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Evolutionism
and
Idealism in Ethics

...By...

Frederick Cohn, A. B., A. M., Ph. D.

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

1909

Evolutionism and Idealism in Ethics

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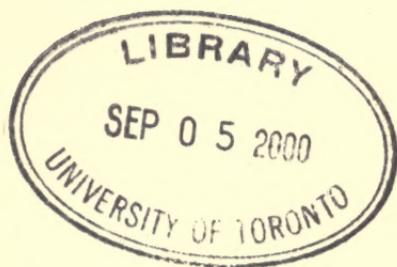
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER I.	
EVOLUTIONISM	6
CHAPTER II.	
EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS— <i>Herbert Spencer</i>	10
PART I. Ethical Aim of Spencer's Philosophy. Scientific Character.	
PART II. Origin of the Moral Sense	
PART III. Hedonistic Utilitarianism	
PART IV. Justice	
PART V. Negative and Positive Beneficence	
CHAPTER III.	
EVOLUTION OF ETHICS— <i>Darwin, Sutherland, Kropotkin</i>	28
CHAPTER IV.	
IDEALISM— <i>Immanuel Kant</i>	40
CHAPTER V.	
SUMMARY AND CRITICISM	47
CHAPTER VI.	
CONVERGENCE	54
CHAPTER VII.	
RECONCILIATION	60

Evolutionism and Idealism in Ethics.

INTRODUCTION.

"The key to the ancient philosophy is found," remarks Martineau,¹ "in a distinction which our language does not enable us accurately to express; viz., between *einai* and *gignesthai*,—Seyn und Werden,—absolute existence and relative phenomena."

"The key to the modern philosophy," continues the same eminent writer, "is found in quite a different distinction, viz., that between the subjective and objective—between the mind, as constituted seat and principle of thought, and the scene or data assigned it to think. To determine what belongs to the Ego and what to the non-Ego is the great problem of recent times; the answer to which is *idealistic* and *realistic* in proportion as it gives ascendancy to the former or to the latter as the source of our cognitions."²

Evolutionism and Idealism are the two great systems that dominate thought to-day. They divide between them the realm of philosophic interest and inquiry. Each has its able advocates and expounders. From their mutual contact and reciprocal influence proceed the best currents in the higher thought and scientific speculation of our day.

It is the purpose of these pages to consider Evolutionism and Idealism with particular reference to Ethics,—their bearing on, special character in, and general significance for, this most important of the sciences.³

1 Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. 1. Introd. p. 1.

2 Ibid, p. 2.

3 "The supreme human science." (Alexander, Moral Order and Progress, p. 259).

CHAPTER I.

EVOLUTIONISM.

By evolutionism we mean the ideas and doctrines connected with the general theory of evolution.

Evolution is the theory of development. It is associated particularly and classically with the name of Herbert Spencer, who may be said, in modern times, to have been its founder and chief exponent, and whose great distinction it is to have elaborated and systematically formulated its ideas, and to have applied them to the whole realm of human knowledge in his monumental life-work, the imposing volumes of the *Synthetic Philosophy*.¹

Evolution includes also what is known as Darwinism, which, however, is restricted to the scientific explanation of the development of species in plants and in animals, through struggle for life and variation due to natural selection with resulting survival of the fittest, as set forth by Darwin in his epoch-making work, "*The Origin of Species*" (1859). Evolution is the broader term referring to the development of the universe.

Stated briefly, Evolution is the development of the simple into the complex. In one word, it is "complexity." "Evolution means growing complexity."² In Spencer's own more technical language, it is the change "from a simple homogeneity to a complex heterogeneity." The law is variously stated in Spencer's writings and even itself underwent development³ in the progress of his thought; but always with the same fundamental factors, reaching its final, most complete expression in what may be termed the *formula of evolution*,—"a continuous change from indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to definite, coherent heterogeneity of structure and function, through successive differentiations and integrations."⁴ Always it implies growth, progress, development in conformity with the laws of life and through the adjustment of inner relations to outer relations—

1 Mackintosh, *From Comte to Benjamin Kidd*, p. 83.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 67. Schurman, *Import of Darwinism*, p. 53.

3 Hudson, *Philosophy of Herbert Spencer*, p. 82 ff; also MacPherson, *Spencer and Spencerism*, p. 48 ff.

4 Hudson, p. 88. Cf. Spencer, *First Principles*, Sec. 145.

which constitutes, indeed, the essence or, at all events, the definition of life.

The idea of evolution was not absolutely new.¹ It existed already among the ancients, in Hindu Cosmogonies, notably among the Greeks, and was the distinguishing doctrine of Heraclitus,² with his famous theory of Becoming. "The general conception of systematic growth, advance, or orderly progression from matter to life, from the polyp to man, from the atom to the cosmos, was as familiar to Greek thought as to modern evolutionary science. The Greek natural philosophers held that the course of the world consisted in a gradual transition from the indeterminate to the determinate, so that higher and more complex forms of existence follow and depend on the lower and simpler forms."³ In 1755 Kant, in his "Theory of The Heavens," in the so-called Nebular Hypothesis, endeavored to trace the evolution of the universe from primitive star-dust to the present cosmos;⁴ and the conception of evolution became through him well-known in German philosophy, and also through the systems of Schelling and Hegel. But it was only after the great biological investigations of the eighteenth century, and the researches and discoveries in the fields of botany, geology and astronomy; after the labors of Goethe in Germany, Geoffroy St. Hilaire, Lamarck, and Laplace in France, Erasmus Darwin and Lyell in England and particularly Charles Darwin, and the publication of the latter's epoch-making "Origin of Species" (1859), with its theory of natural selection which first put the doctrine of evolution on a scientific basis, (Darwin being the first to discover an adequate scientific cause to explain the variation of species, and the principle, or as Schurman suggests, "mechanism,"⁵ of development) that the idea of evolution assumed new and momentous importance, and was applied with thorough-going, scientific exactness to the whole realm of knowledge with most fruitful result and with radical and even revolutionary effect. The idea and the philosophy of evolution have dominated the thought of the latter half of the nineteenth century. All the sciences have been re-written, re-classified, transformed. Its influence has been remarkable, and after half a century is still felt

1 Schurman, I. of D., p. 43 ff.

2 Cf. Windleband, Hist. of Phil., p. 47 ff.

3 Schurman, p. 47.

4 Ibid, p. 50. Fiske, Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy, Vol. II., p. 325.

5 p. 54.

in most positive ways, with vivifying force, and illuminating and productive power.

