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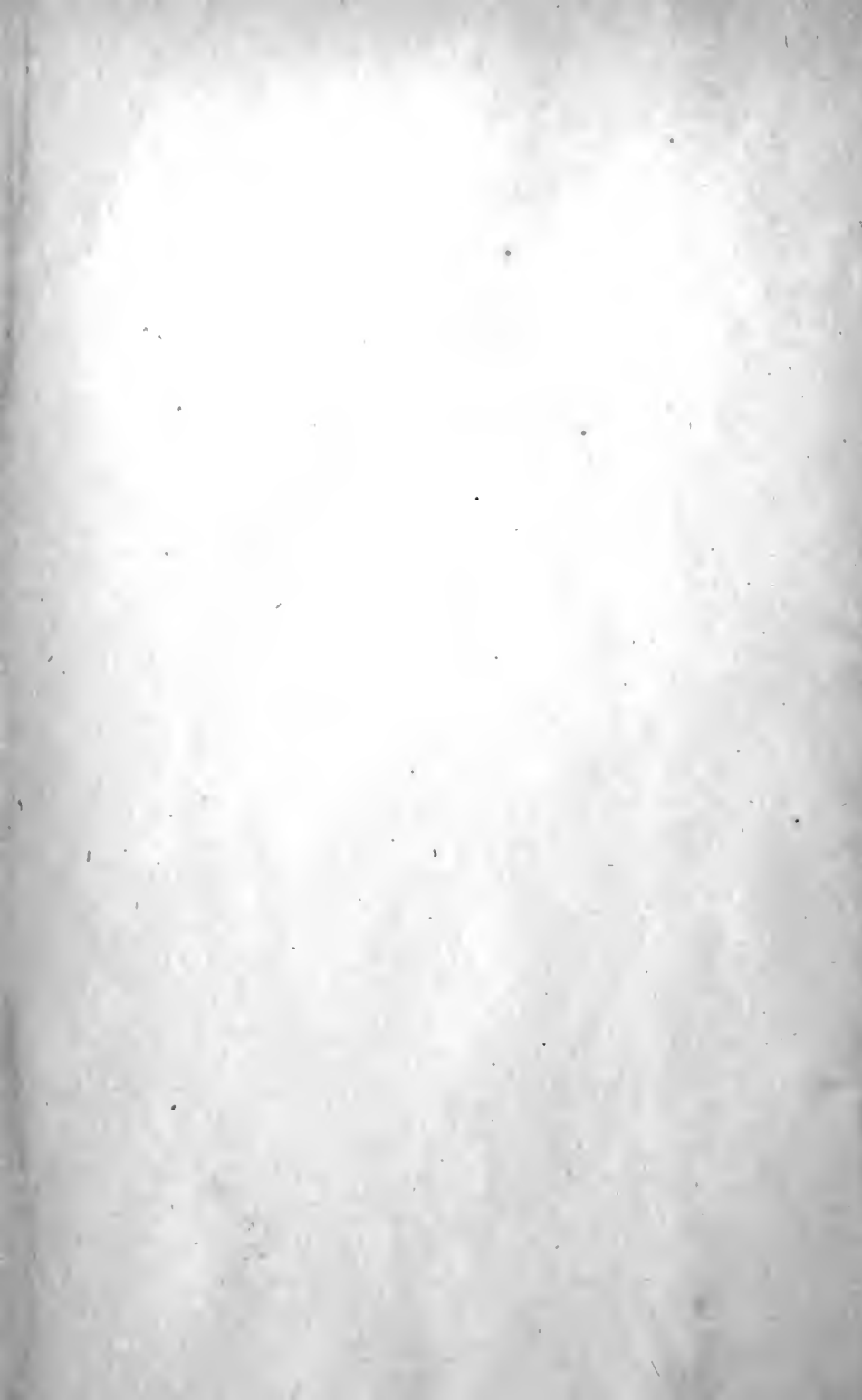


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THE ROMANES LECTURE

1893

*Evolution & Ethics*

BY

THOMAS H. HUXLEY, F.R.S.

DELIVERED

IN THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE, MAY 18, 1893

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MACMILLAN AND CO.  
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## EVOLUTION AND ETHICS

Soleo enim et in aliena castra transire, non tanquam transfugas tanquam explorator. (L. ANNÆI SENECEÆ EPIST. II. 4.)

THERE is a delightful child's story, known by the title of "Jack and the Bean-stalk," with which my contemporaries who are present will be familiar. But so many of our grave and reverend juniors have been brought up on severer intellectual diet, and perhaps, have become acquainted with fairyland only through primers of comparative mythology, that it may be needful to give an outline of the tale. It is a legend of a bean-plant, which grows and grows until it reaches the high heavens and there spreads out into a vast canopy of foliage. The hero, being moved to climb the stalk, discovers that the leafy expanse supports a world composed of the same elements as that below, but yet strangely new; and his adventures there, on which I may not dwell, must have completely changed his views of the nature of things; though the story, not having been composed by, or for, philosophers, has nothing to say about views.

My present enterprise has a certain analogy to that of the daring adventurer. I beg you to accompany

me in an attempt to reach a world which, to many, is probably strange, by the help of a bean. It is, as you know, a simple, inert-looking thing. Yet, if planted under proper conditions, of which sufficient warmth is one of the most important, it manifests active powers of a very remarkable kind. A small green seedling emerges, rises to the surface of the soil, rapidly increases in size and, at the same time, undergoes a series of metamorphoses which do not excite our wonder as much as those which meet us in legendary history, merely because they are to be seen every day and all day long.

By insensible steps, the plant builds itself up into a large and various fabric of root, stem, leaves, flowers and fruit, every one moulded within and without in accordance with an extremely complex, but, at the same time, minutely defined pattern. In each of these complicated structures, as in their smallest constituents, there is an immanent energy which, in harmony with that resident in all the others, incessantly works towards the maintenance of the whole and efficient performance of the part which it has to play in the economy of nature. But no sooner has the edifice, reared with such exact elaboration, attained completeness, than it begins to crumble. By degrees, the plant withers and disappears from view, leaving behind more or fewer apparently inert and simple bodies, just like the bean from which it sprang; and, like it, endowed with the potentiality of giving rise to a similar cycle of manifestations.

Neither the poetic nor the scientific imagination is

put to much strain in the search after analogies with this process of going forth and, as it were, returning to the starting point. It may be likened to the ascent and descent of a slung stone, or to the course of an arrow along its trajectory. Or we may say that the living energy takes first an upward and then a downward road. Or it may seem preferable to compare the expansion of the germ into the full-grown plant, to the unfolding of a fan, or to the rolling forth and widening of a stream; and thus arrive at the conception of 'development,' or 'evolution.' Here as elsewhere, names are 'noise and smoke'; the important point is to have a clear and adequate conception of the fact signified by a name. And, in this case, the fact is the Sisyphean process, in the course of which, the living and growing plant passes from the relative simplicity and latent potentiality of the seed to the full epiphany of a highly differentiated type, thence to fall back to simplicity and potentiality.

The value of a strong intellectual grasp of the nature of this process lies in the circumstance that what is true of the bean is true of living things in general. From very low forms up to the highest—in the animal no less than in the vegetable kingdom—the process of life presents the same appearance <sup>(1)</sup> of cyclical evolution. Nay, we have but to cast our eyes over the rest of the world and cyclical change presents itself on all sides. It meets us in the water that flows to the sea and returns to the springs; in the heavenly bodies that wax and wane, go and return

to their places ; in the inexorable sequence of the ages of man's life ; in that successive rise, apogee, and fall of dynasties and of states which is the most prominent topic of civil history.

As no man fording a swift stream can dip his foot twice into the same water, so no man can, with exactness, affirm of anything in the sensible world that it is. <sup>(2)</sup> As he utters the words, nay, as he thinks them, the predicate ceases to be applicable ; the present has become the past ; the ' is ' should be ' was. ' And the more we learn of the nature of things, the more evident is it that what we call rest is only unperceived activity ; that seeming peace is silent but strenuous battle. In every part, at every moment, the state of the cosmos is the expression of a transitory adjustment of contending forces ; a scene of strife, in which all the combatants fall in turn. What is true of each part, is true of the whole. Natural knowledge tends more and more to the conclusion that " all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth " are the transitory forms of parcels of cosmic substance wending along the road of evolution, from nebulous potentiality, through endless growths of sun and planet and satellite ; through all varieties of matter ; through infinite diversities of life and thought ; possibly, through modes of being of which we neither have a conception, nor are competent to form any, back to the undefinable latency from which they arose. Thus the most obvious attribute of the cosmos is its impermanence. It assumes the aspect not so much of a permanent entity as of a changeful process, in which

nought endures save the flow of energy and the rational order which pervades it.

We have climbed our bean-stalk and have reached a wonderland in which the common and the familiar become things new and strange. In the exploration of the cosmic process thus typified, the highest intelligence of man finds inexhaustible employment; giants are subdued to our service; and the spiritual affections of the contemplative philosopher are engaged by beauties worthy of eternal constancy.

But there is another aspect of the cosmic process, so perfect as a mechanism, so beautiful as a work of art. Where the cosmopoietic energy works through sentient beings, there arises, among its other manifestations, that which we call pain or suffering. This baleful product of evolution increases in quantity and in intensity, with advancing grades of animal organization, until it attains its highest level in man. Further, the consummation is not reached in man, the mere animal; nor in man, the whole or half savage; but only in man, the member of an organized polity. And it is a necessary consequence of his attempt to live in this way; that is, under those conditions which are essential to the full development of his noblest powers.

Man, the animal, in fact, has worked his way to the headship of the sentient world, and has become the superb animal which he is, in virtue of his success in the struggle for existence. The conditions having been of a certain order, man's organization has adjusted itself to them better than that of his competitors in the

cosmic strife. In the case of mankind, the self-assertion, the unscrupulous seizing upon all that can be grasped, the tenacious holding of all that can be kept, which constitute the essence of the struggle for existence, have answered. For his successful progress, as far as the savage state, man has been largely indebted to those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger; his exceptional physical organization; his cunning, his sociability, his curiosity and his imitateness; his ruthless and ferocious destructiveness when his anger is roused by opposition.

