundamental basis of society is wanting. It seems clearly impossible that the notion of Right can ever be generated merely from the social instincts of humanity; and the opinion is affirmed that the principles of morality lie at the foundation of society, and are necessary to its proper and permanent existence, instead of being derived therefrom. This point, it is believed, is of vast significance at the present day, in the light of many modern Socialistic Theories which are loudly paraded as the cure for many

existing evils. Our space will not admit of such expansion and illustration of these important views as they deserve, and we leave them with the remark that they either ignore morality altogether, or admit it in such a way as to leave the social fabric without any proper ethical basis.

The true view thus emerges. So far as the answer to the question of the nature and origin of moral distinctions is concerned, we find that we are thrown on some form of the Intuitional Theory, which discovers in the very constitution of our nature the notions of right, wrong, obligation, &c., with their accompanying sentiments, and which maintains that these notions are neither derived from, nor can be resolved into, any simpler idea. The Intuitional Theory of Knowledge, already accepted and established, lays a solid rational foundation for this position. There is an objective moral order in the Universe, with its fixed laws and principles existing under and flowing from God, as the supreme Moral Governor as well as the Creator. As a very important factor in the universe, and placed under this moral order, we find man. Qualifying man for his place and functions therein, we find a moral nature belonging to his constitution. In this nature,

properly understood and analyzed, we find the notions of right and wrong, &c., as the simple and original deliverances of his moral nature, and these are the intuitive principles which lie at the foundation of a proper ethical system for man. Just as there are fundamental notions or intuitive principles in the intellectual sphere, so there are similar notions or principles in the moral. Concerning these we do not now assert anything further than that they have an existence, and that they lie at the very foundation of Moral Philosophy, on the one hand, and the rectitude of conduct and the constitution of society, on the other.

But a few sentences need be added in regard to the mental process by means of which the knowledge of moral principles is attained. How do we come by our ethical notions? Even supposing there be eternal and immutable principles of morality, which have distinct objective existence in connection with the moral order of the Universe, how do we acquire our knowledge of them? What is the mental process? What has already been said in this chapter paves the way for a correct answer to this question, and we believe fully justifies the conclusion that this process cannot be an *a-posteriori* or empirical one. The process

must clearly be intuitive, and in no sense a generalization from any kind of experience. It is necessary to this experience, and cannot be an induction from that experience in which it exists as a constitutive element. The notion of Right lies as it were in our moral nature, and, by the spontaneous activity of that nature, is contributed to that experience which possesses ethical attributes It is not necessary to discuss the question as to whether consciousness testifies to the existence of this intuitive process, but if any Utilitarian should deny the existence of these intuitive moral principles, or the reality of the *a-priori* process here, we would simply remind him as an Empiricist that consciousness does not testify that man has a brain, though he freely admits its existence.

When speaking of the process by which our knowledge of moral distinctions is acquired it is proper to remark that, in regard to many particular forms of duty the understanding will be called into exercise, and many related circumstances will call for consideration; yet so far as the knowledge of right and wrong in relation to our conduct is concerned, this distinction is presupposed in its application to particular duties, and is the intuitive deliver-

ance of our moral nature, which gives us thus the knowledge of moral distinctions as necessary to our ethical experience.

On this point there has often been a good deal of confusion in ethical writings, but it is hoped that this very brief paragraph may indicate, with some degree of clearness, the true doctrine. The process by which we obtain our knowledge of moral conceptions is distinctly *intuitive*; that which is directly known is the distinction between right and wrong. As Flint well says, "Morality is the direct object of conscience." To decide what particular actions are right or wrong in any given circumstances, an exercise of the understanding may be required, and an induction from experience may be needed; but neither this mental exercise, nor this induction gives us the knowledge of the fundamental distinction between right and wrong, which the morality of particular actions involves. The principles of morality are given to us intuitively, not gathered by us empirically. The application of these principles to various cases remains to be made in a properly regulated ethical experience, but this experience is not possible save under the condition that the fundamental intuitive notion of the distinction

between right and wrong is contributed to it by the spontaneous activity of the mind. As these questions will come up for some further consideration in a following chapter, we need not dwell longer on them now. The views announced in this chapter, on what is usually known as the Theory of Moral Sentiments are believed to be of primary importance, and no valid Moral Philosophy is possible, it would also appear, on the principles of the Utilitarian Theory and the explanations they give of the topics treated in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONSCIENCE.

This chapter leads us to examine the explanation Utilitarians generally give of Conscience or the moral faculty. The remarks made in the previous chapter concerning the nature and origin of our moral conceptions will aid us in the criticism now to be made. The question now is, whether Conscience is an original faculty or not? Utilitarians assert that it is not, and profess to show how it is developed. If, however, the conclusions of the previous chapter are sound, then the notions of right and wrong being simple and ultimate, we are justified in maintaining that Conscience is an original faculty of our nature. The examination now to be made relates chiefly to two points. The first is the validity of the denial that Conscience is an original faculty; and the second relates to the correctness of the explanation Utilitarians give of the facts denoted by the word Conscience.

In regard to the first of these points, the conclusion of the previous chapter, that our ethical conceptions are simple and ultimate, requires us to hold that the faculty from which these conceptions spring is an original part of our nature, of which no other explanation can be given than that it is the source of certain simple and ultimate conceptions which are generically different from any others we possess. When we thus call Conscience an original faculty, we simply mean that it is a fundamental part of man, of whose exercise and determinations we can give no other account than that they are the necessary products of his very nature. Just as we call the faculty of perception, or of memory, an original faculty, because the fact that we perceive or remember is such that it cannot be explained through any simpler or more fundamental psychological fact; so, in like manner, we term Conscience an original faculty, because it cannot be reduced to any more fundamental fact, and its deliverances are peculiar to itself, and incapable of further analysis. As an original faculty, Conscience is known by various names among Moralists. The Moral Sense of Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Butler, the Practical Reason of Kant and

Fichte, as well as *Conscience*, all denote substantially the same thing, and all imply that the faculty thus named cannot be reduced to any more elementary part of our nature, and is, therefore, original or ultimate.

With this brief statement we pass on to discover, if we can, whether the Utilitarian explanations of the origin of Conscience are sufficient to account for the facts. It is denied that these explanations are adequate to account for all the facts which, it is admitted, call for explanation in an ethical theory; and the great variety of explanations given, as well as the evident want of agreement amongst Utilitarian writers on this point, goes far to shake confidence in their fundamental position, which involves the denial of Conscience as an original faculty.

If Conscience be a development the first difficulty is to give a philosophical account of the way in which its development begins, if there be no original basis for it in our constitution. It is admitted freely that Conscience can be educated, but it is denied that any educational process, or development experience, can originate Conscience in the first instance. It must exist before it can be educated, it must be presupposed before its development can begin.

Then another difficulty attends this view. How is it possible, along the line of development, to find a sufficient basis for the peculiar authority which, as a matter of fact, Conscience is admitted to possess? The fact of its absolute authority is admitted by Utilitarians, and they are bound to provide a satisfactory explanation of that fact. If their principles do not furnish such explanation, and if their theory does not provide a solid basis for the fact of the *de-jure* authority of Conscience, then their system stands condemned as insufficient. It is admitted that Association and external circumstances, especially the education and training of early life, may do a great deal to influence the operation of the moral faculty, and to give direction to its activity in relation to our personal conduct; but it is denied that education, training, or external circumstances of any kind, can ever generate in our moral nature the sense of the binding authority of Conscience, of which we are so distinctly conscious. Hence the notion of development under its most general aspect is not sufficient to account for the origin of Conscience, nor to lay the foundation for its peculiar authority.

Let us now look for a little at some of the attempts made by Utilitarians to show how

Conscience originates, and grows up. Mill makes it consist in a painful feeling connected with a violation of what we conceive to be duty. This feeling may be more or less intense, and in some cases may be so strong as to have prohibitory power over our conduct. It will be observed that the feeling Mill speaks of is connected with a *violation* of duty, and as such is purely negative in its character, and does not cover the positive ground over which Conscience also extends its authority. It is also a fact of experience that frequent violations of duty tend to lessen, rather than strengthen, the feeling connected with its violation. This being the case there would follow the destruction rather than the development of Conscience. And a third remark is still more fatal to the theory. This feeling of a painful character is connected with a violation of duty. Duty involves the notion of right, which notion again, flows, as we have seen, from Conscience. Hence, the existence of Conscience is assumed in the exposition Mill gives. The feeling which he takes as its source, and, indeed, makes its very essence, can have no ethical significance save as connected with those very notions which belong to Conscience, and spring from it as an original faculty.

Alexander Bain and others regard Conscience as a development, under the discipline of some form of external authority. All such theories do not afford an explanation deep enough to reach the depths of the problem of Conscience. External authority involves law; law presupposes right; Conscience gives this conception. Hence, the external authority from which Conscience is said by some Utilitarians to be developed, takes for granted the very thing to be explained, viz:—The existence of Conscience, which is hence to be regarded as an original faculty. It is admitted that external authority, paternal or civil, may exert a considerable influence over Conscience either for good or for evil; but it is held that it cannot produce Conscience, or account for its supremacy. It is also maintained that unless there be some such order and uniformity in the conditions of external authority, as can only spring from the original and immutable conceptions of right and wrong, and the eternal distinction between them, our experience under such external authority must be confused, chaotic, and purposeless. It is only on the supposition of an original faculty, giving us these immutable conceptions, that external authority can possess any moral

significance, or that a discipline, ethical in its nature, can be exercised.