Probably in no realm did the theory of evolution, and what is implied in evolutionism, produce such a tremendous effect, and have such a remarkable influence, as in the sphere of ethics and its allied province of religion.¹ Here, from the first, it encountered the strongest opposition, and met with the fiercest criticism and denunciation.² It was felt by the advocates of the traditional theories of morality and religion, not merely vitally to effect, but completely to undermine them, to be thoroughly subversive of their fundamental positions and distinctions, and absolutely destructive of all for which they stood. Its influence upon them was believed to be wholly baneful. Evolutionism in the realm of ethics and religion seemed to be synonymous not merely with materialism, but with the rankest sensualism and with atheism. Its leaders and expounders have been held up to the greatest ridicule, subjected to every species of misrepresentation, scientific and popular, and have even been regarded as enemies of society and foes of civilization and the race. Every new book which professed to treat morality and religion from the standpoint of evolution was treated with scant courtesy and with ironical and contemptuous disdain; and that, too, not only by bigots, and ignorant and fanatic persons, but by men with pretensions to scholarship and scientific and philosophical equipment.³

In recent years there has been a complete change. The doctrine of evolution, while by no means universally accepted as a fact, has at least commended itself to a constantly increasing number of minds. The idea, even as a "working-principle," has been found of the greatest helpfulness and creative usefulness. And to-day, in the realms of ethics and religion, too, in the most careful and profound works, the idea of evolution is applied, or at least considered, in a wholly dispassionate, calm, and scientific spirit.⁴ "Now every year, and almost every month, brings with it a fresh supply of books, pamphlets, and magazine articles on 'The Evolution of Morality,'

1 Williams, *Review of Evolutional Ethics*, p. 1.

2 Macpherson instances the attack of Hugh Miller, p. 38. note. Cf. Bowne's book on Spencer.

3 Schurman's *Kantian Ethics and Ethics of Evolution*, published as late as 1881, is not free from this hostile animus. Bixby's *Crisis in Morals* is more fair.

4 T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 87.

'L'Evolution de la Morale,' 'Die Evolution der Sittlichkeit,' 'Sittlichkeit und Darwinismus,'"¹ etc. The author of the foregoing quotation has made an independent study of no less than thirteen writers on evolutionary ethics, whose books he refers to as a "few" that are "most prominent." Among these, besides Darwin, Wallace, Haeckel, Spencer and Fiske, are Leslie Stephen² and S. Alexander.³ In the less than fifteen years since his review was written there have appeared,—to name only the most important,—Huxley's "Evolution and Ethics" (1894), Drummond's "Ascent of Man" (1894), A. Sutherland's "Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct" (2 Vols. 1898), P. Kropotkin's "Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution" (1902), Westermarck's "Origin and Development of Moral Ideas" (1906), and "Morals in Evolution: A Study in Comparative Ethics" (L. T. Hobhouse, 1907, 2 Vols.); also "Darwinism and the Problems of Life" (Conrad Guenther, translated by Joseph McCabe, 1907).

All of these works treat of ethics as affected by, or viewed from, the standpoint of evolution or development.

1 Williams, R. of E. E. (1893), p. 2.

2 Science of Ethics (1882).

3 Moral Order and Progress (1889).

CHAPTER II.

THE EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS—HERBERT SPENCER.

PART I.

ETHICAL AIM OF SPENCER'S PHILOSOPHY. SCIENTIFIC CHARACTER.

"The application of evolution to morals," remarks Professor Alexander,¹ "may mean only the employment of biological ideas; or it may mean that morals must be treated as one part of a comprehensive view of the universe, in which a steady development may be observed from the lowest to the highest phenomena,² and a development, it may be added, which follows the law of the survival of the fittest."³

The essential character of the evolutionary ethics, in all its phases, may best be understood from a study of the ethical writings of Herbert Spencer, their original and typical expounder and "most influential teacher."⁴ All the prominent writers on evolutionary morals either derive their theories directly from him or have been largely influenced by his speculations and conclusions.

Spencer's ethics are to be found, (besides in "Social Statics," his first work, 1850) mainly in his great ethical treatises which form a part of his Synthetic Philosophy, "The Principles of Morals," published in three volumes (1893). These were divided into parts, of which Part I of Vol. I had already appeared as (substantially the same) the "Data of Ethics" (1876). Part II contained "The Inductions of Ethics," while Part III treated of "The Ethics of Individual Life." Part IV constituted "Justice" (published in advance, 1891). Parts V and VI, completing the Ethics, treated of "Negative and Positive Beneficence" (1893).

These ethical writings formed a part of Spencer's general system of Evolution, and indeed a highly important, and even a main part. We have warrant for considering them the crown and culmination of Spencer's whole system of thinking. In his "Autobiography"⁵ he expressly says, "The whole system was at the outset,

¹ M. O. & P., p. 14.

² As in Westermarck, *Hobhouse*; **historical ethics**.

³ His own original contribution, regarding the growth of a new ideal as analogous to growth of new species in organic world. His struggle of ideals Mackintosh characterizes as a "bloodless and well-nigh painless Darwinism." (Fr. C. to K., p. 149).

⁴ Sidgwick, *History of Ethics*, p. 255.