But, in proportion as men have passed from anarchy to social organization and in proportion as civilization has grown in worth, these deeply ingrained serviceable qualities have become defects. After the manner of successful persons, civilized man would gladly kick down the ladder by which he has climbed. He would be only too pleased to see 'the ape and tiger die.' But they decline to suit his convenience; and the unwelcome intrusion of these boon companions of his hot youth into the ranged existence of civil life adds pains and griefs, innumerable and immeasurably great, to those which the cosmic process necessarily brings on the mere animal. In fact, civilized man brands all these ape and tiger promptings with the name of sins; he punishes many of the acts which flow from them as crimes; and, in extreme cases, he does his best to put an end to the survival of the fittest of former days by axe and rope.

I have said that civilized man has reached this point; the assertion is perhaps too broad and general;



I had better put it that ethical man has attained thereto. The science of ethics professes to furnish us with a reasoned rule of life ; to tell us what is right action and why it is so. Whatever difference of opinion may exist among experts, there is a general consensus that the ape and tiger methods of the struggle for existence are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles.

The hero of our story descended the bean-stalk, and came back to the common world, where fare and work were alike hard ; where ugly competitors were much commoner than beautiful princesses ; and where the everlasting battle with self was much less sure to be crowned with victory than a turn-to with a giant. We have done the like. Thousands upon thousands of our fellows, thousands of years ago, have preceded us in finding themselves face to face with the same dread problem of evil. They also have seen that the cosmic process is evolution ; that it is full of wonder, full of beauty, and, at the same time, full of pain. They have sought to discover the bearing of these great facts on ethics ; to find out whether there is, or is not, a sanction for morality in the ways of the cosmos.

Theories of the universe, in which the conception of evolution plays a leading part, were extant at least six centuries before our era. Certain knowledge of them, in the fifth century, reaches us from localities as distant as the valley of the Ganges and the Asiatic coasts of the Ægean. To the early

philosophers of Hindostan, no less than to those of Ionia, the salient and characteristic feature of the phenomenal world was its changefulness; the unrelenting flow of all things, through birth to visible being and thence to not being, in which they could discern no sign of a beginning and for which they saw no prospect of an ending. It was no less plain to some of these antique forerunners of modern philosophy that suffering is the badge of all the tribe of sentient things; that it is no accidental accompaniment, but an essential constituent of the cosmic process. The energetic Greek might find fierce joys in a world in which 'strife is father and king'; but the old Aryan spirit was subdued to quietism in the Indian sage; the mist of suffering which spread over humanity hid everything else from his view; to him life was one with suffering and suffering with life.

In Hindostan, as in Ionia, a period of relatively high and tolerably stable civilization had succeeded long ages of semi-barbarism and struggle. Out of wealth and security had come leisure and refinement, and, close at their heels, had followed the malady of thought. To the struggle for bare existence, which never ends, though it may be alleviated and partially disguised for a fortunate few, succeeded the struggle to make existence intelligible and to bring the order of things into harmony with the moral sense of man, which also never ends, but, for the thinking few, becomes keener with every increase of knowledge and with every step towards the realization of a worthy ideal of life.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, the value of civilization was as apparent as it is now; then, as now, it was obvious that only in the garden of an orderly polity can the finest fruits humanity is capable of bearing be produced. But it had also become evident that the blessings of culture were not un-mixed. The garden was apt to turn into a hothouse. The stimulation of the senses, the pampering of the emotions, endlessly multiplied the sources of pleasure. The constant widening of the intellectual field indefinitely extended the range of that especially human faculty of looking before and after, which adds to the fleeting present those old and new worlds of the past and the future, wherein men dwell the more the higher their culture. But that very sharpening of the sense and that subtle refinement of emotion, which brought such a wealth of pleasures, were fatally attended by a proportional enlargement of the capacity for suffering; and the divine faculty of imagination, while it created new heavens and new earths, provided them with the corresponding hells of futile regret for the past and morbid anxiety for the future. <sup>(3)</sup> Finally, the inevitable penalty of over-stimulation, exhaustion, opened the gates of civilization to its great enemy, ennui; the stale and flat weariness when man delights not, nor woman neither; when all things are vanity and vexation; and life seems not worth living except to escape the bore of dying.

Even purely intellectual progress brings about its revenges. Problems settled in a rough and ready way by rude men, absorbed in action, demand

renewed attention and show themselves to be still unread riddles when men have time to think. The beneficent demon, doubt, whose name is Legion and who dwells amongst the tombs of old faiths, enters into mankind and thenceforth refuses to be cast out. Sacred customs, venerable dooms of ancestral wisdom, hallowed by tradition and professing to hold good for all time, are put to the question. Cultured reflection asks for their credentials; judges them by its own standards; finally, gathers those of which it approves into ethical systems, in which the reasoning is rarely much more than a decent pretext for the adoption of foregone conclusions.

One of the oldest and most important elements in such systems is the conception of justice. Society is impossible unless those who are associated agree to observe certain rules of conduct towards one another; its stability depends on the steadiness with which they abide by that agreement; and, so far as they waver, that mutual trust which is the bond of society is weakened or destroyed. Wolves could not hunt in packs except for the real, though unexpressed, understanding that they should not attack one another during the chase. The most rudimentary polity is a pack of men living under the like tacit, or expressed, understanding; and having made the very important advance upon wolf society, that they agree to use the force of the whole body against individuals who violate it and in favour of those who observe it. This observance of a common understanding, with the consequent distribution of

punishments and rewards according to accepted rules, received the name of justice, while the contrary was called injustice. Early ethics did not take much note of the animus of the violator of the rules. But civilization could not advance far, without the establishment of a capital distinction between the case of involuntary and that of wilful misdeed; between a merely wrong action and a guilty one. And, with increasing refinement of moral appreciation, the problem of desert, which arises out of this distinction, acquired more and more theoretical and practical importance. If life must be given for life, yet it was recognized that the unintentional slayer did not altogether deserve death; and, by a sort of compromise between the public and the private conception of justice, a sanctuary was provided in which he might take refuge from the avenger of blood.

The idea of justice thus underwent a gradual sublimation from punishment and reward according to acts, to punishment and reward according to desert; or in other words, according to motive. Righteousness, that is, action from right motive, not only became synonymous with justice, but the positive constituent of innocence and the very heart of goodness.

Now when the ancient sage, whether Indian or Greek, who had attained to this conception of goodness, looked the world, and especially human life, in the face, he found it as hard as we do to bring the course of evolution into harmony with even the elementary

requirements of the ethical ideal of the just and the good.

If there is one thing plainer than another, it is that neither the pleasures, nor the pains, of life in the merely animal world are distributed according to desert; for it is admittedly impossible for the lower orders of sentient beings to deserve either the one or the other. If there is a generalization from the facts of human life, which has the assent of thoughtful men in every age and country, it is that the violator of ethical rules constantly escapes the punishment which he deserves; that the wicked flourishes like a green bay tree, while the righteous begs his bread; that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children; that, in the realm of nature, ignorance is punished just as severely as wilful wrong; and that thousands upon thousands of innocent beings suffer for the crime, or the unintentional trespass, of one.

Greek and Semite and Indian are agreed upon this subject. The book of Job is at one with the 'Works and Days' and the Buddhist Sutras; the Psalmist and the Preacher of Israel, with the Tragic Poets of Greece. What is a more common motive of the ancient tragedy in fact, than the unfathomable injustice of the nature of things; what is more deeply felt to be true than its presentation of the destruction of the blameless by the work of his own hands, or by the fatal operation of the sins of others? Surely *Œdipus* was pure of heart; it was the natural sequence of events—the cosmic process—which drove him, in all

innocence, to slay his father and become the husband of his mother, to the desolation of his people and his own headlong ruin. Or to step, for a moment, beyond the chronological limits I have set myself, what constitutes the sempiternal attraction of Hamlet but the appeal to deepest experience of that history of a no less blameless dreamer, dragged, in spite of himself, into a world out of joint ; involved in a tangle of crime and misery, created by one of the prime agents of the cosmic process as it works in and through man ?

Thus, brought before the tribunal of ethics, the cosmos might well seem to stand condemned. The conscience of man revolted against the moral indifference of nature and the microcosmic atom should have found the illimitable macrocosm guilty. But few, or none, ventured to record that verdict.

In the great Semitic trial of this issue, Job takes refuge in silence and submission ; the Indian and the Greek, less wise perhaps, attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable and plead for the defendant. To this end, the Greeks invented Theodicies ; while the Indians devised what, in its ultimate form, must rather be termed a Cosmodicy. For, though Buddhism recognizes gods many and lords many, they are products of the cosmic process ; and transitory, however long enduring, manifestations of its eternal activity. In the doctrine of transmigration, whatever its origin, Brahminical and Buddhist speculation found, ready to hand, (4) the means of constructing a plausible vindication of the ways of the cosmos to man. If this world is full of

pain and sorrow ; if grief and evil fall, like the rain, upon both the just and the unjust ; it is because, like the rain, they are links in the endless chain of natural causation by which past, present, and future are indissolubly connected ; and there is no more injustice in the one case than in the other. Every sentient being is reaping as it has sown ; if not in this life, then in one or other of the infinite series of antecedent existences of which it is the latest term. The present distribution of good and evil is, therefore, the algebraical sum of accumulated positive and negative deserts ; or, rather, it depends on the floating balance of the account. For it was not thought necessary that a complete settlement should ever take place. Arrears might stand over as a sort of 'hanging gale' ; a period of celestial happiness just earned might be succeeded by ages of torment in a hideous nether world, the balance still overdue for some remote ancestral error. (5)

Whether the cosmic process looks any more moral than at first, after such a vindication may perhaps be questioned. Yet this plea of justification is not less plausible than others ; and none but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality ; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying.