In asserting and defending the doctrine that Conscience is an original faculty, there is a difficulty which Utilitarians parade as a fatal objection to the Intuitive doctrine. The objection may be stated thus: If Conscience be an original faculty, and its deliverances ultimate, we would expect to find uniformity in men's moral judgments. As a matter of fact, they say, there is great diversity; one man judging one thing right, another declaring it wrong; one nation and one age approving certain courses of action, another condemning the same. The conclusion is then drawn that Conscience cannot be an original faculty. The fact of diversity is admitted, though it is held that Utilitarians give too great prominence to this diversity. It is maintained, however, that the nature and extent of the different judgments men pass on the same courses of action does not invalidate the doctrine that Conscience is an original or intuitive faculty. Let us look somewhat carefully at this point.

It is to be borne in mind that, though men may differ in regard to what is right and what is wrong, they all agree in regard to the reality of moral distinctions. It is always implied

that there is a right and a wrong, even though there may be diversity in the application of this distinction to particular cases, but the fact that the distinction involves moral conceptions is sufficient to justify the position of the Intuitionalist in regard to Conscience, which gives us the conception of right. As already hinted, an exercise of the understanding may be required in determining what is right or wrong in particular cases.

This general view will justify us in removing from the discussion all those so-called diversities of moral judgments, which result from the different ways in which different men may regard a complicated and many-sided case. To illustrate, take the conduct of the son, spoken of by Paley, who betrayed his father to death. Was the son right or wrong? In reply, we say that Conscience cannot really pronounce on the case in this form. As we have seen in other connections, the understanding must come in to decide in what aspect the case is to be viewed. The understanding may regard the act of the son as one of patriotism, and it may present it in this light to Conscience for decision as to its moral quality. But in doing so the understanding may be wrong. It may be wrong in representing it as an act of patriotism

at all, and more particularly it may be wrong in looking at it in that light alone. Now with such errors of the understanding, which go far to produce the diversity of moral judgments seen amongst men, Conscience has nothing whatever to do. Conscience can only deal with the act as brought before it, and in so far as the different decisions which the Consciences of different men pronounce on a complicated case, arise from the different aspects in which that case is set before them, Conscience is in no respect at fault, but the understanding has erred in its judgment.

We are also justified in leaving out of the problem those moral judgments closely allied with the foregoing, which arise from the different conclusions which the understanding may come to, as to the best way of reaching a particular end. Suppose we have a simple case, such as that of the Hindoo mother casting her child into the Ganges. The end she has in view is to please her god, and this she thinks is the proper way to do it. Conscience does not tell us how best to secure the end. Here again the understanding must inform us what is the proper means to secure the end in view, and when the understanding brings its judgment before Conscience, the latter gives a ver-

dict as to its moral significance. Here, again, with errors of the understanding Conscience has nothing to do, and so diversities of moral judgments, in cases of this nature, are not to be charged against Conscience, and hence do not affect the conclusion that it is an original faculty.

It would appear, therefore, that the supposed diversities of moral judgments among men do not belong so much to Conscience as to the Understanding. As an Intuitive faculty its province is not to judge in the proper sense of the term, but to give us the distinction between right and wrong, to put us directly in possession of the notion of right, and command us, with inherent and absolute authority, to do the right and avoid the wrong. The chief source of diversity lies with the Understanding as the judging faculty; and, even when we speak of the education of Conscience, we have to bear in mind that probably the chief part of that so-called education belongs rather to the Understanding than to Conscience properly so-called. When we speak, as we have done, of the education of Conscience, and admit that, in a certain sense, it is capable of education we speak in a somewhat general way, and take into account the relation between Conscience

and Understanding in the matter of our moral judgments. The Understanding, as the judging faculty, may be enlightened; and Conscience, as the moral faculty, may be strengthened as the educating process goes on. The former will discern more and more clearly the truth, in regard to the things with which it has to deal, and then Conscience will command more and more imperatively that the right ought to be done.

In regard to these diversities, further, it may be remarked that we must also be prepared to make allowance for the disorder of our moral nature in its various aspects, and relations. This disorder admittedly exists, and making proper allowance for it in our system may do something to remove such supposed diversities as are not accounted for by the views already presented. That a faculty is disordered, or capable of suffering disorder, is not proof that it is not an original part of our nature. On the contrary the very fact that a faculty is capable of disorder is rather a presumption, and a strong one too, that such faculty is an original partof that nature which suffers from, and is the seat of, this moral disorder.

We therefore conclude that the Utilitarian

explanation of Conscience is entirely insufficient; and that no proper theory of its origin, growth, and authority, can be presented on the the principles of that system. We adopt the Intuitive Theory in its general outlines, as affording us the true and adequate explanation of Conscience, finding it not so much a judging faculty, as the faculty by which we have the notion of right with all that notion involves. It is held to be an original faculty; and neither the moral disorder of our nature, nor the diversity of moral judgments found among men, invalidates this conclusion. Conscience may, hence, be defined as an original faculty, or an intuitive element in man's nature, by means of which he has the notion of Right given him, and is enabled to apprehend moral distinctions and acquire ethical conceptions; and by which he is impelled to, or restrained from, certain actions, according as they are right or wrong; and by which, also, he becomes the subject of certain peculiar emotions of approval or disapproval, according as he does, or fails to do, the right. Into further details we need not now enter, and it is the less necessary to do so as some of these points will come up again, when

we examine the question of moral obligation connected with the peculiar authority which Conscience is felt to possess.

CHAPTER V.

THE ETHICAL STANDARD.

In our analysis and criticism we reach what in some respects is the most prominent point in the Utilitarian system, and have to examine the view taken as to what constitutes the Ethical Standard or Rule of Right. Without entering into detailed consideration of the various views held even by Utilitarians themselves, we shall chiefly enquire into the validity of General Utility as the rule of right or criterion of virtue. We shall also take substantially the description of General Utility given by Utilitarians themselves, though even that is open to criticism, and the chief enquiry will be, whether there is good ground to justify the claim that the principle of Utility is sufficient in itself to serve the purpose of an Ethical Standard which has a sound philosophical basis, and which is convenient for practical purposes in the conduct of life, so

that by means of it the moral quality of actions may be discovered, and our ethical conduct rightly directed.

Before taking up those views which specially regard General Utility as the Ethical Standard, we may make brief reference to those ethical systems which are usually classed under Utilitarianism, but which take Law in some form to be the Standard of right. There is a sense, as we shall see further on, in which the Divine Law especially may be regarded as the moral Standard. Even in this case, however, we have carefully to observe that the notion of right is presupposed, and thus the question of the *origin* of moral conceptions, and the question of the *rule of right* have ever to be kept distinct. Further remarks on this point may be reserved till we seek to unfold the true view of the Standard.

A general defect of all inductive systems of morals is that they begin with the *objective* sphere, and make the *subjective* arise from, and be dependent upon, the *objective*. As in the Divine nature we think of the notion of Right as prior to that of the Divine Law—the latter being merely the expression through the Divine Will, in the objective sphere, of the rectitude of the Divine nature—so in regard

to man's moral nature, any *objective* principle or outward fact cannot be the starting point of morals or supply the Ethical Standard. Even General Utility, were it much more definite than it is, is merely an *objective* rule, which of itself can never supply unfailing guidance to *moral* conduct. Morality does not inhere in things external, and unless the mind brings its own *subjective* moral tribute to what comes before it, then morality in relation to external things has no existence for us. Unless we begin with our moral nature, which belongs to our essential being coming from God, and in which we have a reflection of the Divine nature, we could never reach the conclusion that the useful is right; and this conclusion is absolutely necessary before our notions have any moral significance. There would be a mere intellectual judgment stating that this or that action or thing is useful, and no philosophical basis for the assertion that the useful is right, unless we already possess a standard by which to reach this conclusion. This standard cannot be Utility, for the generally useful and the morally right are entirely different things, and the Standard relates to the latter.

Then again we see that there is an assump-

tion underlying the Utilitarian doctrine here, which goes far to show that General Utility cannot be the ultimate Standard of Right. The assumption is that the *Useful is Right.* We naturally ask on what ground, and by means of what standard, is this assumption made? We evidently require the aid of another standard by means of which the rightness of Utility is determined, or else it is a pure assumption, entirely destitute of philosophical validity. This criticism will also hold good against every theory which places the standard of right in anything which itself has no proper ethical basis, whether it be mere Law, or General Utility. The question will ever recur, wherein consists the rightness of that rule or principle? The rule or principle which is thus taken to be the standard requires another standard to enable us to test its validity. This shows how futile it is to try to discover in the external sphere, in the way Utilitarians seek to do, the ethical standard, and it indicates that we cannot get an *ultimate* standard on their principles. We must begin with the internal and reason out to the external. Doing this we shall find, for example, that in the Divine Law, as the expression of the Divine Will, which rises out of the Divine nature, we have an ethical stand-

ard ; but if we leave out of account the Divine nature, with its essential rectitude, the Divine Law has no valid ground. In like manner, if we leave out of account our moral nature, or deny that such a thing is an original part of our being giving us the notion of Right, then Utility can never acquire any moral significance, and hence can never serve the purpose of the ethical standard. That a thing is useful does not in itself *make* it right, but because a thing is right it will be found useful ; and the wider the induction we make the more clearly will this appear. On the Utilitarian doctrine a wide induction may show that what we judged to be right at one time, *i. e.* useful, may turn out after all not to be right, *i. e.* not to be useful.