⁵ Vol. II., p. 369.

and has ever continued to be, a basis for a right rule of life, individual and social." Spencer's interest, then, was primarily ethical. I deem this fact most striking, and of the highest importance in properly weighing and estimating Spencer's philosophy,¹ and assigning it place and rank among other systems. It was, properly speaking, no speculative interest, but a practical bias, that led him to formulate his great laws of thought, and set forth so comprehensively and exhaustively the conditions of existence. The thought is borne in on one more and more that Spencer has a right to be regarded as a great moralist, as one of the greatest ethical teachers of his generation; and this may probably constitute his greatest claim to future remembrance. In the preface to the "Data of Ethics" he says, "Written as far back as 1842 (Spencer was then only twenty-two years old) my first essay, consisting of letters on 'The Proper Sphere of Government,' vaguely indicated what I conceived to be certain general principles of right and wrong in political conduct; and from that time onward my *ultimate purpose, lying behind all proximate purposes*, has been that of finding for the principles of right and wrong, in conduct at large, a scientific basis." Could language be plainer or more explicit? From the very beginning of his intellectual activity his interest lay in *moral questions*, and his "ultimate purpose, lying behind all proximate purposes," was to find for the principles of right and wrong in the whole realm of conduct "a scientific basis." This fact, I repeat, I think worthy of the greatest emphasis, and consider of the utmost importance in a true, scientific evaluation of the evolutionary system as a whole. It was this part of the task to which he regarded "all the preceding parts as subsidiary." The evolutionary system as a whole, I take it, apart from its intrinsic character, its own special propositions and formulations, is to be viewed and judged, also *in the light of its end*, and to have its special character stamped and marked in accordance with that judgment. Only thus, it seems to me, does one reach the highest *scientific* estimate, or arrive at a due philosophical appreciation of the *full import* of "evolutionism." Surely that is not science which neglects any of the factors, and only the stultification and abdication of science which neglects *one of the highest factors of all*. And it shall ever remain a most significant fact that the great

¹ "The constituent elements of an organism can only be truly and adequately conceived as rendered what they are by the end realized through the organism." Green, p. 83.

founder of the evolutionary philosophy was led to his colossal work through interest in ethical questions.

We must include here Spencer's testimony to the value and need of morality. "Few things can happen more disastrous than the decay and death of a regulative system no longer fit."¹ Spencer regarded morality as of supreme worth. The dedication of his whole life, as well as—as we have seen—of his whole system, in its behalf, in its scientific establishment and philosophic affirmation and confirmation, is most eloquent proof of this, and constitutes, at the same time, one of the most inspiring chapters in the biography of modern heroism. This fact, too, is to be taken into account in our judgment and full final evaluation of "evolutionism,"—the life and character of its leaders and exponents.² The worth of Science as a whole is judged, and rightly judged, by its effects and influence upon the devotees of science, upon those engaged in scientific investigations and labors, theoretical and practical;³ and in the same way the precise and complete character of this department of scientific thought, this division of scientific ideas, this area of philosophy which we call "Evolutionism," can be fully determined only by a knowledge of the lives and characters of its chief promulgators and illustrators. Judged in the light of Spencer's life-long devotion, in spite of almost constant invalidism, to his aims (not to mention other matters such as his probably deliberately chosen celibacy, sacrifice of a worldly career that would no doubt have been as prosperous as brilliant), Spencer's labors for the support and not the subversal or undermining⁴ of morality and ethics,⁵ take on the highest character and positively assume the proportions of the grand and the heroic.⁶

Spencer's system, broadly characterized, is what Martineau calls Hedonistic Utilitarian. It is opposed to asceticism, is against what he terms the "impossible," against "rules that cannot be obeyed." He pleads for a sane and scientific morality, in accordance with the laws of life and the essential conditions of existence. Spencer rec-

1 Data of Ethics, preface.

2 Cf. Sidgwick, H. of E., p. 31.

3 Spencer's Essay, "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth."

4 As in Nietzsche with his "Herren-Moral," regarding ordinary morality as "Slave-Morality."

5 Same may be said of his system's final effect upon religion. See Autobiography, Vol. II., p. 547.

6 Crapsey calls Darwin a "saint." (Religion and Politics, p. 292).

ognizes his system's "essential likeness" to that of a certain class who yet criticise his own, because of a difference of derivation. "Ethical principles otherwise derived by them, coincide with ethical principles scientifically derived."¹ The difference, he insists, is one of origin, not of content. He resents the imputation that he is an "atheist" if he diverges from "established theological dogma," and he indignantly repudiates the name "materialist." There is no fundamental antagonism, he maintains, in the differences that exist between "natural morality" and what he calls "supernatural morality."

The words "secularization of morals,"² in my opinion, best describe Spencer's ethical system. Morality is not destroyed or invalidated, as it is in the systems of some thinkers, Nietzsche for instance. Spencer's moral rules are practically those of the current ethical code. He speaks of their having a "general authority to be reverently recognized."³ Justice, kindness, truth, virtue, chastity, duty, peace, perfection, even the ideal, are cardinal words in his system also, have all the force and value for Spencer that they have for the most pronounced traditional moralist. The difference is that these ideas are arrived at through a process of reasoning, that is, are scientifically deduced and philosophically formulated and validated. "Their dictates have to be interpreted and made definite by science."⁴ The method of this "analysis" and synthesis and consequent "secularization" we shall now proceed to show. And, first, let us examine Spencer's account of the origin of the moral sense itself.

PART II.

ORIGIN OF THE MORAL SENSE.