Everyday experience familiarizes us with the facts which are grouped under the name of heredity. Every one of us bears upon him obvious marks of his parentage,



perhaps of remoter relationships. More particularly, the sum of tendencies to act in a certain way, which we call 'character,' is often to be traced through a long series of progenitors and collaterals. So we may justly say that this 'character'—this moral and intellectual essence of a man—does veritably pass over from one fleshly tabernacle to another and does really transmigrate from generation to generation. In the new-born infant, the character of the stock lies latent and the Ego is little more than a bundle of potentialities. But, very early, these become actualities; from childhood to age they manifest themselves in dulness or brightness, weakness or strength, viciousness or uprightness; and with each feature modified by confluence with another character, if by nothing else, the character passes on to its incarnation in new bodies.

The Indian philosophers called character, as thus defined, 'karma.' (6) It is this karma which passed from life to life and linked them in the chain of transmigrations; and they held that it is modified in each life, not merely by confluence of parentage, but by its own acts. They were, in fact, strong believers in the theory, so much disputed just at present, of the hereditary transmission of acquired characters. That the manifestation of the tendencies of a character may be greatly facilitated, or impeded, by conditions, of which self-discipline, or the absence of it, are among the most important, is indubitable; but that the character itself is modified in this way is by no means so certain; it is not so sure that the transmitted character of an evil liver is worse, or that of a

righteous man better, than that which he received. Indian philosophy, however, did not admit of any doubt on this subject ; the belief in the influence of conditions, notably of self-discipline, on the karma was not merely a necessary postulate of its theory of retribution, but it presented the only way of escape from the endless round of transmigrations.

The earlier forms of Indian philosophy agreed with those prevalent in our own times, in supposing the existence of a permanent reality, or 'substance,' beneath the shifting series of phenomena, whether of matter or of mind. The substance of the cosmos was 'Brahma,' that of the individual man 'Atman' ; and the latter was separated from the former only, if I may so speak, by its phenomenal envelope, by the casing of sensations, thoughts and desires, pleasures and pains, which make up the illusive phantasmagoria of life. This the ignorant take for reality ; their 'Atman' therefore remains eternally imprisoned in delusions, bound by the fetters of desire and scourged by the whip of misery. But the man who has attained enlightenment sees that the apparent reality is mere illusion, or, as was said a couple of thousand years later, that there is nothing good nor bad but thinking makes it so. If the cosmos "is just and of our pleasant vices makes instruments to scourge us," it would seem that the only way to escape from our heritage of evil is to destroy that fountain of desire whence our vices flow ; to refuse any longer to be the instruments of the evolutionary process and withdraw from the struggle for existence. If the karma is modifiable by self-dis-

cipline, if its coarser desires, one after another, can be extinguished, the ultimate fundamental desire of self-assertion, or the desire to be, may also be destroyed. (7) Then the bubble of illusion will burst, and the freed individual 'Atman' will lose itself in the universal 'Brahma.'

Such seems to have been the pre-Buddhistic conception of salvation and of the way to be followed by those who would attain thereto. No more thorough mortification of the flesh has ever been attempted than that achieved by the Indian ascetic anchorite; no later monachism has so nearly succeeded in reducing the human mind to that condition of impassive quasi-somnambulism, which, but for its acknowledged holiness, might run the risk of being confounded with idiocy.

And this salvation, it will be observed, was to be attained through knowledge, and by action based on that knowledge; just as the experimenter, who would obtain a certain physical or chemical result, must have a knowledge of the natural laws involved and the persistent disciplined will adequate to carry out all the various operations required. The supernatural, in our sense of the term, was entirely excluded. There was no external power which could affect the sequence of cause and effect which gives rise to karma; none but the will of the subject of the karma which could put an end to it.

Only one rule of conduct could be based upon the remarkable theory of which I have endeavoured to give a reasoned outline. It was folly to continue

to exist when an overplus of pain was certain and the probabilities in favour of the increase of misery, with the prolongation of existence, were so overwhelming. Slaying the body only made matters worse; there was nothing for it but to slay the soul by the voluntary arrest of all its activities. Property, social ties, family affections, common companionship, must be abandoned; the most natural appetites, even that for food, must be suppressed, or at least minimized; until all that remained of a man was the impassive, extenuated, mendicant monk, self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances, which the deluded mystic took for foretastes of the final union with Brahma.

The founder of Buddhism accepted the chief postulates demanded by his predecessors. But he was not satisfied with the practical annihilation involved in merging the individual existence in the unconditioned—the Atman in Brahma. It would seem that the admission of the existence of any substance whatever—even of the tenuity of that which has neither quality nor energy and of which no predicate whatever can be asserted—appeared to him to be a danger and a snare. Though reduced to a hypostatized negation, Brahma was not to be trusted; so long as entity was there, it might conceivably resume the weary round of evolution, with all its train of immeasurable miseries. Gautama got rid of even that shade of a shadow of permanent existence by a metaphysical *tour de force* of great interest to the student of philosophy, seeing that it

supplies the wanting half of Bishop Berkeley's well-known idealistic argument.

Granting the premises, I am not aware of any escape from Berkeley's conclusion, that the "substance" of matter is a metaphysical unknown quantity, of the existence of which there is no proof. What Berkeley does not seem to have so clearly perceived is that the non-existence of a substance of mind is equally arguable; and that the result of the impartial applications of his reasonings is the reduction of the All to co-existences and sequences of phenomena, beneath and beyond which there is nothing cognoscible. It is a remarkable indication of the subtlety of Indian speculation that Gautama should have seen deeper than the greatest of modern idealists; though it must be admitted that, if some of Berkeley's reasonings respecting the nature of spirit are pushed home, they reach pretty much the same conclusion. (8)

Accepting the prevalent Brahminical doctrine that the whole cosmos, celestial, terrestrial, and infernal, with its population of gods and other celestial beings, of sentient animals, of Mara and his devils, is incessantly shifting through recurring cycles of production and destruction, in each of which every human being has his transmigratory representative, Gautama proceeded to eliminate substance altogether; and to reduce the cosmos to a mere flow of sensations, emotions, volitions, and thoughts, devoid of any substratum. As on the surface of a stream of water, we see ripples and

whirlpools, which last for a while and then vanish with the causes that gave rise to them, so what seem individual existences are mere temporary associations of phenomena circling round a centre, "like a dog tied to a post." In the whole universe there is nothing permanent, no eternal substance either of mind or of matter. Personality is a metaphysical fancy ; and in very truth, not only we, but all things, in the worlds without end of the cosmic phantasmagoria, are such stuff as dreams are made of.

What then becomes of karma ! Karma remains untouched. As the peculiar form of energy we call magnetism may be transmitted from a loadstone to a piece of steel, from the steel to a piece of nickel, as it may be strengthened or weakened by the conditions to which it is subjected while resident in each piece, so it seems to have been conceived that karma might be transmitted from one phenomenal association to another by a sort of induction. However this may be, Gautama doubtless had a better guarantee for the abolition of transmigration, when no wrack of substance, either of Atman or of Brahma, was left behind ; when, in short, a man had but to dream that he willed not to dream, to put an end to all dreaming.

This end of life's dream is Nirvana. What Nirvana is the learned do not agree. But, since the best original authorities tell us there is neither desire nor activity, nor any possibility of phenomenal reappearance for the sage who has entered Nirvana, it may be safely said of this acme of Buddhistic philosophy—the rest is silence. (9)

Thus there is no very great practical disagreement between Gautama and his predecessors with respect to the end of action ; but it is otherwise as regards the means to that end. With just insight into human nature, Gautama declared extreme ascetic practices to be useless and indeed harmful. The appetites and the passions are not to be abolished by mere mortification of the body ; they must, in addition, be attacked on their own ground and conquered by steady cultivation of the mental habits which oppose them ; by universal benevolence ; by the return of good for evil ; by humility ; by abstinence from evil thought ; in short by total renunciation of that self-assertion which is the essence of the cosmic process.

Doubtless, it is to these ethical qualities that Buddhism owes its marvellous success. <sup>(10)</sup> A system which knows no God in the western sense ; which denies a soul to man ; which counts the belief in immortality a blunder and the hope of it a sin ; which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice ; which bids men look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation ; which, in its original purity, knew nothing of vows of obedience, abhorred intolerance and never sought the aid of the secular arm ; yet spread over a considerable moiety of the Old World with marvellous rapidity, and is still, with whatever base admixture of foreign superstitions, the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind.

Let us now set our faces westwards, towards Asia Minor and Greece and Italy, to view the rise and

progress of another philosophy, apparently independent, but no less pervaded by the conception of evolution. <sup>(11)</sup>

The sages of Miletus were pronounced evolutionists; and, however dark may be some of the sayings of Heraclitus of Ephesus, who was probably a contemporary of Gautama, no better expressions of the essence of the modern doctrine of evolution can be found than are presented by some of his pithy aphorisms and striking metaphors. <sup>(12)</sup> Indeed, many of my present auditors must have observed that, more than once, I have borrowed from him in the brief exposition of the theory of evolution with which this discourse commenced.

But when the focus of Greek intellectual activity shifted to Athens, the leading minds concentrated their attention upon ethical problems. Forsaking the study of the macrocosm for that of the microcosm, they lost the key to the thought of the great Ephesian, which, I imagine, is more intelligible to us than it was to Socrates, or to Plato. Socrates, more especially, set the fashion of a kind of inverse agnosticism, by teaching that the problems of physics lie beyond the reach of the human intellect; that the attempt to solve them is essentially vain; that the one worthy object of investigation is the problem of ethical life; and his example was followed by the Cynics and the later Stoics. Even the comprehensive knowledge and the penetrating intellect of Aristotle failed to suggest to him that in holding the eternity of the world, within its present range of mutation



he was making a retrogressive step. The scientific heritage of Heracleitus passed into the hands neither of Plato nor of Aristotle, but into those of Democritus. But the world was not yet ready to receive the great conceptions of the philosopher of Abdera. It was reserved for the Stoics to return to the track marked out by the earlier philosophers; and, professing themselves disciples of Heracleitus, to develope the idea of evolution systematically. In doing this, they not only omitted some characteristic features of their master's teaching, but they made additions altogether foreign to it. One of the most influential of these importations was the transcendental theism which had come into vogue. The restless, fiery energy, operating according to law, out of which all things emerge and into which they return, in the endless successive cycles of the great year; which creates and destroys worlds as a wanton child builds up, and anon levels, sand castles on the seashore; was metamorphosed into a material world-soul and decked out with all the attributes of ideal Divinity; not merely with infinite power and transcendent wisdom, but with absolute goodness.