The insuperable and fatal objection to General Utility as a rule of duty is that it is entirely unsuitable for use if, indeed, it be not impossible of practical application. Even if we admit that it has theoretical validity, and that the general objections already urged have no real weight, yet the principle of General Utility is so indefinite in itself, and so difficult of application to particular cases, that it can never be of any practical service in estimating the moral significance of actions, or in guiding

our conduct. Something much more definite and practical is needed as ethical guide.

Even if we take the narrow and more selfish form of the Utilitarian Theory of the Standard, where *self*-interest alone is considered; and where an estimate only requires to be made of what will be for our own personal good, the difficulty of making such a generalization as the facts call for, and of arriving at such a conclusion as will afford a clear rule of duty in each case, is at once manifest. No possible calculation of the probable results of my actions, or of the effect of my conduct on my own individual interests, can ever be made with such accuracy as to provide a well defined rule of duty. The complexity of the problem is entirely beyond our powers to calculate, and that being the case, it is impossible to reach such a conclusion, by means of Utility in the sense of mere self interest, as shall supply an infallible guide in determining the morality of any action, or deciding what is duty in any particular circumstances. In any case it can only tell us what may probably be the *best thing* to do, but it can never declare authoritatively what we *ought* to do.

Then, if we take General Utility in the broader sense of General Benevolence, the

problem becomes all the more complicated. If we have regard to the principle of Utility in its broad sense of the greatest good of the greatest number, and even allow the distinction, proper enough in itself, that some pleasures are intrinsically higher than others, the problem is exceedingly complex. Even if we endeavor to make use of Bentham's calculus, or to fall back on the record of past experience of which Mill speaks, the calculation as to what is really the *useful*, and hence the *right* in a given case, will still be found far beyond our powers. If we cannot estimate with certainty the probably useful results of our actions upon ourselves, how can we hope to take into account, and reckon upon, these effects on *all* in any way affected thereby. Until, however, we make this complete induction, we have no sure ground to conclude that we have come to a correct decision as to how we ought, in any given circumstances, to act, if General Utility is taken as the guide. This point might be illustrated at great length from the individual, and from society, but this brief statement may be deemed sufficient to indicate the force of the objection to the claim of General Utility to be the rule of duty. Even if Utility have theoretical validity, as the

ethical Standard, it can have no practical value. Even if we grant that we have it in possession, it would after all be but an ethical white elephant.

From what has just been said it follows that inevitable confusion must ever attend our moral judgments on the Utilitarian Theory. Actions which at one time are thought to be for the general good, are afterwards found not to be so. Our induction has probably been incomplete, or very important factors have been left out of account; and the result is, that the action which at one time is thought to possess one moral character, is afterwards found to possess another of a very different kind, inasmuch as at one time it was thought to be for the general good, but afterwards is found out not to be so. Inextricable confusion is the inevitable result on this view.

Another question concerning the Utilitarian Theory of the Standard arises, and demands an answer from its advocates. Who is to be the Judge of the generally useful, so as to enable us to decide what is the morally right? Who is to be the authoritative Interpreter of the principle of General Utility? One man in one set of circumstances says a certain course of conduct is right, *i. e.*, useful; another in

the same circumstances, concerning the same course of conduct, gives an entirely different verdict. Who is to decide the controversy? Who is to be the Referee? Unless Utilitarianism can supply us with this important and much needed personage, it fails as a sufficient theory of the ethical standard. The only consistent form of the theory is the purely selfish one; and yet this system leaves men to live in a state of constant warfare, each individual seeking selfish ends, and each thinking of others only in so far as they may serve to further his own self-interest.

Another radical error of the Utilitarian doctrine on the point under discussion remains to be mentioned. Making Utility the Standard of Right involves the principle that the morality of an action depends upon, and is determined by, its consequences. This principle, it is believed, is one of the most pernicious that can enter the moral system. The morality of an action is not to be judged of merely by the consequences which follow it, but rather by what lies back of the action and leads to its performance. It is admitted that those actions which tend to the general good are those which are right, but it is not allowed that their moral quality is *constituted*

by their Utility, and hence Utility cannot be an absolute standard to judge them by. That which is useful is right, and that which is not useful is wrong; but a thing is not right because it is useful; it is useful because it is right. No study merely of the consequences of our actions can ever bring us to sound conclusions concerning their ethical significance, and as Utility is an inference from these consequences, it cannot be taken as the standard. Any indications that we may discover in the results of our actions, as to whether they are useful or the reverse, can only possess ethical significance on the supposition that we have in some way related to our moral nature a standard, by which our actions are to be measured, and our conduct guided.

What has thus been briefly sketched will suffice to show the inherent weakness of the Utilitarian system on this important point. It will also to some extent indicate the lines along which the true view of the Ethical Standard is to be sought. In unfolding the doctrine we accept on this point, we have to keep clearly before our minds the difference between the conception of Right and the enquiry into its nature and origin, and the Ethical Standard and the enquiry as to what it really is. The

latter enquiry takes for granted the former, and assumes that the more distinctly philosophical question of the Theory of the Moral Sentiments has been settled, and that the conceptions of right, wrong, &c., are before us, and their nature properly understood. Then, when we come to the enquiry concerning the Standard, we are led to seek some rule or law, by the employment of which we may be able to decide the particular actions which are right or wrong as the case may be, and by the use of which we may be able to have our conduct, in an orderly intelligent way, guided in accordance with the conceptions of right and wrong, which come to us as the primitive deliverances of the original faculty usually termed Conscience.

In reaching the true doctrine here, it is well to take a wide view of the Moral Order of the Universe. We have hinted that there is such a moral order just as there is a well defined natural order in the system of existing things. Each part of the great whole has its own nature, place, and functions in the system. This great moral system of the Universe embraces all intelligent beings possessing a moral nature, and placed in ethical relations. At the head of this vast moral Commonwealth

stands the Divine Being; the perfect rectitude of his nature is the foundation of morals for the whole system; and in the last analysis morality, whether for men or angels, will be found centering there. The Divine Will expressed in whatever way it may be made known is the Divine Law, and this Law is the ultimate standard of right, perfect in its nature, and of universal application. Man, as a factor in the system of the Universe in which moral order prevails, and over which the Divine Law rules, is endowed with a moral nature, as has already been clearly shown. This moral nature is not entirely independent and self-contained, so that it does not in itself contain the full explanation of all its facts. For the final explanation of many of its facts, especially that of the peculiar authority of Conscience, which gives us the sense of obligation which we are conscious of, we have to go beyond our own moral nature and rest again in the Divine Being. This being the case, we are justified in concluding that our moral nature is the reflection or counterpart of the Divine nature in its moral aspects; and hence, between the Divine Law, as the expression through the Divine Will of the rectitude of the Divine nature, and our moral nature and its deliverances when it is

rightly attuned, there will be harmony. This will give us a two-fold view of the standard; first as the Divine Law, and second as a rule proceeding from our moral nature. Thus we may find the standard in the form of Law, as for example in the Decalogue, which is an expression of the Will of God in harmony with his perfect nature, and in keeping with the standard of the absolute rectitude of that nature. So amongst men we may find it in civil enactments or in the maxims of society; but neither the Moral Law, nor the Civil Code, nor anything external, can have meaning as a moral standard, save as it is the expression or reflection of a subjective moral principle, stamped on our nature as an original part of it, and founded finally in the rectitude of the Divine nature. The ultimate ethical standard then is the Divine Law, in whatever way made known to us. This is our clear and unmistakeable rule of duty. Even if we have not the Divine Law as made known in the Decalogue, we find it written on our moral nature, and speaking to us with authority. Hence, for us the rule is primarily objective in the Divine Law, and this is the only immutable and infallible standard to test the rightness or wrongness of

particular actions and mental states. Any subjective principle pertaining to our nature, and capable of being formulated in some external law has significance, and can have binding authority, only in so far as it reflects correctly the Divine Law, under which we are placed in the moral order of the Universe. Moral Law rules throughout this realm, and our duty is only properly attended to when we conform to this moral Law. This moral Law is the Divine voice speaking to us; our moral nature is the ear by which we hear that voice, so as to obtain guidance for the proper exercise of our powers.

In order to use this standard whether conceived of as external Law from God, or as made known to us through our moral nature, the understanding will come into exercise in making application of this standard to particular actions. Conscience gives the notion of Right, and asserts categorically that the Right ought to be done. But when we ask what particular actions are right and what wrong, we then need, on the one hand, an ethical standard, and on the other, the use of the understanding. The understanding views the actions in question, and judges whether they possess, when compared with the ethical standard, those

features which entitle them to be called right or not. Then when this judgment is passed, Conscience, which has already supplied the fundamental notion of Right, says this, which is right, ought to be done. Then if I do it approval will follow, if not disapproval is felt.