Throughout the whole of human conduct there are necessary relations of cause and effect, and from these are derived all moral rules, however much these may be proximately derived from moral intuitions.⁵

Spencer's explanation of moral intuitions is unique, and con-

1 D. of E., preface.

2 Ibid.

3 D. of E., sec. 63.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid, sec. 20.

stitutes a positive contribution to modern thought in the reconciliation of the views of the empirical psychologists represented by Locke and those of the older intuitionists. Spencer makes original use of the Lamarckian doctrine of "use-inheritance." In a letter to Mr. Mill, published in Bain's "Mental and Moral Science,"¹ we find the following passages:

"Moral intuitions are the results of accumulated experiences of utility, gradually organized and inherited," and "come to be quite independent of conscious experience." . . . "The experiences of utility, organized and consolidated through all past experience of the human race, have been producing nervous modifications which by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us *certain faculties of moral intuition*, certain emotions corresponding to *right and wrong* conduct, which have no apparent basis in the individual experience of utility."

To the above, Spencer added in the "Data of Ethics,"²—"The evolution-hypothesis thus enables us to reconcile opposed theories of knowledge. For, as the doctrine of innate forms of intellectual intuition falls into harmony with the experimental doctrine, when we recognize the production of intellectual faculties by inheritance of effects wrought by experience; so the doctrine of innate powers of moral perception becomes congruous with the utilitarian doctrine, when it is seen that preferences and aversions are rendered *organic by inheritance* of the effects of pleasurable and painful experiences in progenitors."³

These intuitions are the slowly-organized results of experiences received by the race while living in the presence of the conditions to the achievement of the highest life.⁴

The origin of moral obligation is the sentiment of duty in general, which latter is an abstract sentiment generated in a manner analogous to that in which abstract ideas are generated.⁵

Accumulated experiences have produced the consciousness that guidance of feelings which refer to remote and general results is usually more conducive to welfare than guidance by feelings to be immediately gratified.⁶ The common character of feelings that

¹ Third edition, p. 721.

² Sec. 46.

³ Cf. Fiske. O. of C. P., Vol. II., Chapter XXII.

⁴ D. of E., Sec. 63.

⁵ D. of E., Sec. 47.

⁶ Ibid.

prompt honesty, truthfulness, diligence, providence, etc., which men find to be better prompters than the appetites and simple impulses, is that they are all complex, re-representative feelings, occupied with the future rather than the present. Therefore, the idea of *authoritativeness* comes to be connected with feelings having these traits, and this idea of authoritativeness is one element in the abstract consciousness of duty.¹

Another element is *co-erciveness*. This originates from the experience of political, religious, and social restraints that have established themselves in the course of civilization.

In Spencer's account of the political, religious and social restraints lies the core of his teaching with regard to the origin of the moral consciousness. His theory is as follows:

The essential trait in the moral consciousness is the control of some feeling or feelings by some other feeling or feelings. As social evolution renders the life more complex, the restraints many and strong, the evils of impulsive conduct marked, and the comforts to be gained by providing for the future tolerably certain, there come experiences numerous enough to make familiar the benefits of subordinating the simpler feelings to the more complex ones.

There also arises sufficient intellectual power to make an induction from these experiences, followed by a sufficient massing of individual induction into a *public and traditional* induction impressed on each generation.

This conscious relinquishment of immediate and special good to gain distant and general good is a cardinal trait of the (1) self-restraint called *moral*; it is also a cardinal trait of the self-restraint originating from (2) fear of visible ruler (*political*), (3) fear of invisible ruler (*religious*), and (4) fear of society at large (*social*.)

These four are at first practically co-extensive and undistinguished; yet in the course of social evolution they differentiate and eventually the moral control with its accompanying conceptions and sentiments emerges independent. The process is as follows:

In rudest groups, neither political nor religious rule exists. The leading check to immediate satisfaction of each desire as it arises, is the consciousness of the evils which the anger of fellow-savages may entail. First there is only mutual dread of vengeance.

1 D. of E., Sec. 47.

Gradually, the fear of the angry chief becomes distinguishable, i. e., political control begins to differentiate. Meanwhile has been developing the ghost theory, fear of the double of the deceased man, which becomes later fear of the ghosts of dead chiefs, which gives rise to the religious restraint. For a long time these three sets of restraint are co-extensive because they mostly refer to one end—success in war. Killing of enemies becomes both a political and a religious duty. The control of social opinion is directly exercised by praise of the brave and blame of the cowardly and comes to be indirectly exercised by applause of loyalty to ruler and piety to the god.

The growth of political authority gradually checks the taking of personal satisfaction for injuries. The fact that success in war is endangered if followers fight among themselves is a strong motive for rulers for restraining quarrels; therefore, he forbids aggression and inflicts punishment for disobedience. Political restraints are enforced by religious restraints. Dread of the ghost of the dead ruler produces regard for traditional commands, which eventually acquire sacredness. With further social evolution come further interdicts, until eventually arises a body of civil laws; religious injunctions harmonize with and enforce the political injunctions; while simultaneously there develops a social sanction for these rules of internal conduct, strengthening the political and religious sanctions.

Yet the P. R. and S.¹ controls, which are like the moral control in habitually requiring subjection of simple presentative feelings to complex, representative feelings and postponement of present to future, do not constitute the moral control, but are only preparatory to it. From them the moral control evolves.

The command of the political ruler is first obeyed because it is his command, not from a representation of evil consequences. The sinfulness of breaking divine injunction lies first in the disobedience to God, not in the entailing of injury. Breach of social rules is condemned as ignoring the world's authority, not as being any essential impropriety.

The essential truths, to be noted are (1st) P. R. and S. controls have evolved with the evolution of society as means to social self-preservation, necessary and mutually congruous. (2nd) The cor-

¹ We shall use these initials for the words Political, Religious and Social.

relative internal restraints are representations of remote results which are incidental rather than necessary—a legal penalty, a supernatural punishment, a social reprobation. (3rd) These results are simple and more directly wrought and, therefore, more vividly conceived than natural results of action, therefore more potent over undeveloped minds. (4th) The thought of external coercion being always joined, there arises the notion of obligation, which so becomes habitually associated with surrender of immediate special benefits, for the sake of distant, general benefits. (5th) The moral control corresponds in a large measure with the P. R. and S. in respect of its injunctions, and the nature of the mental processes producing conformity to these injunctions, but differs in their special nature.