The consequences of this step were momentous. For if the cosmos is the effect of an immanent, omnipotent and infinitely beneficent cause, the existence in it of real evil, still less of necessarily inherent evil, is plainly inadmissible. <sup>(13)</sup> Yet the universal experience of mankind testified then, as now, that, whether we look within us or without us, evil stares us in the face on all sides; that if

anything is real, pain and sorrow and wrong are realities.

It would be a new thing in history if *à priori* philosophers were daunted by the factious opposition of experience; and the Stoics were the last men to allow themselves to be beaten by mere facts. 'Give me a doctrine and I will find the reasons for it' said Chrysippus. So they perfected, if they did not invent, that ingenious and plausible form of pleading, the Theodicy; for the purpose of showing firstly, that there is no such thing as evil; secondly, that if there is, it is the necessary correlate of good; and moreover, that it is either due to our own fault, or inflicted for our benefit. Theodicies have been very popular in their time, and I believe that a numerous, though somewhat dwarfed, progeny of them still survives. So far as I know, they are all variations of the theme set forth in those famous six lines of the 'Essay on Man,' in which Pope sums up Bolingbroke's reminiscences of stoical and other speculations of this kind—

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good;  
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear : whatever is is right.

Yet, surely, if there are few more important truths than those enunciated in the first triad, the second is open to very grave objections. That there is a 'soul of good in things evil' is unquestionable; nor will

any wise man deny the disciplinary value of pain and sorrow. But these considerations do not help us to see why the immense multitude of irresponsible sentient beings, which cannot profit by such discipline, should suffer; nor why, among the endless possibilities open to omnipotence—that of sinless, happy existence among the rest—the actuality in which sin and misery abound should be that selected. Surely it is mere cheap rhetoric to call arguments which have never yet been answered by even the meekest and the least rational of Optimists, suggestions of the pride of reason. As to the concluding aphorism, its fittest place would be as an inscription in letters of mud over the portal of some ‘stye of Epicurus’ (<sup>14</sup>); for that is where the logical application of it to practice would land men, with every aspiration stifled and every effort paralyzed. Why try to set right what is right already? Why strive to improve the best of all possible worlds? Let us eat and drink, for as to-day all is right, so to-morrow all will be.

But the attempt of the Stoics to blind themselves to the reality of evil, as a necessary concomitant of the cosmic process, had less success than that of the Indian philosophers to exclude the reality of good from their purview. Unfortunately, it is much easier to shut one’s eyes to good than to evil. Pain and sorrow knock at our doors more loudly than pleasure and happiness; and the prints of their heavy footsteps are less easily effaced. Before the grim realities of practical life the pleasant fictions of optimism vanished. If this were the best of

all possible worlds, it nevertheless proved itself a very inconvenient habitation for the ideal sage.

The stoical summary of the whole duty of man, 'Live according to nature,' would seem to imply that the cosmic process is an exemplar for human conduct. Ethics would thus become applied Natural History. In fact, a confused employment of the maxim, in this sense, has done immeasurable mischief in later times. It has furnished an axiomatic foundation for the philosophy of philosophasters and for the moralizing of sentimentalists. But the Stoics were, at bottom, not merely noble, but sane, men; and if we look closely into what they really meant by this ill-used phrase, it will be found to present no justification for the mischievous conclusions that have been deduced from it.

In the language of the Stoa, 'Nature' was a word of many meanings. There was the 'Nature' of the cosmos and the 'Nature' of man. In the latter, the animal 'nature,' which man shares with a moiety of the living part of the cosmos, was distinguished from a higher 'nature.' Even in this higher nature there were grades of rank. The logical faculty is an instrument which may be turned to account for any purpose. The passions and the emotions are so closely tied to the lower nature that they may be considered to be pathological rather than normal phenomena. The one supreme, hegemonic, faculty, which constitutes the essential 'nature' of man is most nearly represented by that which, in the language of a later philosophy, has been called the pure reason. It is this 'nature' which holds up the

ideal of the supreme good and demands absolute submission of the will to its behests. It is this which commands all men to love one another, to return good for evil, to regard one another as fellow-citizens of one great state. Indeed, seeing that the progress towards perfection of a civilized state, or polity, depends on the obedience of its members to these commands, the Stoics sometimes termed the pure reason the 'political' nature. Unfortunately, the sense of the adjective has undergone so much modification, that the application of it to that which commands the sacrifice of self to the common good would now sound almost grotesque. <sup>(15)</sup>

But what part is played by the theory of evolution in this view of ethics? So far as I can discern, the ethical system of the Stoics, which is essentially intuitive, and reverences the categorical imperative as strongly as that of any later moralists, might have been just what it was if they had held any other theory; whether that of special creation, on the one side, or that of the eternal existence of the present order, on the other. <sup>(16)</sup> To the Stoic, the cosmos had no importance for the conscience, except in so far as he chose to think it a pedagogue to virtue. The pertinacious optimism of our philosophers hid from them the actual state of the case. It prevented them from seeing that cosmic nature is no school of virtue, but the head-quarters of the enemy of ethical nature. The logic of facts was necessary to convince them that the cosmos

works through the lower nature of man, not for righteousness, but against it. And it finally drove them to confess that the existence of their ideal "wise man" was incompatible with the nature of things; that even a passable approximation to that ideal was to be attained only at the cost of renunciation of the world and mortification, not merely of the flesh, but of all human affections. The state of perfection was that 'apatheia' (17) in which desire, though it may still be felt, is powerless to move the will, reduced to the sole function of executing the commands of pure reason. Even this residuum of activity was to be regarded as a temporary loan, as an efflux of the divine world-pervading spirit, chafing at its imprisonment in the flesh, until such time as death enabled it to return to its source in the all-pervading logos.

I find it difficult to discover any very great difference between Apatheia and Nirvana, except that stoical speculation agrees with pre-Buddhistic philosophy, rather than with the teachings of Gautama, in so far as it postulates a permanent substance equivalent to 'Brahma' and 'Atman'; and that, in stoical practice, the adoption of the life of the mendicant cynic was held to be more a counsel of perfection than an indispensable condition of the higher life.

Thus the extremes touch. Greek thought and Indian thought set out from ground common to both, diverge widely, develope under very different

physical and moral conditions, and finally converge to practically the same end.

The Vedas and Homeric epos set before us a world of rich and vigorous life, full of joyous fighting men

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine . . . .

and who were ready to brave the very Gods themselves when their blood was up. A few centuries pass away, and under the influence of civilization, the descendants of these men are 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought'—frank pessimists, or at best, make-believe optimists. The courage of the warlike stock may be as hardly tried as before, perhaps more hardly, but the enemy is self. The hero has become a monk. The man of action is replaced by the quietist, whose highest aspiration is to be the passive instrument of the divine Reason. By the Tiber, as by the Ganges, ethical man admits that the cosmos is too strong for him; and destroying every bond which ties him to it by ascetic discipline, he seeks salvation in absolute renunciation. <sup>(18)</sup>

Modern thought is making a fresh start from the base whence Indian and Greek philosophy set out; and, the human mind being very much what it was six and twenty centuries ago, there is no ground for wonder if it presents indications of a tendency to move along the old lines to the same results.

We are more than sufficiently familiar with modern pessimism, at least as a speculation; for I cannot

call to mind that any of its present votaries have sealed their faith by assuming the rags and the bowl of the mendicant Bhikku, or the cloak and the wallet of the Cynic. The obstacles placed in the way of sturdy vagrancy by an unphilosophical police have, perhaps, proved too formidable for philosophical consistency. We also know modern speculative optimism, with its perfectibility of the species, reign of peace, and lion and lamb transformation scenes ; but one does not hear so much of it as one did forty years ago ; indeed, I imagine it is to be met with more commonly at the tables of the healthy and wealthy, than in the congregations of the wise. The majority of us, I apprehend, profess neither pessimism nor optimism. We hold that the world is neither so good, nor so bad, as it conceivably might be ; and, as most of us have reason, now and again, to discover that it can be. Those who have failed to experience the joys that make life worth living are, probably, in as small a minority as those who have never known the griefs that rob existence of its savour and turn its richest fruits into mere dust and ashes.

Further, I think I do not err in assuming that, however diverse their views on philosophical and religious matters, most men are agreed that the proportion of good and evil in life may be very sensibly affected by human action. I never heard anybody doubt that the evil may be thus increased, or diminished ; and it would seem to follow that good must be similarly susceptible of addition or subtraction. Finally, to my knowledge, nobody



professes to doubt that, so far forth as we possess a power of bettering things, it is our paramount duty to use it and to train all our intellect and energy to this supreme service of our kind.

Hence the pressing interest of the question, to what extent modern progress in natural knowledge and, more especially, the general outcome of that progress in the doctrine of evolution, is competent to help us in the great work of helping one another.

The propounders of what are called the "ethics of evolution," when the 'evolution of ethics' would usually better express the object of their speculations, adduce a number of more or less interesting facts and more or less sound arguments, in favour of the origin of the moral sentiments, in the same way as other natural phenomena, by a process of evolution. I have little doubt, for my own part, that they are on the right track; but as the immoral sentiments have no less been evolved, there is, so far, as much natural sanction for the one as the other. The thief and the murderer follow nature just as much as the philanthropist. Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before. Some day, I doubt not, we shall arrive at an understanding of the evolution of the æsthetic faculty; but all the understanding in the world will neither increase nor diminish the force of the intuition that this is beautiful and that is ugly.