We are satisfied that any theory of the standard which does not regard the Divine Law as the ultimate rule of duty, must necessarily be defective in theory and unsatisfactory in practice. Nor let it be thought that in asserting the validity of the Divine Law in this connection, we are leaving true philosophical ground, and answering a question in moral philosophy by theological facts and by the dogmatic method. In the first place, the sphere of sound morality and the sphere of true religion will in the end be found to coincide; and in the second place, the more fully our conduct is conformed to the Divine Law the more harmonious will the operation of all our powers be, and the more satisfactory will our conduct be found to the dictates of our moral nature itself. The system is but one. It is a mistake, we believe, to separate as widely as some do the questions of morals and religion, of Conscience and the Bible. Their field is the same. The one gives light where it is needed, and

supplies the full answer to problems which the other can only partially solve; and so in close relation, though with distinct treatment, we would be inclined to bind moral philosophy and religion, and take the position most decidedly, that Moral Science can only be properly treated from the Theistic standpoint.

In closing this chapter it may be proper to add, in regard to General Utility as the ethical Standard, that as a matter of fact any course of action which advances the general good will be found to be right, and should be followed; and any action which is not for the general weal is wrong, and should not be done. We may even say that it is right to seek the general good, and that it is our duty to do it. In saying this, the reader may think we are falling back on Utilitarian ground. But not so. That any course of action tends to the general good is merely an indication that it is in all probability right; but it is neither the source of its moral quality, nor the real test of its ethical significance. And further, when we say that it is right to seek the general good the question remains, why is this right? We answer that the right is useful because it is *right*, and not that the useful is right because it is *useful*. This clearly involves

a standard lying back of Utility, and in relation to which Utility may be a kind of finger post. Turn the matter over as we may, we will ever find that we are without an immutable and infallible rule till we rest in the Divine Law as the ultimate standard of right. It appears that because Utility has the function we have just indicated, it finds such a very prominent place in the writings of Utilitarians, who treat the whole subject from the standpoint of ethical Empiricism. The objection to our doctrine here, that if we make the Divine Law the ultimate rule, we leave all those who have no clear knowledge of the ethical standard without a rule, has no real weight. In the first place, the fact that some men have no knowledge such as the Bible gives of the true and final standard of duty, is only an acknowledgment of their sad condition, and an explanation of the low state of morals among them, as well as a reason why this knowledge should be given them as soon as possible. In the second place, God's Law is written or reflected in man's moral nature, and men are responsible for the use they make of the knowledge thus given them, so that they are not entirely without a knowledge of the Divine Law. The more closely a man follows the light of

Reason, and the more carefully he obeys the dictates of Conscience, the more will his conduct conform to the requirements of the Divine Law; and even though Reason and Conscience in man, with the disorder of his moral nature resting on him, may be unable to direct his conduct aright, yet they point to, and afford evidence of, the true and only perfect guide of human conduct, the Divine Law, natural or revealed.

CHAPTER VI

MORAL OBLIGATION.

We now reach another of the deep problems of Ethics, and have to enquire in particular, if the explanations given by Utilitarians of the fact of Moral Obligation, or of the absolutely binding authority of Conscience, will stand examination. Unless their system provides a proper place for the fact of Obligation, and supplies an intelligible explanation of its peculiar binding nature, then the system fails. It will be found that on this point Utilitarianism meets with one of its most searching tests. If the tendency to produce happiness, if general Utility in any form, determines the rightness of an action, how can we get beyond the sphere of the agreeable or useful, for our explanation of the *imperative*, as distinguished from the *optional*? "How are we to pass from the desirable which is optional, to the dutiful which is obligatory?"

The fact that some writers, such as Bentham and many Positivists, deny the fact of Obligation altogether, and the fact that upholders of the Utilitarian system differ greatly in their mode of expounding the fact of Obligation, goes far to cast a measure of doubt upon their doctrines, and to suggest the question whether adequate provision can be made in that system for the fact of moral obligation.

After what has already been said in the chapters on "Conscience" and "The Ethical Standard," it is not at all necessary to enter into lengthened analysis and criticism of the subject of this chapter, as much that has already been brought out has gone to show, that no valid ground for moral obligation and the binding authority of Conscience, is provided on the ground principles of Utilitarianism We need now only add a paragraph or two respecting the two main forms in which Utilitarians present the ground of Obligation in their ethical system. The one of these finds the source of obligation in *personal feeling*, the other in mere *external authority*. Let us examine each a little.

Of the first view Mill may be taken as the representative. On his view the general good is the standard of right; and unless he can

answer the question, why am I obliged to promote the general good, his theory fails. If the source of obligation be personal feeling, then the degree of that feeling will be the measure of obligation, and if the feeling be wanting, as in the case of a very hardened man, then the obligation has no existence for him. The measure of obligation is not in the degree of our *feeling*, but in the binding authority of the deliverances of the moral faculty.

Another mistake Mill makes is to confound *obligation* with *obedience*. Some of the best things Mill has written on moral philosophy are found in this connection; but while they are excellent as connected with obedience, they are quite irrelevant so far as a true doctrine of obligation is concerned. The difficulty of obedience is one thing, and the ground of obligation is another. His remarks are admirable in regard to the former, but provide no ground for the latter.

Mill is also at fault in regard to the *nature* of the feeling of which he speaks, when he says, "it is substantially the same in all systems, viz. :—a feeling of the mind." The mental feeling he speaks of is merely a negative thing, and is a pain connected with disobedience; and the keener this pain is, the more

definite is the development of Conscience. The true feeling connected with obligation is one of approbation or disapprobation; and this feeling, instead of constituting the source of obligation, involves the assumption of obligation, as already existing. Did obligation not thus exist as a fact, the feeling could never be generated. The feeling flows from the fact of obligation, and cannot possibly be its source or ground.

The other leading form of the Utilitarian theory of Obligation connects that fact with mere external authority. Of this view Bain is a leading representative. When we speak of external authority in this connection we do not take into account the Law of God, but simply civil, parental, or social restraints, and these by some Utilitarians are made, alike the source of our ethical conceptions, and the ground of moral obligation. This external authority is the ultimate fact, and it is not admitted that there is a deeper notion, that of Right, which is really the source of obligation. The main criticism we offer here is that external authority, whether it be civil, parental, or social, only receives validity on the supposition of moral obligation as already resting upon us. Mere external law in itself has no necessary

ethical significance. It must rest on a moral ground of some kind, in order to give it uniformity of operation and binding authority. The magistrate, the parent, society, has no right to compel obedience where no moral basis for the command exists; and it is maintained that there can be no moral discipline under mere blind authority. Under such training or experience, Conscience with its deliverances would be destroyed rather than developed. The discipline and restraints of external authority must presuppose the notion of *oughtness* as well as that of *rightness.*

Again, if mere external authority be the ground upon which I *ought* to do any particular thing, it follows, since that authority implies a person or body politic, that the mere arbitrary will of the sovereign, of the parent, or of society must constitute the rule of right, and provide the source of obligation. This conclusion contains its own refutation. Either the authority is entirely arbitrary in its nature, or the notion of right with its binding authority is presupposed. This goes to show that wherever obligation finally rests, it cannot be in mere external authority apart from a deeper ethical foundation.

Another radical defect in this view is that

no proper ground of obligation is provided for what may be called the positive part—often the largest part—of morality, and in a certain sense the more important part. External authority provides merely for the negative part of morality, while we require a ground of obligation which will be sufficient for both the positive and negative parts. Mere external authority says, "thou shalt not," while we need a ground which will enable us to say, "thou oughtest," and so cover all the ground. In the "Categorical Imperative" of our moral nature we find this notion of *oughtness*, applicable alike to that which is *prohibitive* and to that which is *preceptive*, and here, so far as our nature is concerned, we would discover the source of moral obligation. Conscience, as an original faculty, gives us the conception of Right. This conception carries with it the authority of Law, and provides an adequate basis for moral obligation. There is thus a voice lifted up within us, which cannot be silenced even if it be ignored, and that voice declares an obligation from which we cannot escape even though we may repudiate or violate it. No form of the Utilitarian system can ever explain the *de-jure* authority which rules us, even when *de-facto* obedience is not

rendered. The *useful* can never be translated into the *obligatory*, and until this is done the theory is insufficient. The Intuitive theory alone can provide an adequate philosophy of obligation. In the Categorical Imperative of the Practical Reason, as Kant would say, or in the First Principles of Morals, as the Scottish Intuitionalists would say, we find what is needed, and what no mere Empirical or development Theory of Morals can ever provide—an explanation of the authority of Conscience, and an all-sufficient ground for Moral Obligation, alike on its negative or prohibitory side, and on its positive or preceptive side.

In completing the brief statement of this chapter it is of importance to add, in regard to the source of obligation, that in its deepest ground we will find it resting in the Divine nature. Man's moral nature, as we have seen, is dependent, and does not contain in itself the final explanation of all its facts. Man is but a factor in the vast Moral Commonwealth of God, and it is only when we go out and up to the Divine Being that we fully understand the deepest problems of man's moral nature and conduct, as well as his various experiences which are ethical in their nature. The final answer to the question, what is the ultimate

source of moral obligation for man, is to be found in the nature and rectitude of the Divine Being, under whose Divine Law as an expression of his Will, we are placed; and of this Divine Law we have the echo in our moral nature, which voices the Will and Law of God, and which, as an expression of the perfect rectitude of the Divine Nature, supplies us, in the last analysis, with an adequate ground of moral obligation. It is quite true to say that Conscience is the source of obligation, and has paramount authority. Still the language is popular rather than philosophically accurate, if we have reference to the ultimate source of Conscience itself, and the final ground of moral obligation. This latter rests in the nature of the Divine Being.