For the restraints properly distinguished as moral are unlike these restraints out of which they evolve and with which they are long confounded, in this—they refer, not to extrinsic effects of actions, but to their intrinsic effects.¹ The moral motive differs from the motive with which it is associated, in this—that instead of being constituted by representation of incidental, collateral, non-necessary consequences of acts, it is constituted by representations of consequences which the acts naturally produce.

Therefore, moral feelings are later than the P. R. and S., for only from these lower evolve the higher. Only after P. R. and S. restraints have produced a stable community can there be sufficient experience of the pain which comes of aggression, to cause us to generate that moral aversion constituted by the consciousness of their intrinsically evil results.

We associate the name "moral" with feelings that are firstly, re-representative; secondly, concerned with indirect rather than direct effects and generally with remote rather than immediate; and thirdly, that refer to effects mostly general rather than special.²

The above is Spencer's famous account of the origin of the moral sentiment.

Spencer alludes to Dr. Bain's ascribing the feeling of moral obligation as due to the effects of punishment inflicted by law and public opinion, and agrees with him to the extent of thinking that

1 D. of E., Sec. 46.

2 D. of E., Sec. 45 ff.

by them is generated the sense of compulsion which the consciousness of duty includes, and which the word "obligation" indicates. He calls attention, however, to an earlier and deeper element, generated as above described, implied by the fact that certain of the higher self-regarding feelings (prudence, economy) have a moral authority in opposition to the simpler self-regarding feelings, showing that apart from any thought of factitious penalties, the feeling constituted by representation of the natural penalties has acquired an acknowledged superiority.

Fears of political and social penalties (and perhaps religious) have generated that sense of *co-erciveness* which goes along with the thought of postponing present and future to the personal desires and claims of others. This sense of co-erciveness becomes indirectly connected with the feelings distinguished as moral.

"For since the P. R. and S. restraining motives are mainly formed of represented future results and since the moral restraining motive is mainly formed of represented future results, it happens that the representations, having much in common, and being often aroused at the same time, the fear joined with three sets of them becomes, by *association*, joined with the fourth. Thinking of the extrinsic effects of a forbidden act, excites a dread which continues present while the intrinsic effects of the act are thought of; and being thus linked to these intrinsic effects causes a vague sense of *moral compulsion*." ¹

With this ingenious account of the rise of the moral sentiment is joined the startling conclusion that the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory and will diminish as fast as moralization increases. As the moral motive becomes distinct and predominant it loses the associated consciousness as above described and the feeling of obligation fades.

"With complete adaption to the social state that element in the moral consciousness which is expressed by the word "obligation" will disappear. The highest actions required for the harmonious carrying on of life will be as much a matter of course as are these lower actions which the simple desires prompt. In their proper times and places and proportions, the moral sentiments will guide men just as spontaneously and adequately as now do the sensations." ²

¹ D. of E., Sec. 47.

² Ibid.

In other words, it will be just as natural and agreeable to do right, as for a person of healthy appetite to eat. "The pleasures and pains which the moral sentiments originate will, like bodily pleasures and pains, become incentives and deterrents so adjusted in their strength to the needs that the moral conduct will be the natural conduct."¹

PART III.

SPENCER'S UTILITARIANISM.

It is sufficiently plain from the account that has already been given that Spencer is a Utilitarian. His system is Hedonistic Utilitarianism. In the above analysis the moral intuitions are explained as the result of accumulated experiences of *utility*. Utilitarian considerations are at the basis of Spencer's whole system. Spencer explicitly avows himself as of that school. Because of his criticism, in "Social Statics," of the empirical utilitarianism of Bentham, he was accused by Mill of being an anti-utilitarian; in a letter to Mill, published in Bain's "Mental and Moral Science,"² he denies this in the following language. "I have never regarded myself as an anti-utilitarian. My dissent from the doctrine of utility as commonly understood, concerns not the object to be reached by men but the method of reaching it. While I admit that *happiness* is the *ultimate end* to be contemplated, I do not admit that it should be the proximate end. The expediency-philosophy having concluded that happiness is a thing to be achieved, assumes that morality has no other business than empirically to generalize the results of conduct and to supply for the guidance of conduct nothing more than its empirical generalizations."

"But the view for which I contend is that Morality properly co-called—the science of right conduct—has for its object to determine how and why certain modes of conduct are detrimental, and certain other modes beneficial. These good and bad results cannot be accidental, but must be necessary consequences of the constitution of things: and I conceive it to be the business of Moral Science to deduce from the laws of life and the conditions of existence, what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness and what

¹ D. of E., Sec. 48.

² P. 307. Quoted in part in the Data of Ethics.

kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deductions are to be recognized as *laws of conduct*; and are to be conformed to irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness or misery."

In the above, the laws of conduct are to be deduced from the tendency of actions, ultimately if not proximately, to produce happiness. Spencer elsewhere says explicitly, "Analysing the conditions of complete living necessitates the recognition of *happiness for each and all* as the *end* to be achieved by fulfilment of these conditions."¹ "The *ultimate supreme end*" is "*Happiness special and general.*" "Right and wrong as conceived by us can exist only in relation to the actions of creatures capable of *pleasures and pains.*"²

Conduct is good or bad, according to Spencer, according as the total effects are pleasurable or painful. "The good is invariably the pleasurable." "Pleasure somewhere, at sometime, to some being or beings, is an inexpugnable element of the conception of moral aim."³ "No school can avoid taking for the *ultimate moral aim* a *desirable state of feeling*, called by whatever name—gratification, enjoyment, happiness."