There is another fallacy which appears to me to pervade the so-called "ethics of evolution." It is the notion that because, on the whole, animals and plants have advanced in perfection of organization by means of the struggle for existence and the consequent 'survival of the fittest'; therefore men in society, men as ethical beings, must look to the same process to help them towards perfection. I suspect that this fallacy has arisen out of the unfortunate ambiguity of the phrase 'survival of the fittest.' 'Fittest' has a connotation of 'best'; and about 'best' there hangs a moral flavour. In cosmic nature, however, what is 'fittest' depends upon the conditions. Long since I ventured to point out that if our hemisphere were to cool again, the survival of the fittest might bring about, in the vegetable kingdom, a population of more and more stunted and humbler and humbler organisms, until the 'fittest' that survived might be nothing but lichens, diatoms, and such microscopic organisms as those which give red snow its colour; while, if it became hotter, the pleasant valleys of the Thames and Isis might be uninhabitable by any animated beings save those that flourish in a tropical jungle. They, as the fittest, the best adapted to the changed conditions, would survive.

Men in society are undoubtedly subject to the cosmic process. As among other animals, multiplication goes on without cessation and involves severe competition for the means of support. The struggle for existence tends to eliminate those less fitted to

adapt themselves to the circumstances of their existence. The strongest, the most self-assertive, tend to tread down the weaker. But the influence of the cosmic process on the evolution of society is the greater the more rudimentary its civilization. Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process ; the end of which is not the survival of those who may happen to be the fittest, in respect of the whole of the conditions which exist, but of those who are ethically the best. (19)

As I have already urged, the practice of that which is ethically best—what we call goodness or virtue—involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place of ruthless self-assertion it demands self-restraint ; in place of thrusting aside, or treading down, all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect, but shall help his fellows ; its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many as possible to survive. It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence. It demands that each man who enters into the enjoyment of the advantages of a polity shall be mindful of his debt to those who have laboriously constructed it ; and shall take heed that no act of his weakens the fabric in which he has been permitted to live. Laws and moral precepts are directed to the end of curbing the cosmic process and reminding the individual of his duty to the community, to the protection and in-

fluence of which he owes, if not existence itself, at least the life of something better than a brutal savage.

It is from neglect of these plain considerations that the fanatical individualism of our time attempts to apply the analogy of cosmic nature to society. Once more we have a misapplication of the stoical injunction to follow nature; the duties of the individual to the state are forgotten and his tendencies to self-assertion are dignified by the name of rights. It is seriously debated whether the members of a community are justified in using their combined strength to constrain one of their number to contribute his share to the maintenance of it; or even to prevent him from doing his best to destroy it. The struggle for existence, which has done such admirable work in cosmic nature, must, it appears, be equally beneficent in the ethical sphere. Yet if that which I have insisted upon is true; if the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends; if the imitation of it by man is inconsistent with the first principles of ethics; what becomes of this surprising theory?

Let us understand, once for all, that the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it. It may seem an audacious proposal thus to pit the microcosm against the macrocosm and to set man to subdue nature to his higher ends; but, I venture to think that the great intellectual difference between the ancient times with which we have been occupied and our day, lies in the solid

foundation we have acquired for the hope that such an enterprise may meet with a certain measure of success.

The history of civilization details the steps by which men have succeeded in building up an artificial world within the cosmos. Fragile reed, as he may be, man, as Pascal says, is a thinking reed : <sup>(20)</sup> there lies within him a fund of energy, operating intelligently and so far akin to that which pervades the universe, that it is competent to influence and modify the cosmic process. In virtue of his intelligence, the dwarf bends the Titan to his will. In every family, in every polity that has been established the cosmic process in man has been restrained and otherwise modified by law and custom ; in surrounding nature, it has been similarly influenced by the art of the shepherd, the agriculturist, the artisan. As civilization has advanced, so has the extent of this interference increased ; until the organized and highly developed sciences and arts of the present day have endowed man with a command over the course of non-human nature greater than that once attributed to the magicians. The most impressive, I might say startling, of these changes have been brought about in the course of the last two centuries ; while a right comprehension of the process of life and of the means of influencing its manifestations is only just dawning upon us. We do not yet see our way beyond generalities ; and we are befogged by the obtrusion of false analogies and crude anticipations. But Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, have all had

to pass through similar phases, before they reached the stage at which their influence became an important factor in human affairs. Physiology, Psychology, Ethics, Political Science, must submit to the same ordeal. Yet it seems to me irrational to doubt that, at no distant period, they will work as great a revolution in the sphere of practice.

The theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, sometime, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced. The most daring imagination will hardly venture upon the suggestion that the power and the intelligence of man can ever arrest the procession of the great year.

Moreover the cosmic nature born with us and, to a large extent, necessary for our maintenance, is the outcome of millions of years of severe training, and it would be folly to imagine that a few centuries will suffice to subdue its masterfulness to purely ethical ends. Ethical nature may count upon having to reckon with a tenacious and powerful enemy as long as the world lasts. But, on the other hand, I see no limit to the extent to which intelligence and will, guided by sound principles of investigation, and organized in common effort, may modify the conditions of existence, for a period longer than that now covered by history. And much may be done to change the nature of man himself. The intelligence which has converted the brother of the wolf into the faithful guardian of the flock ought to

be able to do something towards curbing the instincts of savagery in civilized men.

But if we may permit ourselves a larger hope of abatement of the essential evil of the world than was possible [to those who, in the infancy of exact knowledge, faced the problem of existence more than a score of centuries ago, I deem it an essential condition of the realization of that hope that we should cast aside the notion that the escape from pain and sorrow is the proper object of life.

We have long since emerged from the heroic childhood of our race, when good and evil could be met with the same 'frolic welcome'; the attempts to escape from evil, whether Indian or Greek, have ended in flight from the battle-field; it remains to us to throw aside the youthful overconfidence and the no less youthful discouragement of nonage. We are grown men, and must play the man

strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield,

cherishing the good that falls in our way and bearing the evil, in and around us, with stout hearts set on diminishing it. So far, we all may strive in one faith towards one hope :

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,

. . . . but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note may yet be done. <sup>(21)</sup>

## NOTES

### *Note 1* (p. 3).

I HAVE been careful to speak of the 'appearance' of cyclical evolution presented by living things; for, on critical examination, it will be found that the course of vegetable and of animal life is not exactly represented by the figure of a cycle which returns into itself. What actually happens, in all but the lowest organisms, is that one part of the growing germ (*A*) gives rise to tissues and organs; while another part (*B*) remains in its primitive condition, or is but slightly modified. The moiety *A* becomes the body of the adult and, sooner or later, perishes, while portions of the moiety *B* are detached and, as offspring, continue the life of the species. Thus, if we trace back an organism along the direct line of descent from its remotest ancestor, *B*, as a whole, has never suffered death; portions of it, only, have been cast off and died in each individual offspring.

Everybody is familiar with the way in which the 'suckers' of a strawberry plant behave. A thin cylinder of living tissue keeps on growing at its free end, until it attains a considerable length. At successive intervals, it develops buds which grow into strawberry plants; and these become independent by the death of the parts of the sucker which connect them. The rest of the sucker, however, may go on living and growing indefinitely and, circumstances remaining favourable, there is no obvious reason why it should ever die. The living substance *B*, in a manner, answers to the sucker. If we could restore the continuity which was once possessed by the portions of *B*, contained in all the individuals of a direct line of descent, they would form a sucker, or *stolon*, on which these individuals would be strung, and which would never have wholly died.

A species remains unchanged so long as the potentiality of development resident in *B* remains unaltered; so long *e.g.* as the



buds of the strawberry sucker tend to become typical strawberry plants. In the case of the progressive evolution of a species, the developmental potentiality of *B* becomes of a higher and higher order. In retrogressive evolution, the contrary would be the case. The phenomena of atavism seem to show that retrogressive evolution, that is, the return of a species to one or other of its earlier forms, is a possibility to be reckoned with. The simplification of structure, which is so common in the parasitic members of a group, however, does not properly come under this head. The worm-like, limbless *Lernæa* has no resemblance to any of the stages of development of the many-limbed active animals of the group to which it belongs.

*Note 2* (p. 4).

Heraclitus says "Ποταμὸς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστί δις ἐμβῆναι τῷ αὐτῷ"; but, to be strictly accurate, the river remains, though the water of which it is composed changes—just as a man retains his identity though the whole substance of his body is constantly shifting.

This is put very well by Seneca (Ep. lvii.i<sup>2</sup>20, Ed. Ruhkopf). "Corpora nostra rapiuntur fluminum more, quidquid vides currit cum tempore; nihil ex his quæ videmus manet. Ego ipse dum loquor mutari ista, mutatus sum. Hoc est quod ait Heraclitus 'In idem flumen bis non descendimus.' Manet idem fluminis nomen, aqua transmissa est. Hoc in amne manifestius est quam in homine, sed nos quoque non minus velox cursus prætervehit."

*Note 3* (p. 9).

"Multa bona nostra nobis nocent, timoris enim tormentum memoria reducit, providentia anticipat. Nemo tantum præsentibus miser est." (Seneca, Ep. v. 7.)

Among the many wise and weighty aphorisms of the Roman Bacon, few sound the realities of life more deeply than "Multa bona nostra nobis nocent." If there is a soul of good in things evil, it is at least equally true that there is a soul of evil in things good: for things, like men, have "les défauts de leurs qualités." It is one of the last lessons one learns from experience,

but not the least important, that a heavy tax is levied upon all forms of success; and that failure is one of the commonest disguises assumed by blessings.

*Note 4 (p. 13).*

"There is within the body of every man a soul which, at the death of the body, flies away from it like a bird out of a cage, and enters upon a new life.....either in one of the heavens or one of the hells or on this earth. The only exception is the rare case of a man having in this life, acquired a true knowledge of God. According to the pre-Buddhistic theory the soul of such a man goes along the path of the Gods to God and, being united with Him, enters upon an immortal life in which his individuality is not extinguished. In the later theory, his soul is directly absorbed into the Great Soul, is lost in it and has no longer any independent existence. The souls of all other men enter, after the death of the body, upon a new existence in one or other of the many different modes of being. If in heaven or hell, the soul itself becomes a god or demon without entering a body; all superhuman beings, save the great gods being looked upon as not eternal, but merely temporary creatures. If the soul returns to earth it may or may not enter a new body; and this either of a human being, an animal, a plant or even a material object. For all these are possessed of souls, and there is no essential difference between these souls and the souls of men—all being alike mere sparks of the Great Spirit, who is the only real existence." (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, 1881, p. 83.)