CHAPTER VII.

DISINTERESTED AFFECTIONS AND BENEVOLENT ACTIONS.

Our endeavor in this chapter will be to look as carefully as possible into the account Utilitarians give of disinterested affections and benevolent actions. Is their view in regard to the origin and growth of these affections, and of the way in which men come to perform unselfish actions the correct one? Is their philosophy of Benevolence valid? Does their system provide such a philosophy?

In the exposition of their views given in the first part of this treatise, we found that Utilitarians were chiefly engaged in giving, along sociological lines, the natural history rather than the philosophy of the affections and actions now under review. Whilst most earlier, and some later Moralists deny the reality of the existence of such actions, yet most modern Utilitarians admit their exist-

ence. Even Paley, whose system is often called one of Expediency, though this description is scarcely correct, admits the existence of benevolent affections. Mill makes their existence a very prominent part of his system, and endeavors to build up therefrom his theory of general benevolence. Utilitarians deny that they are original, however.

The first obvious difficulty which meets the Utilitarian theory here is the evident inconsistency between its theory of life, and its doctrine of general benevolence, and the weakness of its attempts to harmonize these two parts of the system. If we start out with the Utilitarian theory of life, how can we reach a sound philosophy of benevolence? If happiness, in any form, be the end of human life, if self-interest be the sole motive to action, it must be the happiness or interest of that particular life of which it is the end. So soon as we make the interest of others for its own sake, an end of individual life, we leave the basis of Utilitarian principles, by deserting their fundamental position in the theory of life. The theory which lays its foundation on the principle of personal happiness, or self-interest in any way considered, cannot but be illogical when it attempts to set up a theory of uni-

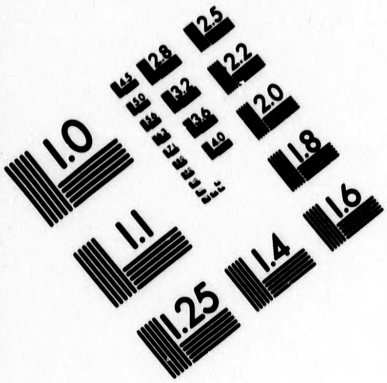
versal benevolence. All that can be logically concluded is, that a man may do what is for the good of his neighbor, only that his own interests may be advanced thereby. This, however, is not benevolence. Here *selfishness* not *disinterestedness* is seen. The only consistent form of the theory is that of Hobbes and others, who virtually deny that there are any disinterested affections or dispositions in our nature. This, however, is to confess that Utilitarianism has no place for a theory of benevolent dispositions and actions. The devotion of the mother, the patriotism of the soldier, the heroism of the martyr, and the self-sacrifice of the philanthropist, remain unexplained on this theory.

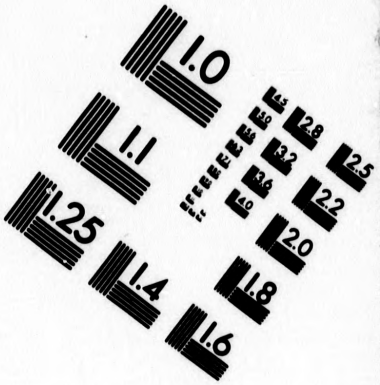
The above criticism is almost all that is needed to show the radical defect of the Utilitarian doctrine here. We can, however, carry the war into Africa and show that the accounts given by Mill, Bain, and Spencer, &c., are not sufficient to provide anything like a basis for a philosophy of benevolence. The desire for sympathetic unity which is a natural instinct in men, and the operation of habit and association thereon, may do much to give direction to our actions, and complexion to our sentiments; yet it is contended that these actions,

dispositions, and sentiments, could never be *produced* by these means. Hutcheson and Butler are undoubtedly right in the view they take of our nature, that it possesses as an original part of its furnishings, dispositions, desires, and sentiments, which are disinterested and which look to the good of others as their natural and proper end. There are then, benevolent dispositions in us, and in this fact the possibility of benevolence lies. We may indeed stand related to others as Utilitarians say, and there is no doubt much that is sound in what they state regarding the effect of habit, &c., on human life in the individual, and in society as well, but we yet seek the good of others for its own sake. If asked why we should do so, we can only answer that *it is right to do so.* We are thus brought back again to the fundamental position of the Intuitional theory. The conception of right is a simple and ultimate deliverance of the moral faculty, which is an original part of our nature. It is right to seek the good of our neighbors, and what is right we ought to do, and when we do right we experience moral approbation, and when we fail we have an experience of an opposite nature. Unless we begin with ethical elements, no development by means of

habit or anything else in the individual, can ever justify the application of ethical predicates. The notion of right lies at the basis of our disinterested affections and benevolent actions, and affords their true philosophy. They exist as an original element in our being, and are closely related to our moral nature, receiving alike their moral character and their law of operation or exercise therefrom. Without the moral element in them at the outset, no experience of the individual nor influence of society could call that element into existence. That element, however, being presupposed, habit and other external influences may exercise a modifying influence upon it.

A few words may be added respecting those theories which are more distinctly Sociological. Here it is contended that, if there be no *original* disinterested affections or sentiments in the individual, the proper basis for society is entirely wanting. It is not enough to say that man, as he now is in society, possesses these sentiments, and to maintain that these sentiments arise out of the conditions of society, which conditions are themselves constituted by these sentiments. Society presupposes the principles of morality. The notion of right, in its broadest application, lies at the founda-





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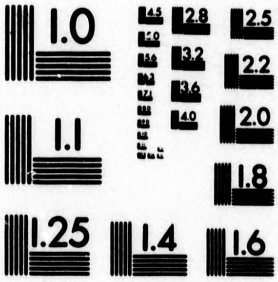

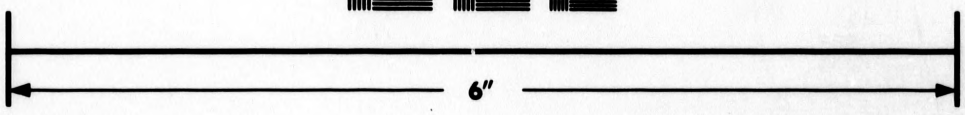

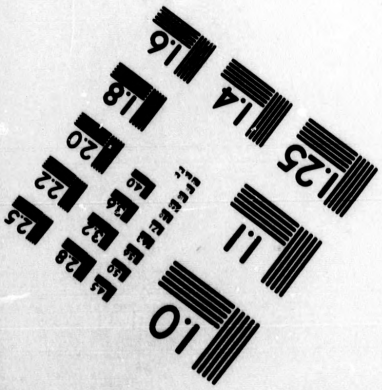

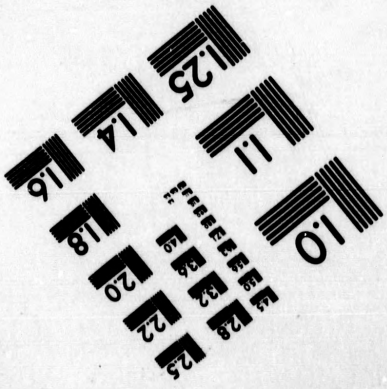

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tion, determining the duty and obligation of each individual in all his relations. The principles of morality proclaim that it is right to act for the welfare of society, and hence benevolence is commanded as right and obligatory. In this fact we again are brought back to the fundamental position of the Intuitive theory of morals, and therein find, at once the ethical basis of society, and the true philosophy of Benevolence.

Lest it should be thought that we are returning to Utilitarian principles when we say that it is right to act for the welfare of others, or for the good of society as a whole, it may be well to remark that the Utilitarian position derives the notion of right from that of Utility. The generally useful is right, and right because useful. The Intuitive doctrine is that it is the right which constitutes and determines the useful, and without the notion of right all would be arbitrary and confused. So in its sociological applications this principle declares that what is for the good of society is right, that is, it is for the good of society because right, not right because for the good of society. The ethical in the order of nature must ever precede and lay the foundation for the generally useful, both in regard to the

individual and society. Sociology, to become a science, must take for granted moral principles; even Utility must rest on an ethical ground before it can have a place in Morals.

The Utilitarian system breaks down in dealing with the question of benevolent feelings and actions. Its denial of benevolent dispositions as an original element in our nature is not valid; its account of the origin and growth of benevolent affections and actions is entirely insufficient; and its theory provides no proper moral basis for society. The Intuitional theory provides an ample explanation, which is both in keeping with the facts of man's nature, and consonant with his sociological conditions.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOTIVE AND ACTION.

We have now to investigate the Utilitarian doctrine of Motive on the one hand, and Action on the other. A very special part of the discussion will concern the peculiar view of some leading advocates of the system respecting the relation between motive and action. The Utilitarian doctrine of motive is simple and clear; its conception of moral action seems confused and indefinite; and its theory as to the relation between motive and action is boldly stated, and not easily misunderstood. We have thus three topics to deal with in this chapter.