Life is good or bad according as it does or does not leave a surplus of agreeable feeling. "We regard as *good* the conduct furthering *self-preservation* and as *bad* the conduct tending to *self-destruction.*" The establishment of an associated state both makes possible and requires a form of conduct such that *life* may be *completed* in each and his offspring, not only without preventing completion of it in others, but with furtherance of it in others. The aim of morality is *life*, of absolute morality is *complete life.*⁴ Ethics is the "laws of right living at large." Beyond the conduct commonly approved or reprobated as right or wrong it includes all conduct which furthers or hinders, directly or indirectly, the *welfare of self and others.*⁵ The conduct called *good* rises to the conduct conceived as *best*, when it fulfills all three classes of ends at the same time—"greatest totality of *life* in *self*, in *offspring*, and in *fellow-man.*"

It is quite consistent to assert that happiness is the ultimate aim of action and at the same time to deny that it can be reached by making it the immediate aim. What constitutes happiness is more difficult to determine than what constitutes the means of its

1 D. of E., Sec. 63.

2 Ibid., Sec. 100.

3 Ibid., Sec. 16.

4 Essay on Prison Ethics (Essays, p. 269).

5 D. of E., Sec. 109.

attainment. Since evolution has been and still is working towards the *highest life*, it follows "that conformity to those principles by which the highest life is achieved is furtherance of that end."

That *happiness* is the *supreme end* is beyond question true, for it is the concomitant of that highest life which every theory of moral guidance has distinctly or vaguely in view.¹ Those ethical systems which make virtue, right, obligation, the cardinal aims are complementary to those which make *welfare, happiness, pleasure*, the cardinal aim.

General happiness is to be achieved mainly through the adequate pursuit of their own happiness by individuals; while, reciprocally, the happiness of individuals is to be achieved, in part, by their pursuit of the general happiness.

When conditions require any class of actions to be relatively great, there will arise relatively great pleasure accompanying that class of activities.

All conduct is acts adjusted to ends. Our use of the words 'good or bad with respect to conduct under its ethical aspect, has regard to the *efficiency* or *non-efficiency* of adjustments of acts to ends. Always those acts are *good* or *bad* according as they are *well* or *ill-adapted* to ends. All the actions conducive to self-welfare and the welfare of the species will be *pleasurable*.²

PART IV.

J U S T I C E.

In the foregoing we have seen that, according to Spencer, happiness is the end of life. This idea is repeated with unwearied emphasis in all his work. Whether called, as in "Social Statics," "the Divine idea," regarded as the will and purpose of God, or divested, as it was later, of all theological or theistic implications,³ happiness, individual and social, happiness in the greatest possible degree, remained for Spencer the supreme end of all life and all evolutionary development. In this sense, Spencer was indeed a hedonist of the most pronounced type.

But how is happiness, the end of life, to be attained? In

1 *Ibid.*, Sec. 63.

2 Negative and Positive Beneficence, p. 331.

3 See note d on answer to Sidgwick, *Soc. Stat.*, p. 90.

Spencer's first ethical work, "Social Statics," this matter was already fully discussed and philosophically developed.

Happiness consists in gratification, which depends upon due exercise of the faculties. The latter implies freedom, for it is only as men are free that they can exercise their several faculties. Freedom is thus the primary condition. But since all have a right to happiness, it follows that the freedom of each must be compatible with the freedom of all the rest. The spheres of activity must not intrench upon one another. Consequently the liberty of each must be limited, but limited only by the like liberty of all. From this condition arises what is called *justice*, variously defined by Spencer, but essentially the same in the possession of this common characteristic of the recognition of the sphere of each bounded only by the like or similar sphere of all.¹ In that volume of the Ethics which bears the name of "Justice"² it is frequently termed "mutual restraint," though more fully described in the sentence,—which applies as a rule, without qualification, in both human and sub-human life—"Each individual ought to be subject to the effects of its own nature and resulting conduct." In the ratio between *conduct* and *consequence* lies justice. The treatment here is somewhat different than in his earlier works, but here, too, the "formula of justice" is "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man."³ In "Social Statics" this is expressed in virtually identical language.⁴ Justice is equalness,—hence the word equity; and it is a source of considerable pride to Spencer, that in this mental admeasurement of moral quantities, his system approaches so nearly to the geometrical, and in its synthetic development, "partakes of the character of an exact science."⁵ For Spencer applies this principle of "equalness" to the whole range of human affairs. He distinguishes between equality and inequality, as applied, the one to the "bounds," the other to the "benefits"—i. e. "The equality concerns the mutually limited sphere of action which must be maintained if associated men are to co-operate harmoniously. The inequality concerns the results which each may achieve by carrying on his actions within the implied limits."⁶ Whereas unequal

1 Cf. the definition of justice in the Pandects as "Perpetua voluntas suum cuique."

2 Part IV. of the Morals, published in advance of Pts. II. and III., 1891.

3 Justice, p. 46.

4 Soc. Stat., p. 121.

5 Ibid., p. 501.

6 Justice, p. 43.

benefits must result since, according to the law of justice each is to take the consequences of his own nature which is different in each, the limits in which man may exercise his own powers must be kept open and uninterfered with except as restricted by the equal claims of others." This teaching of justice is basic and central to the whole system of evolutionary moral philosophy. Spencer calls it "the supreme moral law."¹ He speaks everywhere of its fundamental radical importance. It is the primary principle of conduct. From it, as corollaries, are deduced all the moral rules and the ethical injunctions of society. The sacredness of life, the inviolability of person, of property, of reputation, all the rights of individuals, and the rules embodying these rights and prohibiting their transgression are derived from this fundamental principle of justice. "Justice we hold to be higher generosity," writes Spencer.² "The motive causing a generous act has reference to effects of a more concrete, special and proximate kind than the motive to do justice which beyond the proximate effects, usually themselves less concrete than those that generosity contemplates, includes a consciousness of the distant, involved, diffused effects of maintaining equitable relations."³ The practical part of Spencer's teaching of justice is against socialism and communism and every kind of paternalism. He opposes state-interference of every sort and holds that the proper function of government is precisely this of maintaining justice. Spencer is an advocate of the most extreme individualism. With Coleridge he believes the true idea of life to be "the tendency to individuation." This is highest in the moral sphere. "What we call the moral law—the law of equal freedom—is the law under which individuation becomes perfect; and ability to recognize and act up to this law is the final endowment of humanity."⁴ "Only by entire fulfilment of the moral law can life become complete; and, all life whatever may be defined as a quality, of which aptitude to fulfill this law is the highest manifestation."⁵