For what I have said about Indian Philosophy, I am particularly indebted to the luminous exposition of primitive Buddhism and its relations to earlier Hindu thought, which is given by Prof. Rhys Davids in his remarkable "Hibbert Lectures" for 1881, and "Buddhism," (1890). The only apology I can offer for the freedom with which I have borrowed from him in these notes, is my desire to leave no doubt as to my indebtedness. I have also found Dr. Oldenberg's "Buddha" (Ed. 2, 1890) very helpful. The origin of the theory of transmigration stated in the above extract is an unsolved problem. That it differs widely from the Egyptian metempsychosis is clear. In fact, since men usually people the

other world with phantoms of this, the Egyptian doctrine would seem to presuppose the Indian as a more archaic belief.

Prof. Rhys Davids has fully insisted upon the ethical importance of the transmigration theory. "One of the latest speculations now being put forward among ourselves would seek to explain each man's character, and even his outward condition in life, by the character he inherited from his ancestors, a character gradually formed during a practically endless series of past existences, modified only by the conditions into which he was born, those very conditions being also, in like manner, the last result of a practically endless series of past causes. Gotama's speculation might be stated in the same words. But it attempted also to explain, in a way different from that which would be adopted by the exponents of the modern theory, that strange problem which it is also the motive of the wonderful drama of the book of Job to explain—the fact that the actual distribution here of good fortune, or misery, is entirely independent of the moral qualities which men call good or bad. We cannot wonder that a teacher, whose whole system was so essentially an ethical reformation, should have felt it incumbent upon him to seek an explanation of this apparent injustice. And all the more so, since the belief he had inherited, the theory of the transmigration of souls, had provided a solution perfectly sufficient to any one who could accept that belief." (Hibbert Lectures, p. 93.) I should venture to suggest the substitution of 'largely' for 'entirely' in the foregoing passage. Whether a ship makes a good or a bad voyage is largely independent of the conduct of the captain, but it is as largely affected by that conduct. Though powerless before a hurricane he may weather many a bad gale.

*Note 5 (p. 14).*

"The outward condition of the soul is, in each new birth, determined by its actions in a previous birth; but by each action in succession and not by the balance struck after the evil has been reckoned off against the good. A good man, who has once uttered a slander may spend a hundred thousand years as a god, in consequence of his goodness, and, when the power of his good actions is exhausted, may be born as a dumb man on account of

his transgression ; and a robber who has once done an act of mercy, may come to life in a king's body as the result of his virtue, and then suffer torments for ages in hell or as a ghost without a body, or be re-born many times as a slave or an outcast, in consequence of his evil life.

"There is no escape according to this theory, from the result of any act ; though it is only the consequences of its own acts that each soul has to endure. The force has been set in motion by itself and can never stop ; and its effect can never be foretold. If evil, it can never be modified or prevented, for it depends on a cause already completed, that is now for ever beyond the soul's control. There is even no continuing consciousness, no memory of the past that could guide the soul to any knowledge of its fate. The only advantage open to it is to add in this life to the sum of its good actions, that it may bear fruit with the rest. And even this can only happen in some future life under essentially the same conditions as the present one ; subject, like the present one, to old age, decay, and death ; and affording opportunity, like the present one, for the commission of errors, ignorances, or sins, which in their turn must inevitably produce their due effect of sickness, disability, or woe. Thus is the soul tossed about from life to life, from billow to billow in the great ocean of transmigration. And there is no escape save for the very few who, during their birth as men, attain to a right knowledge of the Great Spirit : and thus enter into immortality, or, as the later philosophers taught, are absorbed into the Divine Essence." (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 85—86.)

The state after death, thus imagined by the Hindu philosophers, has a certain analogy to the purgatory of the Roman Church ; except that escape from it is dependent not on a divine decree modified, it may be, by sacerdotal or saintly intercession, but by the acts of the individual himself ; and that while ultimate emergence into heavenly bliss of the good, or well-prayed for, Catholic is professedly assured, the chances in favour of the attainment of absorption, or of Nirvana, by any individual Hindu are extremely small.

*Note 6 (p. 15).*

“That part of the then prevalent transmigration theory which could not be proved false seemed to meet a deeply felt necessity, seemed to supply a moral cause which would explain the unequal distribution here of happiness or woe, so utterly inconsistent with the present characters of men.” Gautama “still therefore talked of men’s previous existence, but by no means in the way that he is generally represented to have done.” What he taught was “the transmigration of character.” “Gotama held that after the death of any being, whether human or not, there survived nothing at all but that being’s ‘Karma,’ the result, that is, of its mental and bodily actions. Every individual, whether human or divine, was the last inheritor and the last result of the Karma of a long series of past individuals—a series so long that its beginning is beyond the reach of calculation, and its end will be coincident with the destruction of the world.” (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, p. 92.)

In the theory of evolution, the tendency of a germ to develop according to a certain specific type, *e.g.* of the kidney bean seed to grow into a plant having all the characters of *Phaseolus vulgaris* is its ‘Karma.’ It is the “last inheritor and the last result” of all the conditions that have affected a line of ancestry which goes back for many millions of years to the time when life first appeared on the earth. The moiety B of the substance of the bean plant (see *Note 1*) is the last link in a once continuous chain extending from the primitive living substance: and the characters of the successive species to which it has given rise are the manifestations of its gradually modified Karma. As Prof. Rhys Davids aptly says, the snowdrop “is a snowdrop and not an oak, and just that kind of snowdrop, because it is the outcome of the Karma of an endless series of past existences.” (Hibbert Lectures, p. 114.)

*Note 7 (p. 17).*

“It is interesting to notice that the very point which is the weakness of the theory—the supposed concentration of the effect of the Karma in one new being—presented itself to the early

Buddhists themselves as a difficulty. They avoided it, partly by explaining that it was a particular thirst in the creature dying (a craving, *Tanhā*, which plays otherwise a great part in the Buddhist theory) which actually caused the birth of the new individual who was to inherit the Karma of the former one. But, how this took place, how the craving desire produced this effect was acknowledged to be a mystery patent only to a Buddha." (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, p. 95.)

Among the many parallelisms of Stoicism and Buddhism, it is curious to find one for this *Tanhā*, 'thirst,' or 'craving desire' for life. Seneca writes (Epist. lxxvi. 18): "*Si enim ullum aliud est bonum quam honestum, sequetur nos aviditas vitæ aviditas rerum vitam instruentium: quod est intolerabile infinitum, vagum.*"

*Note 8 (p. 19).*

"The distinguishing characteristic of Buddhism was that it started a new line, that it looked upon the deepest questions men have to solve from an entirely different standpoint. It swept away from the field of its vision the whole of the great soul-theory which had hitherto so completely filled and dominated the minds of the superstitious and the thoughtful alike. For the first time in the history of the world, it proclaimed a salvation which each man could gain for himself and by himself, in this world, during this life, without any the least reference to God, or to gods, either great or small. Like the Upanishads, it placed the first importance on knowledge; but it was no longer a knowledge of God, it was a clear perception of the real nature, as they supposed it to be, of men and things. And it added to the necessity of knowledge, the necessity of purity, of courtesy, of uprightness, of peace and of a universal love far reaching, grown great and beyond measure." (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, p. 29.)

The contemporary Greek philosophy takes an analogous direction. According to Heracleitus, the universe was made neither by gods nor men; but, from all eternity, has been, and to all eternity, will be, immortal fire, glowing and fading in due measure. (Mullach, *Heracleti Fragmenta*, 27.) And the part assigned by his successors the Stoics, to the knowledge and the

volition of the 'wise man' made their Divinity (for logical thinkers) a subject for compliments, rather than a power to be reckoned with. In Hindu speculation the 'Arahat,' still more the 'Buddha,' becomes the superior of Brahma; the stoical 'wise man' is, at least, the equal of Zeus.

Berkeley affirms over and over again that no idea can be formed of a soul or spirit—"If any man shall doubt of the truth of what is here delivered, let him but reflect and try if he can form any idea of power or active being; and whether he hath ideas of two principal powers marked by the names of *will* and *understanding* distinct from each other, as well as from a third idea of substance or being in general, with a relative notion of its supporting or being the subject of the aforesaid power, which is signified by the name *soul* or *spirit*. This is what some hold: but, so far as I can see, the words *will*, *soul*, *spirit*, do not stand for different ideas or in truth, for any idea at all, but for something which is very different from ideas, and which, being an agent, cannot be like unto or represented by any idea whatever [though it must be owned at the same time, that we have some notion of soul, spirit and the operations of the mind, such as willing, loving, hating, inasmuch as we know or understand the meaning of these words.]" (The Principles of Human Knowledge, lxxvi.)<sup>1</sup>

It is open to discussion, I think, whether it is possible to have 'some notion' of that of which we can form no 'idea.'

Berkeley attaches several predicates to the "perceiving active being mind, spirit, soul or myself" (Part I. II.). It is said, for example, to be "indivisible, incorporeal, unextended and incorruptible." The predicate indivisible, though negative in form has highly positive consequences. For, if 'perceiving active being' is strictly indivisible, man's soul must be one with the Divine spirit: which is good Hindu or Stoical doctrine, but hardly orthodox Christian philosophy. If, on the other hand, the 'substance' of active perceiving 'being' is actually divided into the one Divine and innumerable human entities, how can the predicate 'indivisible' be rigorously applicable to it?

<sup>1</sup> See also § lxxxix., cxxxv., cxlv.

Taking the words cited, as they stand, they amount to the denial of the possibility of any knowledge of substance. 'Matter' having been resolved into mere affections of 'spirit,' 'spirit' melts away into an admittedly inconceivable and unknowable hypostasis of thought and power—consequently the existence of anything in the universe beyond a flow of phenomena, is a purely hypothetical assumption. Indeed, a pyrrhonist might raise the objection that if 'esse' is "percipi" spirit itself can have no existence except as a perception, hypostatized into a 'self' or as a perception of some other spirit. In the former case, objective reality vanishes; in the latter, there would seem to be the need of an infinite series of spirits each perceiving the others.