The first is the Utilitarian idea of Motive. Are there many motives, or but one general one, which assumes a variety of forms? Recalling the Utilitarian theory of life, we get the answer that there is but one motive to human action, and that is the *love of pleasure,*

in some form or other. Hence, if asked what motive is, we must answer that it is some pleasure, happiness, or selfish end, which, being in the mind's view, leads to action. This theory denies that there is a variety of motives or ends which lead to action. As happiness or self-interest is the sole end of human life, so the desire to secure this is the only motive by which men can be actuated in life. No further exposition is needed.

Now, we deny that the love of pleasure, or the desire of self-interest, is the only end which prompts men to action. As already shown in a former chapter, there are many different desires in our nature, and these prompt us to seek the attainment of their respective ends. The desire of knowledge is one motive, the love of fame another, andthe good of society a third. These are generically different in their nature. They cannot be resolved into each other, much less can they all be resolved into the love, or desire, of pleasure in any of its forms.

It being admitted that there are various motives which influence us to act, and that the desire of pleasure is only one amongst others, and by no means the highest one, we have next to define as clearly as possible what is to be

understood by Motive, for this is one of the points in which there is often want of clearness in writers on moral philosophy. The word *motive* and the word *end* are often used to denote the same thing, though the former popularly denotes that which lies at the source of an action, and the latter expresses the object towards which it is directed. Motive and end are really the same thing under different points of view. A motive is constituted by an end which, being in the mind's view, prompts to voluntary action towards its attainment. A desirable end is a motive to action. Such desirable ends are numerous and of great variety, and this fact overthrows the Utilitarian theory here entirely.

The word *desirable*, when we say that a motive is a desirable end, is to be carefully considered. It is not to be confounded with *pleasurable*, as some Utilitarians very ingeniously maintain. An end may be really desirable, even when it gives no pleasure, or when the thought of possible pleasure is entirely wanting. The morally desirable is one thing, the merely pleasurable is another ; and we object to Utilitarians building up their theory by playing upon the supposed ambiguity of words. In themselves, some ends are intrinsically

higher and more desirable than others, and to some natures one kind of end will have stronger motive power than another. But this does not really affect the theory. A desirable end, or where there are conflicting ends, the more desirable end, is a motive to action. A desirable end thus being a motive to action, enters into the very conception of voluntary action; that is, it is performed from motive, and voluntary action is what we have to deal with in all this discussion. The desire of pleasure is not the only motive, for it does not enter into every voluntary action. We voluntarily direct our attention to other ends than our own happiness. We seek as a desirable end the good of others, and that in many different forms.

We next endeavor to present as clear an idea as possible of what is to be understood by Action in the ethical system. Utilitarians naturally give prominence to the external action, or rather the actual result of action. Finding the moral quality of actions in their tendency to produce happiness, and testing that quality by the standard of general Utility, their attention is turned chiefly to the outward sphere; and they dwell rather on the consequences of actions rather than on the real action, or the action as a whole.

This we take to be a very imperfect conception of moral action. The actual bringing about of a certain result in the outward sphere is not the real essence of moral action at all. Its essential character is to be found in the subjective determining energy of the being whom I call myself. In this the true notion of action lies. There may be real moral action, and no definite observable result in the external sphere; and there may be this definite result, and the character of moral action may be wanting. Mere movement of a limb is not of itself moral action; and there may be no movement of the limbs, and yet moral action may be present. The inner mental determination, decision, or resolve, is the sphere of moral action. This is what gives moral quality to the result in the external world; and, if this be wanting, then moral quality could never pertain to the external. Thus a man may hate his neighbor, and resolve to kill him, but never get a good chance to bring about the result in the external world. He has performed a moral action, however, and bears the responsibility of it. Another man kills his neighbor by mere accident, and we never say that that man has performed an action with which

the quality of murder is connected. The world's greatest Teacher has said that he who hateth his brother without cause, is really guilty of murder.

The notion of action in the ethical sense belongs to the subjective sphere, and the so called external act is rather a result of the real action, than anything else. The moral quality of the action is determined, not so much by the external result, as by the internal determination. Whatever enters into that gives it its moral complexion. The nature of the internal determines the character of the external, when both exist; but the internal may have moral significance when the external is absent, while the external can have no such significance when the internal is wanting. This view of moral action, it is believed, will clear away many difficulties, and cover all the ground, as well as lay a broad solid basis for responsibility. It embraces all the feelings or emotions which we voluntarily cherish, all the envy, hatred, ambition, and lust, of the inner life is included under this notion of moral action, while all accidental events in the outer world, of which we may be but the occasion, are removed from the moral sphere. This is surely a simple way of conceiving of action.

It is voluntary mental determination directed to some end desirable in the mind's view; which determination may, or may not, be manifested in the outer world. This determination may involve the choice and use of means to gain the end, but the choice and determination in every case is subjective, and does not affect the theory involved in the definition of action just given.

The last point this chapter has to discuss is the question of the relation between motive and action. Is there any necessary relation between them? If so, what?

The Utilitarian states the relation between motive and action to be such that *the moral quality of an action is entirely independent of the motive from which it is performed.* The desire to secure pleasure and to avoid pain being the only motive by which men can be influenced, the only conclusion is: either all actions must have the same moral quality, if that moral quality depend on the motive, which is one and the same in all cases, viz.: the love of pleasure, or the moral quality of actions must be held to have no dependence on the motives from which they are done. Utilitarians, in desperation almost, choose the latter alternative; for the former would be

the destruction of moral distinctions entirely.

Their doctrine here we regard as very defective. In the first place, much they say concerning motive, and the love of pleasure and the desire to avoid pain being the only motive which can affect or influence men to action, is full of confusion. They confound our natural impulses with motive in the moral or ethical sense. The natural impulses are those impelling powers we find within us, some connected with our physical and some with our mental nature, and these may or may not have moral quality. A motive on the other hand is an end, desirable in the mind's view, consciously and voluntarily sought after. Here in every case there is moral quality, and an action is such an action because done with such a motive. When pleasure is made the sole motive of human activity, it can only mean in the majority of cases, if we read human nature rightly, that by our very constitution we are impelled to seek pleasure and avoid pain. But this does not make the love of pleasure a motive, such as a true ethical system demands. In order to this, pleasure must be regarded as an end desirable in itself, and which is consciously and voluntarily sought after. It is admitted

that pleasure may be a motive in this sense, but only one of many motives or desirable ends. The mistake which underlies much Utilitarian writing concerning the theory of life, and the theory of motive, is in confounding the mere blind instinctive natural impulse to attain pleasure and avoid pain, with motive.

But we can go further, and say that the connection between motive and action is so vital, that the ethical significance of the action is determined by the motive by which we are influenced in doing it. A motive being a desirable end in the mind's view prompting to action, and action being subjective determination put forth with a view to secure that end, it is evident that motive and action are closely bound up together. Motive, in fact, enters into the very conception of action. An action is such or such an action, in virtue of being directed to such or such an end. The moral quality of the action depends on the motive. Change the motive, and the moral character of the action is altered. The motive is the end, the action is voluntary determination to gain that end; and so, wherever action is, there motive is, to give moral significance to the action. Motive and action are mutually interdependent. The idea of motive enters into

that of action, and action is dependent on motive for its particular moral quality. This is substantially the same theory as that of those who say that the moral quality of an action inheres in the *intention* with which it is done. But intention is simply the mind directed towards some desirable end, and this is better termed motive.

According to this doctrine it is easily understood why precisely the same outward acts may have entirely different moral quality, or rather why results of moral actions apparently the same, may come to be regarded as so different in moral character. It all depends on the nature of the motive that lies back of the act, which is followed by these respective results; or on the fact whether any motive at all is present. In the latter case there is no real moral action, for motive enters into that conception; and in the former case motive determines the ethical character of the action, and estimates the moral quality of the results as well. Take the example of one man shooting his neighbor with malice aforethought, and of another shooting his neighbor by accident. The outward act in the two cases is substantially the same, so we have to examine the subjective sphere to get at the real moral

quality, or to find out whether there is moral quality pertaining to both. In the former case, we find that the end the man desired to attain was the killing of his neighbor, and this was the motive which led him to act, and which gave moral quality to his action. Now, observe in this case, that the same moral quality would adhere to the inner resolve to kill the neighbor whether he actually succeeded in killing him or no. If he missed his aim, or his gun missed fire, he is a murderer all the same. In the latter case, when the shooting was accidental, there was no motive, hence no personal action, and hence no moral quality. It is thus evident that motive and action are very closely related. Motive is an element in action, and action has no moral quality apart from motive.

It may occur to some to remark in this connection, that there are general rules, or principles of morality, by which actions can be judged as right or wrong in themselves, without any reference to the motive from which they are done; and thus after all, the moral quality of an action be independent of motive. In reply, we remark that we cannot, according to the view just stated, separate motive from action. Take away motive, and no moral action remains.