"Such a moral sentiment as abstract justice," writes Spencer,⁶ "which is offended not only by material injuries done to men, but also by political arrangements that place them at a disadvantage, can evolve only after the social stage reached gives familiar expe-

1 Justice, p. 155.

2 D. of E., Sec. 46.

3 Ibid.

4 Soc. Stat., p. 481.

5 Ibid., p. 476.

6 D. of E., Sec. 46.

rience, both of the pains flowing directly from injustices, and also of those flowing indirectly from the class privileges which make injustices easy."

The sentiment of justice Spencer regards "as nothing but a sympathetic affection of the instinct of personal rights,—a sort of reflex function of it." ¹ Applying and extending to his own doctrine of a Moral Sense Adam Smith's famous doctrine of Sympathy, as found in his "Theory of the Moral Sentiments," as "a faculty whose function it is to excite in each being the emotion displayed by surrounding ones, a faculty which awakens a fellow feeling with the passions of others," Spencer reaches the conclusion that "justice and beneficence" (as already previously hinted),² "have a common root."³ "All the actions properly classed under the one, and which we describe as fair, equitable, upright, spring from the sympathetic excitement of the instinct of personal rights; whilst those usually grouped under the other as mercy, charity, good-nature, generosity, amiability, considerateness, are due to the action of Sympathy upon one or more of the other feelings."

Spencer ridicules Bentham's derivation of the sense of justice from the idea of benefits. To assert that the sense of justice arises from a conviction of benefit is as absurd as to "conclude that hunger springs from a conviction of the benefit of eating, or that love of offspring is a result of the wish to maintain the species!"⁴

In the "Data of Ethics" Spencer furnishes us with a "physical analogy" of this "cardinal truth" of justice. He shows how, in any mass of matter, to preserve internal equilibrium throughout the mass of molecules, the mutual limitations of their activities must be everywhere alike.⁵ To social equilibrium there is the same prerequisite which must be fulfilled before complete life, i. e., greatest happiness, can be attained in any society. "Maintenance of equitable relations between men is the condition to attainment of greatest happiness in all societies, however much the greatest happiness attainable in each may differ in nature or amount, or both."⁶

Thus though happiness is the great end of individuals and of societies, it can be attained only in one way, viz., through justice, the observance and maintenance of equitable relations.

¹ Soc. Stat., p. 116.

² *Ibid.*, p. 86.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

PART V.

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE
BENEFICENCE.

In the preface to Vol. I of the "Principles of Ethics," Spencer is led to remark that he is especially anxious to write the sections on Negative and Positive Beneficence¹ because, in the absence of them, the divisions at present published will leave, in nearly all minds, a very erroneous impression respecting the general tone of Evolutionary Ethics. "In its full scope, the moral system to be set forth unites *sternness with kindness*; but thus far attention has been drawn almost wholly to the sternness." Extreme missapprehension and gross misstatement, he declares, have hence resulted.

A gap remains to be filled up, "a further advance not yet even hinted." "For beyond so behaving that each achieves his ends without preventing others from achieving their ends, the members of a society may give *mutual help* in the achievement of ends."² Evolutionary ethics are not complete without an account of Negative and Positive Beneficence. Here, as in other, regarded probably as higher, systems the cap-stone is what commonly passes under the name of love. Love is the fulfilment of the evolutionary law. "If, either indirectly by individual co-operation or directly by volunteered aid, fellow-citizens can make easier for one another the adjustments of acts to ends, then their conduct assumes a still higher phase of evolution: since whatever facilitates the making of adjustments by each, increases the totality of the adjustments made, and serves to render the lives of all more complete."³

While recognizing the fundamental character of justice as a rule of conduct and a means of happiness, Spencer also accords due place to the "supplementary" virtue of *beneficence*. Beneficence is a sympathetic recognition of others' claims to receive aid in the obtaining of products and in the effective carrying on of their lives. The *highest form* of life, individual and social, is not achievable nor is the fullest measure of happiness obtained under a reign of justice only; but there must be joined with it a reign of beneficence. We may compare with this the statement in the "Data of Ethics"⁴

¹ Published afterwards as Pts. V. and VI. (1893).

² D. of E., Sec. 6.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, Sec. 54.

that "the limit of evolution of conduct is not reached until beyond avoidance of direct and indirect injuries to others, there are spontaneous efforts to further the welfare of others." The cup of happiness is not full to the brim until in addition to the happiness arising from non-interference by others is added the happiness through their positive and direct efforts. The first is Negative, the second is Positive, Beneficence.