It is curious to observe how very closely the phraseology of Berkeley sometimes approaches that of the Stoics: thus (cxlviii.) "It seems to be a *general pretence of the unthinking herd that they cannot see God*.....But, alas, we need only open our eyes to see the Sovereign Lord of all things with a more full and clear view, than we do any of our fellow creatures.....we do at all times and in all places perceive manifest tokens of the Divinity: everything we see, hear, feel, or any wise perceive by sense, being a sign or effect of the power of God]".....cxlix. "It is therefore plain, that *nothing can be more evident to any one that is capable of the least reflection, than the existence of God*, or a spirit who is intimately present to our minds producing in them all that variety of ideas or sensations, which continually affect us, on whom we have an absolute and entire dependence, in short, *in whom we live and move and have our being*." cl. [But you will say hath Nature no share in the production of natural things and must they be all ascribed to the immediate and sole operation of God?.....if by *Nature* is meant some being distinct from God, as well as from the laws of nature and things perceived by sense, I must confess that word is to me an empty sound, without any intelligible meaning annexed to it.] Nature in this acceptation is a vain *Chimæra* introduced by those heathens, who had not just notions of the omnipresence and infinite perfection of God."

(Compare Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, iv. 7.)

"Natura, inquit, hæc mihi præstat. Non intelligis te, quum hoc dicis, mutare Nomen Deo? Quid enim est aliud Natura



quam Deus, et divina ratio, toti mundo et partibus ejus inserta? Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare, et Jovem illum optimum et maximum rite dices, et tonantem, et statorem: qui non, ut historici tradiderunt, ex eo quod post votum susceptum acies Romanorum fugientum stetit, sed quod stant beneficio ejus omnia, stator, stabilitorque est: hunc eundem et fatum si dixeris, non mentieris, nam quum fatum nihil aliud est, quam series implexa causarum, ille est prima omnium causa, ea qua cæteræ pendent."

It would appear, therefore, that the good Bishop is somewhat hard upon the 'heathen,' of whose words his own might be a paraphrase.

There is yet another direction in which Berkeley's philosophy, I will not say agrees with Gautama's, but at any rate, helps to make a fundamental dogma of Buddhism intelligible.

"I find I can excite ideas in my mind at pleasure, and vary and shift the scene as often as I think fit. It is no more than willing, and straightway this or that idea arises in my fancy: and by the same power, it is obliterated, and makes way for another. This making and unmaking of ideas doth very properly denominate the mind active. Thus much is certain and grounded on experience. . ." (Principles, xxviii.)

A good many of us, I fancy, have reason to think that experience tells them very much the contrary; and are painfully familiar with the obsession of the mind by ideas which cannot be obliterated by any effort of the will and steadily refuse to make way for any others. But what I desire to point out is that if Gautama was equally confident that he could 'make and unmake' ideas—then, since he had resolved self into a group of ideal phantoms—the possibility of abolishing self by volition naturally followed.

#### *Note 9 (p. 20).*

According to Buddhism, the relation of one life to the next, is merely that borne by the flame of one lamp to the flame of another lamp which is set alight by it. To the 'Arahat' or adept "no outward form, no compound thing, no creature, no creator, no existence of any kind, must appear to be other than a temporary collocation of its component parts fated

inevitably to be dissolved.”—(Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, p. 211.)

The self is nothing but a group of phenomena held together by the desire of life ; when that desire shall have ceased “ the Karma of that particular chain of lives will cease to influence any longer any distinct individual, and there will be no more birth ; for birth, decay, and death, grief, lamentation, and despair will have come, so far as regards that chain of lives, for ever to an end.”

The state of mind of the Arahāt in which the desire of life has ceased is Nirvana. Dr. Oldenberg has very acutely and patiently considered the various interpretations which have been attached to ‘Nirvana’ in the work to which I have referred (p. 285 *et seq.*)—The result of his and other discussions of the question may I think be briefly stated thus :

1. Logical deduction from the predicates attached to the term ‘Nirvana’ strips it of all reality, conceivability, or per-  
ceivability, whether by gods or men. For all practical purposes  
therefore, it comes to exactly the same thing as annihilation.

2. But it is not annihilation in the ordinary sense, inasmuch  
as it could take place in the living Arahāt or Buddha.

3. And, since, for the faithful Buddhist, that which was  
abolished in the Arahāt was the possibility of further pain,  
sorrow, or sin ; and that which was attained was perfect peace ;  
his mind directed itself exclusively to this joyful consummation,  
and personified the negation of all conceivable existence and of all  
pain into a positive bliss. This was all the more easy, as  
Gautama refused to give any dogmatic definition of Nirvana.  
There is something analogous in the way in which people  
commonly talk of the ‘happy release’ of a man who has been  
long suffering from mortal disease. According to their own  
views, it must always be extremely doubtful whether the man  
will be any happier after the ‘release’ than before. But they  
do not choose to look at the matter in this light.

The popular notion that, with practical, if not metaphysical,  
annihilation in view, Buddhism must needs be a sad and gloomy  
faith seems to be inconsistent with fact ; on the contrary, the  
prospect of Nirvana fills the true believer, not merely with  
cheerfulness but with an ecstatic desire to reach it.

*Note 10 (p. 21).*

The influence of the picture of the personal qualities of Gautama, afforded by the legendary anecdotes which rapidly grew into a biography of the Buddha and by the birth stories, which coalesced with the current folk-lore, and were intelligible to all the world, doubtless played a large part. Further, although Gautama appears not to have meddled with the caste system, he refused to recognize any distinction, save that of perfection in the way of salvation, among his followers; and by such teaching, no less than by the inculcation of love and benevolence to all sentient beings, he practically levelled every social, political and racial barrier. A third important condition was the organization of the Buddhists into monastic communities for the stricter professors, while the laity were permitted a wide indulgence in practice and were allowed to hope for accommodation in some of the temporary abodes of bliss. With a few hundred thousand years of immediate paradise in sight, the average man could be content to shut his eyes to what might follow.

*Note 11 (p. 22).*

In ancient times it was the fashion, even among the Greeks themselves, to derive all Greek wisdom from Eastern sources; not long ago it was as generally denied that Greek philosophy had any connexion with oriental speculation; it seems probable, however, that the truth lies between these extremes.

The Ionian intellectual movement does not stand alone. It is only one of several sporadic indications of the working of some powerful mental ferment over the whole of the area comprised between the Ægean and northern Hindostan during the eight, seventh, and sixth centuries before our era. In these three hundred years, prophetism attained its apogee among the Semites of Palestine; Zoroasterism grew and became the creed of a conquering race, the Iranic Aryans; Buddhism rose and spread with marvellous rapidity among the Aryans of Hindostan; while scientific naturalism took its rise among the Aryans of Ionia. It would be difficult to find another three centuries which have given birth to four events of equal importance. All the

principal existing religions of mankind have grown out of the first three : while the fourth is the little spring, now swollen into the great stream of positive science. So far as physical possibilities go, the prophet Jeremiah and the oldest Ionian philosopher might have met and conversed. If they had done so, they would probably have disagreed a good deal ; and it is interesting to reflect that their discussions might have embraced questions which, at the present day, are still hotly controverted.

The old Ionian philosophy then, seems to be only one of many results of a stirring of the moral and intellectual life of the Aryan and the Semitic populations of Western Asia. The conditions of this general awakening were doubtless manifold : but there is one which modern research has brought into great prominence. This is the existence of extremely ancient and highly advanced societies in the valleys of the Euphrates and of the Nile.

It is now known that, more than a thousand—perhaps more than two thousand—years before the sixth century B.C., civilization had attained a relatively high pitch among the Babylonians and the Egyptians. Not only had painting, sculpture, architecture, and the industrial arts, reached a remarkable development ; but in Chaldaea, at any rate, a vast amount of knowledge had been accumulated and methodised, in the departments of grammar, mathematics, astronomy and natural history. Where such tracts of the scientific spirit are visible, naturalistic speculation is rarely far off, though, so far as I know, no remains of an Accadian, or Egyptian, philosophy, properly so called, have yet been recovered.

Geographically, Chaldaea occupied a central position among the oldest seats of civilization. Commerce, largely aided by the intervention of those colossal pedlars, the Phœnicians, had brought Chaldaea into connexion with all of them, for a thousand years before the epoch at present under consideration. And in the ninth, eighth, and seventh centuries, the Assyrian, the depositary of Chaldaean civilization, as the Macedonian and the Roman, at a later date, were the depositaries of Greek culture, had added irresistible force to the other agencies for the wide distribution of Chaldaean literature, art and science.

I confess that I find it difficult to imagine that the Greek immigrants—who stood in somewhat the same relation to the

Babylonians and the Egyptians, as the later Germanic barbarians to the Romans of the Empire—should not have been immensely influenced by the new life with which they became acquainted. But there is abundant direct evidence of the magnitude of this influence in certain spheres. I suppose it is not doubted that the Greek went to school with the Oriental for his primary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic : and that Semitic theology supplied him with some of his mythological lore. Nor does there now seem to be any question about the large indebtedness of Greek art to that of Chaldæa and that of Egypt.

But the manner of that indebtedness is very instructive. The obligation is clear, but its limits are no less definite. Nothing better exemplifies the indomitable originality of the Greeks than the relations of their art to that of the Orientals. Far from being subdued into mere imitators by the technical excellence of their teachers, they lost no time in bettering the instruction they received, using their models as mere stepping stones on the way to those unsurpassed and unsurpassable achievements which are all their own. The shibboleth of Art is the human figure. The ancient Chaldæans and Egyptians, like the modern Japanese, did wonders in the representation of birds and quadrupeds ; they even attained to something more than respectability in human portraiture. But their utmost efforts never brought them within range of the best Greek embodiments of the grace of womanhood, or of the severer beauty of manhood.

It is worth while to consider the probable effect upon the acute and critical Greek mind of the conflict of ideas, social, political and theological, which arose out of the conditions of life in the Asiatic colonies. The Ionian polities had passed through the whole gamut of social and political changes, from patriarchal and occasionally oppressive kingship to rowdy and still more burdensome mobship—no doubt with infinitely eloquent and copious argumentation, on both sides, at every stage of their progress towards that arbitrament of force which settles most political questions. The marvellous speculative faculty, latent in the Ionian, had come in contact with Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Phœnician theologies and cosmogonies ; with the illuminati of Orphism and the fanatics and dreamers of the Mysteries ; possibly with Buddhism and Zoroasterism ; possibly even with Judaism. And it has been observed that the mutual contradictions of antagon-

istic supernaturalisms are apt to play a large part among the generative agencies of naturalism.