For example, it may be asked, is not justice right from whatever motive it is done? Is it not right for a man to pay his debts, even if his motive be to establish a reputation by means of which he may be able to swindle a score of men afterwards? We answer that justice and honesty are in all cases right, but mark, they cannot be performed from any other motive than a desire to do right, and to act honestly, for the motive enters into the act and makes it such an act as it is. If any other motive comes in, such as self-interest, then the moral complexion of the action is entirely changed. If, therefore, a judge gives a seemingly righteous decision, only because he does not wish to be wearied by an importunate suitor, his act does not possess the quality of justice at all, so far as he is concerned. So with the seemingly honest man. This conclusion, it will be seen, goes far to confirm the view expressed concerning action, in which it was confined to the subjective voluntary determination of the being I call myself.

The general conclusion we reach is, that the Utilitarian doctrine here is confused and erroneous. In regard to the notion of action it is confused; in regard to motive,

and the relation of motive to action, it is entirely erroneous. This last point is one of vital importance in the theory of morals, and we have dwelt on it at some length, with a view to make the position as clear as possible.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILL.

We now reach the last topic which our plan requires us to take up; and, as was evident in the statement and exposition already given, we come to one of the most difficult questions in moral philosophy. The question of the Will, though exceedingly difficult and involving many obscure psychological and metaphysical problems, must nevertheless receive some consideration in the ethical system; and no theory can lay claim to completeness unless it takes up, and endeavors to resolve, at least the ethical elements of these questions. In the brief space at our command it is manifestly impossible to attempt to do justice to a subject, upon which the treatises written would form a library of considerable size. We shall only endeavor to examine, in a general way, the main positions of Utilitarians on the topic of this chapter—the Will and Freedom—enquir-

ing particularly if the arguments they advance are valid, without venturing to announce any clearly defined theory on such abstruse points. No attempt will be made to allude to all the questions that come up here, nor even to examine all the opinions held by Utilitarians. We shall mainly follow the line taken up in the exposition of a previous chapter, and refer to but little that was not dealt with there.

It may be proper to remark at the outset that the question of the Will, and of its directing and controlling power, is much wider than at first may be supposed. It extends in some form to all our faculties, though it stands more closely related to some than others. It has relation, not simply to conduct which may be termed distinctly ethical, but it is also connected with the operations of the mind which are purely intellectual. A strong case may even be made out for the conclusion that the purest exercises of the Will are to be found in this region, and that in some respects the problem of Freedom and Necessity can be best studied there.

As has been already stated the leading supporters of Utilitarianism hold the necessitarian, or, as Mill prefers to say, determinist doctrine of the Will. Many Intuitional Moralists also

hold views on this point which are more or less necessitarian, so that this doctrine is not peculiar to Utilitarians. We shall be careful, in all our criticism of their views, not to draw the conclusion that the necessitarian position, properly understood, may not after all have much to support it. We shall simply look at the way Utilitarians state the problem, and consider with some care the soundness of the reasoning, and the force of the arguments by which they seek to support their position.

In regard to the *nature* of the Will, and its peculiar power the Utilitarian doctrine is defective. Their statements on this point are very vague, so that it is not easy to get at their precise meaning. According to them it can hardly be an originating, or even a controlling power in any proper sense; for, instead of being a *cause* or originating power, it is rather an *effect*, or a necessary result of our mental states. It cannot be even controlling power, for instead of controlling, it is virtually determined by our desires and aversions. This opinion as to the nature of the Will and its power may be seriously questioned, as in accordance with the facts neither of consciousness nor of observation. Will, or the mind as Will, possesses in its essential nature, if no

distinctly *causal*, at least directly controlling energy or power.

This remark concerning the *nature* of the Will goes to show that the view Utilitarians take of the *relation* of the Will to the other faculties is also defective. Such writers as Mill make the Will virtually dependent on our desires and aversions, in such a way that the strongest desire or aversion always determines it. In this case it is virtually deprived of that controlling power which is essential to its very nature. If we allow, as Mill does, that the education of the Will is possible through the desires and aversions, and if we can control or direct these by the exercise of the Will, then we have a modification of the determinist view which virtually destroys it. Such an educational process is possible only on the supposition that the Will is superior to, and can control the desires and aversions, and that the Will can restrain the strongest desire when intelligence says it is best to do so. This may be sound doctrine in itself, but we contend that it has no good ground of support on Utilitarian principles. If the desires and aversions rule the Will, by what possible process can the Will rule them. The true view of the *nature* of the Will is that it is at least

controlling power. The Will has thus its own peculiar function. The impulses are impelling powers, the intellect is knowing power, conscience is power to discern moral distinctions, and Will is controlling power. Much may also be said in favor of the view that the Will is *originating* power, but we content ourselves with the statement that it is at least *controlling* power, and in the meantime do not even say over what, specially, its control is exercised.

Coming now to the question of Freedom and Necessity, and taking Mill as a representative of the determinist doctrine from the Utilitarian standpoint, we have to enquire into the soundness of Mill's position, and of the arguments by which he seeks to establish his views. The question here refers to the relation between motive and volition—between that which underlies the exercise of the Will, and that exercise itself. In this connection Mill denies the fact of *freedom*, but he is not willing to accept necessitarianism pure and simple. His doctrine of determinism is, as we shall see, after all but little different from necessitarianism. The principle which underlies his doctrine on this point is that of Causation. In connection with this principle we must remember that Mill's idea of Causation

is not that of *efficient* agency or cause, but merely *physical* cause, in the sense of invariable antecedent and consequent. The invariable antecedent is the cause, and the invariable consequent is the effect. Now, Mill holds that the same laws and uniformities are found in the moral and in the natural world. Human actions are consequents connected with antecedents, and following as invariably, and in the same way, as an effect in the physical world follows its cause. Moral causation thus differs in no respect from physical causation. Invariable antecedent and consequent exist in both cases, and in regard to human actions and the motives from which they spring this fixed sequence holds good. This is determinism in the sphere of morals.

In examining the soundness of this view, it is well to distinguish between what may be called the metaphysical and psychological elements in the discussion. The doctrine of the Will belongs more to Psychology than to Metaphysics. There are certain metaphysical problems involved, but as the Will is properly a power or faculty of the mind, its treatment belongs properly to Psychology. Now, observe that even though Mill scarcely admits the possibility of such a science as Meta-

physics, yet in reasoning from physical to moral causation he is at least reasoning from a speculative to a psychological question. Our criticism of Mill's position would, therefore, be two-fold. In the first place, we think it a mistake to identify the physical and moral as Mill does. There are elements in the latter which do not belong to the former; and these elements are such as to place each in its own peculiar category, and render it impossible to identify the moral and the physical, and to place them under the same causal conditions. In the second place, it is unscientific, to say the least, to build a theory as to the freedom of the human Will, on a merely speculative doctrine in regard to the causal relation of purely physical phenomena. It may be perfectly true that this relation is what Mill says it is, and yet it may be very far from true that the relation between human actions and what leads to them is what Mill holds it to be. The connection between the one set of phenomena does not necessarily determine the connection between the other set. Invariable sequence may rule in the one, but not necessarily in the other. To assume, therefore, that the connection between moral phenomena, and between purely physical phen-

omena is the same, is to assume some of the main things to be proved. It, moreover, opens up the way for the opinion that the mental and the material exist under much the same conditions, and are ruled according to the same laws. This is throwing us on the ground of a materialism which, instead of explaining the exercise of the Will, destroys its essential nature, and renders moral philosophy impossible.

Looking a little more closely at the problem itself, we find a good deal of confusion in regard to the way in which Utilitarians conceive of *action*. Much that they say relates rather to the result of action in the external sphere, whereas action properly so called is the subjective determination. When we speak of motive and action standing in relation to each other, we take action in the sense just defined; and it begets confusion to import the more general and indefinite notion of action into the discussion, as Utilitarians so frequently do. The question then comes to be whether motives determine our volitions, or subjective determinations; or whether the mind has self-determining power, and that the mind as Will determines itself. The two doctrines then are *motive* determination and *self*-determination.

In regard to the latter we may further ask whether, though the mind as Will determines itself, it may not after all do so necessarily? May each mental state not after all necessarily determine the following one? In regard to the former doctrine, if we think of motive as a certain mental state in relation to some end desirable in the mind's view, may not this aspect of motive enter into the mental state from which the volition, *i. e.* the real action flows? In regard to motive, it is not so much something *objective* that constitutes anything *a motive.* It is rather the subjective state—the view the mind takes of the end—which makes it a motive, so that we are led to the conclusion that, however the Will is determined, it must be by something within the mind. It seems clear that the Utilitarian discussion is not only confused, but that it does not touch the real question at issue between Necessitarianism and Libertarianism, viz.:—in my actions, *i. e.* in my volitions or subjective determinations, am I free, or am I under a law of necessity? Our purpose does not require us to enter fully into the important questions which at once emerge from the criticism just offered. It is enough to have shown the inadequacy of the reasoning of Determinists

who think as Mill does; and to show that they neither state the problem properly, nor argue in a sound manner regarding it.

Reference is made by both Necessitarians and Libertarians to the facts of Consciousness, and the testimony they give concerning the question of Freedom. Here again we have to take care not to confound questions of Psychology and of Metaphysics. It is one thing to deal philosophically with the facts of consciousness; it is quite another to reason speculatively concerning the problem of freedom and necessity. Inductive interpretation of consciousness is one thing; deductive reasoning concerning the question before us is another and a different thing. Now, Mill, as we have seen, denies that consciousness can give any testimony upon the question of freedom. Consciousness can only give testimony to what *is*, not to what *may be*; and, as what only may be can never be a matter of consciousness, then the fact of freedom can never be proven by consciousness. This necessarily puts the question of freedom beyond the region of psychology altogether, and throws it upon metaphysical or speculative ground, where, even according to Mill, it can never be resolved. The only conclusion

we can draw is a kind of *agnostic* one, that we cannot decide whether freedom or necessity is the true doctrine, so far as the facts of consciousness testify.

In regard to Mill's position here, we admit that his argument holds good against those forms of the Libertarian view which make freedom consist in *liberty of choice.* If in order to freedom we must be conscious before acting or choosing that are free to act or choose in either one of different ways, then Mill's argument is not easily answered, inasmuch as what is thus conceived to be necessary to freedom does not really enter into consciousness at all. But this view of what is necessary to freedom is not the correct conception. It is enough to be conscious *when acting* that we are free. It is enough if consciousness testifies that we are not under any restraint or compulsion in our actions, *i. e.*, when we put forth subjective energy. To this extent we believe consciousness enables us to go. The fact that in acting we are conscious that we act freely, and not under compulsion, together with the fact that the mind possesses what we have termed inherent spontaneity, lays the psychological basis for a doctrine of Liberty which is sufficient for all practical

purposes, and which provides an adequate foundation for human responsibility with all its demands; and this is the matter of greatest importance so far as the ethical system is concerned.

We need add but little touching the speculative aspects of the problem of Freedom. Admitting that the mind as Will is determined by nothing beyond itself, and holding that consciousness bears testimony that when we act we are not under compulsion, and maintaining also that it is better to say that the mind, person, or ego, is free, than to say that the Will is free, the deeper question still remains as to the manner of the determination of the mind or person. May not the connection of our mental states with our mental determinations, *i. e.*, our actions, be necessary, and the one produce the other invariably. The mental state being so or so, then may not the action be necessarily so or so? Back of psychological freedom may there not be a metaphysical necessity? We hold by the former, and do not see our way clear to deny the latter.

We close this chapter with a brief allusion to another point which may throw a little light on the statement of the previous paragraph.

The nature of the man has much to do with the kind of action he may, in given circumstances, do. For example, two men have placed before them the same opportunity to steal or cheat. The one, being a good man, resists the temptation and does not steal or cheat ; but the other, being a bad man, yields to the temptation and steals or cheats as the case may be. The character of the man has much to do with the kind of action he performs ; and if it were possible to describe properly the essential character of the man, we might be able to predict how he shall act in given circumstances. And the character again is largely the result of voluntary action. One man acts along the path of right, another along the line of wrong. The character of each develops in accordance with the voluntary action, (voluntary being here used in the sense of psychological freedom), so that it would be very difficult for the two men in the same circumstances to act in the same way. In such cases it is scarcely correct to say that the two men act differently from different motives. A motive being an end desirable in the mind's view, and the character of the motive is determined by the view the mind takes of what may be before it, *i. e.* the real motive is in the

subjective sphere, as the antecedent of action. The motives of the two men above mentioned were quite different, though the external circumstances were the same. The motive, *i. e.* the desirable end prompting to action, in the one case was a desire to do right, and so he did not steal or cheat; the motive of the other was to get something, or to make the best of a bargain, and so he stole or cheated. The motive enters into the action and constitutes the action what it really is, in given circumstances. The character of the man has such close connection with his action, that it is at least a conceivable view, that the character of a man being given, and that man placed in given circumstances or having given motives acting on him, to hold that the connection between character and action is very close, if not necessary. This, it will be observed, brings us back by another road to the conclusion that the mind, as Will, is determined by nothing outside itself; and that it is in this sphere that the problem between freedom and necessity must find its solution. Though seemingly very different conceptions, it is possible that freedom and necessity are not entirely inconsistent with each

other. Freedom on psychological ground may not be inconsistent with Necessity on metaphysical ground. The former suffices for Ethics.

CONCLUSION

A brief summary of the results of our analysis and criticism, and a concluding remark or two will bring our task to a close.

The Utilitarian Theory of Morals has been passed under review. The results of statement and exposition were gathered up in the conclusion of the first part of the treatise, and these results were analyzed and criticised in the second part.

This criticism was made from the distinctly Theistic standpoint. In the last analysis the foundation of morals, and the final explanation of many of the moral facts of our nature, is to be found in the nature of the Divine Being. The distinct, though dependent personality of man, as well as the moral disorder of his nature, were also presupposed.

An examination of the Psychology presupposed, and of the Theory of Knowledge involved in the system, showed that both of

them were insufficient, and some form of the Intuitional Theory was preferred to any phase of Empiricism.

In regard to the Theory of Life, it was found that instead of the love of pleasure being the only motive by which men are prompted to action, there are many natural impulses in man, each going out to its respective end. These cannot be all reduced to the love of pleasure; and pleasure itself, instead of being the sole motive to action, is rather an accident or concomitant of the proper exercise of our powers.

As to the nature and origin of moral distinctions, the conclusion was reached that, instead of being complex and derived, they are simple and ultimate. They are the primitive deliverances of our moral nature, and we can give no other account of them, than that they are what they are in their own nature. The knowledge of them is not acquired by any empirical methods, but comes intuitively.

In respect to Conscience, the result went to show that the development theories of Utilitarians were not sufficient to account for the origin and growth of this faculty, which gives us the notion of Right, and commands us to do it; and that none of the objections urged

against this view are sufficient to justify its rejection.

In regard to the Ethical Standard, the insufficiency of the views held by Utilitarians was clearly manifest, and the position was taken that, in the last analysis, the Divine Will, as expressed in the Divine Law, natural or revealed, was the ultimate standard of right for man. This Law was an expression, through the Divine will, of the rectitude of the Divine nature, and it thus has an ethical basis. This Law is echoed in man's moral nature, and thereby a knowledge is given us of an infallible Rule of Right, and unfailing guide for our conduct.

Touching Moral Obligation, we found that its ultimate source can neither be Utility, nor any mere external authority devoid of ethical basis. In one sense, Conscience is the source of obligation, since we are thereby conscious of it; in another sense, the ultimate source of obligation is to be found in the Divine Being.

We also saw that the Utilitarian view of the Disinterested Affections and Benevolent Actions is radically defective. They cannot, in the nature of the case, construct a philosophy of benevolence., without leaving their funda-

mental principles as Utilitarians. Their theory commits suicide in the attempt.

Our criticism likewise showed that the question of Motive and Action, and their relation to each other receives but meagre and unsatisfactory treatment at their hands. Both notions are inadequately conceived, and their doctrine as to the relation between them is entirely unsound.

The very difficult question of the Will, and of Freedom and Necessity was but briefly touched upon, with the result that it was evident that their general doctrine on this point was imperfect in itself, and but feebly supported by the arguments adduced in its favor. We did not attempt to unfold any general doctrine of the Will, but such views of its nature, and of the question of freedom and necessity, as consciousness testifies to, and as the ethical system requires were briefly hinted at.

There are two general remarks with which we wish to close. The one relates to the bearing of the ethical system on Religion and Theology; the other refers to its importance to Society and Sociological Science.

In regard to the first of these questions, the position already taken that Moral Science can

only be properly understood and studied from the Theistic standpoint, shows how close and vital must be the connection between Moral and Theological Science. The former deals with the problems over which we have gone in these pages; the latter deals, in a general way, with the problems of the Divine nature, works, government, and the position of man under that government. In the former we begin with man and reason up to God, in the latter we begin with God and reason down to man. There are many points of contact, and much common ground; and we think that in study and preparation for the ministry, the relation between the two should never be lost sight of. It may be added that there is also a close relation between morals, as bearing on practical life, and the duties of religion in the same sphere. A sound ethical system is ever involved in the duties of religion, and the wider our views the more fully will this appear.

In regard to the second point, what was said regarding various sociological doctrines, though mere hints were given, will suffice to show how important a sound moral philosophy is in order to correct views of society. As the individual does not find the final explanation of the facts of his moral nature till he goes be-

yond himself, so society does not in itself contain its own regulative principles, nor does it afford its own adequate explanation, much less is it able to prescribe its own law and duty. Only when we take the broader view, and regard the moral order of the universe, can we get the true theory of society, and the sound basis on which it may rest. A true ethical system, which proceeds upon the supposition that just as there is a natural order and system in the universe, so there is a moral order and system, and that the Divine Being is over both, is absolutely necessary, not only for the individual, but also for society. It will thus appear that all those modern attempts to reconstruct society upon atheistical principles, as in the case of many Socialistic theories of the present day, leave out of account the fundamental basis upon which society must rest, and are fraught with terrible dangers to the social fabric. True religion and sound ethics must go hand in hand, in all that guides and elevates society; and any attempt to ignore these cannot but bring, under the conditions of the moral order of the universe, terrible, though it may be tardy, retribution. Carefully following the requirements of sound ethics, and of the duties of religion, will secure the

stability and elevation of society, and the development of the race in all that is true and good. Mere education of the intellectual faculties of men will not alone secure this. Men may be great scholars yet great rascals. Moral education of the individual, and hence of society, is what is needed; and this can only be properly done along the lines of a true ethical system, some of whose principles, it is hoped, are set forth in this treatise.

FINIS.