Thus, various external influences may have contributed to the rise of philosophy among the Ionian Greeks of the sixth century. But the assimilative capacity of the Greek mind—its power of Hellenizing whatever it touched—has here worked so effectually, that so far as I can learn, no indubitable traces of such extraneous contributions are now allowed to exist by the most authoritative historians of Philosophy. Nevertheless, I think it must be admitted that the coincidences between the Heracleito-stoical doctrines and those of the older Hindu philosophy are extremely remarkable. In both, the cosmos pursues an eternal succession of cyclical changes. The great year, answering to the Kalpa, covers an entire cycle from the origin of the universe as a fluid, to its dissolution in fire—"Humor initium, ignis exitus mundi," as Seneca has it. In both systems, there is immanent in the cosmos a source of energy, Brahma, or the Logos, which works according to fixed laws. The individual soul is an efflux of this world-spirit and returns to it. Perfection is attainable only by individual effort, through ascetic discipline, and is rather a state of painlessness than of happiness; if indeed it can be said to be a state of anything, save the negation of perturbing emotion. The hatchment motto "*In Cœlo Quies*" would serve both Hindu and Stoic; and absolute quiet is not easily distinguishable from annihilation.

Zoroasterism, which, geographically, occupies a position intermediate between Hellenism and Hinduism, agrees with the latter in recognizing the essential evil of the cosmos; but differs from both in its intensely anthropomorphic personification of the two antagonistic principles, to the one of which it ascribes all the good; and, to the other, all the evil. In fact, it assumes the existence of two worlds, one good and one bad; the latter created by the evil power for the purpose of damaging the former. The existing cosmos is a mere mixture of the two and the 'last judgment' is a root and branch extirpation of the work of Ahriman.

*Note 12 (p. 22).*

There is no snare in which the feet of a modern student of ancient lore, are more easily entangled, than that which is spread by the similarity of the language of antiquity to modern modes of expression. I do not presume to interpret the obscurest of Greek philosophers; all I wish is to point out, that his words, in the sense accepted by competent interpreters, fit modern ideas singularly well.

So far as the general theory of evolution goes there is no difficulty. The aphorism about the river; the figure of the child playing on the shore; the kingship and fatherhood of strife seem decisive. The ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μίη expresses, with singular aptness, the cyclical aspect of the one process of organic evolution in individual plants and animals; yet it may be a question whether the Heracleitean strife included any distinct conception of the struggle for existence. Again, it is tempting to compare the part played by the Heracleitean 'fire' with that ascribed by the moderns to heat, or rather to that cause of motion of which heat is one expression; and a little ingenuity might find a foreshadowing of the doctrine of the conservation of energy, in the saying that all the things are changed into fire and fire into all things, as gold into goods and goods into gold.

*Note 13 (p. 23).*

Pope's lines in the 'Essay on Man.' (Ep. i., 267—8.)

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul,"

simply paraphrase Seneca's "quem in hoc mundo locum deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus: quod est illic materia, id nobis corpus est."—(Ep. lxx. 24); which again is a Latin version of the old Stoical doctrine, εἰς ἅπαν τοῦ κόσμου μέρος δίδκει ὁ νοῦς, καθάπερ ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχή.

So far as testimony for the universality of what ordinary people call 'evil,' goes, there is nothing better than the writings of the Stoics themselves. They might serve as a storehouse for the epigrams of the ultra-pessimists. Heracleitus (*circa* 500 B.C.) says just as hard things about ordinary humanity as his disciples

centuries later; and there really seems no need to seek for the causes of this dark view of life in the circumstances of the time of Alexander's successors or of the early Emperors of Rome. To the man with an ethical ideal, the world, including himself, will always seem full of evil.

*Note 14 (p. 25).*

I use the well-known phrase, but decline responsibility for the libel upon Epicurus, whose doctrines were far less compatible with existence in a sty than those of the Cynics. If it were steadily borne in mind that the conception of the 'flesh' as the source of evil, and that the great saying 'Initium est salutis notitia peccati,' are the property of Epicurus, fewer illusions about Epicureanism would pass muster for accepted truth.

*Note 15 (p. 27).*

The Stoics said that man was a ζῷον λογικὸν πολιτικὸν φιλόπληγον, or a rational, a political, and an altruistic, or philanthropic animal. In their view, his higher nature tended to develop in these three directions as a plant tends to grow up into its typical form. Since, without the introduction of any consideration of pleasure or pain, whatever thwarted the realization of its type by the plant might be said to be bad, and whatever helped it good; so virtue, in the Stoical sense, as the conduct which tended to the attainment of the rational, political, and philanthropic ideal, was good in itself, and irrespectively of its emotional concomitants.

Man is an "animal sociale communi bono genitum." The safety of society depends upon practical recognition of the fact. "Salva autem esse societas nisi custodia et amore partium non possit," says Seneca. (De. Ira. ii. 31.)

*Note 16 (p. 27).*

The importance of the physical doctrine of the Stoics, lies in its clear recognition of the universality of the law of causation, with its corollary, the order of nature: the exact form of that order is an altogether secondary consideration.



Many ingenious persons now appear to consider that the incompatibility of pantheism, of materialism and of any doubt about the immortality of the soul, with religion and morality, is to be held as an axiomatic truth. I confess that I have a certain difficulty in accepting this dogma. For the Stoics were notoriously materialists and pantheists of the most extreme character; and while no strict Stoic believed in the eternal duration of the individual soul, some even denied its persistence after death. Yet it is equally certain that of all gentile philosophies, Stoicism exhibits the highest ethical development, is animated by the most religious spirit, and has exerted the profoundest influence upon the moral and religious development not merely of the best men among the Romans, but among the moderns down to our own day.

Seneca was claimed as a Christian and placed among the saints by the fathers of the early Christian Church; and the genuineness of a correspondence between him and the apostle Paul has been hotly maintained in our own time, by orthodox writers. That the letters, as we possess them, are worthless forgeries is obvious; and writers as wide apart as Baur and Lightfoot agree that the whole story is devoid of foundation.

The dissertation of the late Bishop of Durham<sup>1</sup> is particularly worthy of study, apart from this question, on account of the evidence which it supplies of the numerous similarities of thought between Seneca and the writer of the Pauline epistles. When it is remembered that the writer of the Acts puts a quotation from Aratus, or Cleanthes, into the mouth of the apostle; and that Tarsus was a great seat of philosophical and especially stoical learning (Chrysippus himself was a native of the adjacent town of Sôli) there is no difficulty in understanding the origin of these resemblances. See, on this subject, Sir Alexander Grant's dissertation in his edition of 'The Ethics of Aristotle' (where there is an interesting reference to the stoical character of Bishop Butler's ethics), the concluding pages of Dr. Weygoldt's instructive little work *Die Philosophie der Stoa*, and Aubertin's *Sénèque et Saint Paul*.

It is surprising that a writer of Dr. Lightfoot's stamp should speak of Stoicism as a philosophy of 'despair.' Surely, rather, it

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot, *Epistle to the Philippians*.

was a philosophy of men, who having cast off all illusions, and the childishness of despair among them, were minded to endure in patience whatever conditions the cosmic process might create, so long as those conditions were compatible with the progress towards virtue, which alone, for them, conferred a worthy object on existence. There is no note of despair in the stoical declaration that the perfected 'wise man' is the equal of Zeus in everything but the duration of his existence. And, in my judgment there is as little pride about it—often as it serves for the text of discourses on stoical arrogance. Grant the stoical postulate that there is no good except virtue; grant that the perfected wise man is altogether virtuous, in consequence of being guided in all things by the reason, which is an effluence of Zeus and there seems no escape from the stoical conclusion.

*Note 17 (p. 28).*

Our 'Apathy' carries such a different set of connotations from its Greek original that I have ventured on using the latter as a technical term.

*Note 18 (p. 29).*

Many of the stoical philosophers recommended their disciples to take an active share in public affairs; and in the Roman world, for several centuries, the best public men were strongly inclined to Stoicism. Nevertheless, the logical tendency of Stoicism seems to me to be fulfilled only in such men as Diogenes and Epictetus.

*Note 19 (p. 33).*

Of course, strictly speaking, social life and the ethical process in virtue of which it advances towards perfection, are part and parcel of the general process of evolution, just as the gregarious habit of innumerable plants and animals, which has been of immense advantage to them, is so. A hive of bees is an organic polity, a society in which the part played by each member is determined by organic necessities. Queens, workers, and drones, are, so to speak, castes, divided from one another by marked physical barriers. Among birds and mammals, societies are formed, of

which the bond in many cases seems to be purely psychological ; that is to say, it appears to depend upon the liking of the individuals for one another's company. The tendency of individuals to over self-assertion is kept down by fighting. Even in these rudimentary forms of society, love and fear come into play, and enforce a greater or less renunciation of self-will. To this extent the general cosmic process begins to be checked by a rudimentary ethical process, which is, strictly speaking, part of the former just as the 'governor' in a steam-engine is part of the mechanism of the engine.

*Note 20 (p. 35).*

"L'homme n'est qu'un roseau, le plus faible de la nature, mais c'est un roseau pensant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser. Une vapeur, une goutte d'eau, suffit pour le tuer. Mais quand l'univers l'écraserait, l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt ; et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui, l'univers n'en sait rien."

*Pensées de Pascal.* Chap. II. x.

*Note 21 (p. 37).*

A great proportion of poetry is addressed by the young to the young ; only the great masters of the art are capable of divining, or think it worth while to enter into, the feelings of retrospective age. The two great poets whom we have so lately lost, Tennyson and Browning, have done this, each in his own inimitable way ; the one in the 'Ulysses,' from which I have borrowed ; the other in that wonderful fragment 'Childe Roland to the dark Tower came.'

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