"The requirements of equity must be supplemented by the promptings of *kindness*."¹ "Daily experiences prove that every one would suffer many evils and lose many goods, did none give him unpaid assistance."² Furthering the happiness of others, Spencer calls positive beneficence. "The highest life" is reached "only when, besides helping to complete one another's lives, by specified reciprocities of aid, men otherwise help to complete one another's lives."³ "The social man has not reached that harmonization of constitution with conditions forming the limit of evolution, so long as there remains space for the growth of faculties which, by their exercise, bring positive benefits to others and satisfaction to self."⁴ Recognizing the limits set to each by the presence of others and not infringing on the latter's rights is Negative Beneficence. But "if the presence of fellow-men, while putting certain limits to each man's sphere of activity, opens certain other spheres of activity, in which feelings, while achieving their gratification, do not diminish but add to the gratification of others, then such spheres will inevitably be occupied."⁵ In this way Spencer makes room for the exercise of kindness which is included under the name of positive beneficence. Thus kindness, mercy, love are words spoken also by evolution although, as Spencer remarks rather regretfully and with confessed disappointment, not so directly derived from evolutionary principles as he had hoped.⁶ "Altruism," he holds, "is no less primordial than self-preservation,"⁷ and altruistic actions include both justice and beneficence, the root of both of which is sympathy.⁸ The enforcement of justice Spencer regards as a public function, while the exercise of beneficence must be a private function.⁹ When directed

1 Neg. and Pos. B., p. 270.

2 D. of E., Sec. 55.

3 Ibid, Sec. 56.

4 Ibid, Sec. 55.

5 Ibid, Sec. 55.

6 N. and P. B., preface.

7 D. of E., Sec. 76.

8 N. and P. B., p. 268.

9 Ibid, p. 271.

towards the poor it is called benevolence.¹ Beneficence should be spontaneous. Beneficence when strained ceases to be beneficence.² In general, *parental conduct* exemplifies beneficence more than any other conduct.³ But "after the conduct which is of individual concern only and affects others in but remote ways, if at all, and after the conduct comprehended under the head of justice, which sets forth restraints on individual life imposed by social life; nearly all the remainder of conduct becomes the subject matter of beneficence, negative and positive. For nearly all this remainder of conduct, pleasurable or painfully affects others from hour to hour."⁴

The largest field, then, according to Spencer, remains for the exercise of the altruistic sentiments.

The "chief temporary function" is for beneficence to mitigate the sufferings caused by the transition from the present, imperfect, militant-industrial state (with its ethics of enmity) to the future perfect social state, which we are gradually approaching (with its ethics of amity). "Or rather, let us say, to ward off its superfluous sufferings."⁵

"The beneficence which takes into account not only the immediate and remote results to the individual but also the results to posterity and to society at large is best."⁶

Thus the evolutionary ethics, like the higher, universalistic utilitarianism of Mill, issues in the highest altruism. It culminates in love,⁷ and finds its crowning teaching in the injunction, explicitly quoted by Mill,⁸ that bids us "love our neighbor as ourself."⁹

1 N. and P. B., p. 391.

2 Ibid, p. 342; p. 275.

3 Ibid, p. 342.

4 Ibid, p. 422.

5 Ibid, p. 430.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid, p. 270.

8 Utilitarianism, p. 25.

9 We find significant here, whatever may be its full justice, Martineau's remark that "the representatives of this (Hedonistic Utilitarian) philosophy have in truth—greatly to their honor—theorized in one language and felt in another; and have retained ideal conceptions of a scale of good and admiration for types of character, for which their doctrines can find no corresponding place." (T. of E. T., Vol. II., p. 424.)

CHAPTER III.

THE EVOLUTION OF ETHICS.

The doctrine of sympathy plays an immense part in evolutionism, "the all-important emotion of sympathy" Darwin¹ calls it. Darwin was the first to apply it to the explanation of the moral nature of man, to describe what we have called in this chapter, "the evolution of ethics."² He was the pioneer of those who assign a purely naturalistic origin to morality. In Chap. IV of the "Descent of Man," Darwin makes the first attempt to derive the moral sense in man from the lower animals, through the social instinct and the working of "natural selection" combined with the growth of intelligence in man. The social instinct he regards as an extension of the parental and filial affections through habit and natural selection. Sympathy, fidelity and courage, implied in mutual aid and defense, he regards as probably acquired by the same means. Of two tribes, the one more courageous, sympathetic and faithful, mutually helpful and defensive, would succeed better and conquer others; it would spread and be widely victorious, and thus, through natural selection, social and moral qualities would advance and be diffused throughout the world. The process, even as tentatively sketched by Darwin, is very complex, involving many factors, such as "the approbation of others—the strengthening of sympathies by habit—example and imitation—reason—experience, and even self-interest—instruction during youth and religious feelings;"³ but the foundation is sympathy, enforced and rendered increasingly powerful through natural selection.

What Darwin tentatively advanced has been elaborated and illustrated with a wealth of detail by Alexander Sutherland in his celebrated account of the origin and rise of the moral instinct. Following Darwin he explains the growth of the moral feelings, and the sentiment of right, duty, etc., as due wholly to sympathy, originating in the parental and conjugal affections, which he traces back to their feeble beginnings in the lowest animals, and which, through a gradually ascending scale, become the rules of right and the

1 Descent of Man, Chap. IV.

2 In the sense of the **evolution of the ethical sentiment.**

3 Williams, R. of E. E., p. 12.

principles of even an ideal morality; though morality at its best is but one method in race preservation, only one factor, though the highest and best, in the evolution of the universe. Morality is "peri-hestic," originating in the family,¹ although through an extension of sympathy which is but a further development of conjugal and parental love, it becomes "aphestic," i. e., operative outside of the immediate family circle and made to include, not merely husband and wife and children, brothers and sisters and all blood relations, but the members of society in general in ever widening groups, as social unions become larger, as they ever tend to do through the constant increase of sympathy due to the elimination of the unsympathetic by natural selection, and the production of superior types with finer nerve-susceptibility, through the diminution of offspring—with which goes greater parental care. *Morality* is but *sympathy*, and the *average sympathy* as expressed at any time in public opinion, custom, law constitutes *duty*, which derives its binding character from having existed in us from an unremembered time, and grows constantly stronger as the same social sympathies receive sanction and expression, generation after generation. Inward morality, as seen in the feeling of self-respect, is similarly explained as a man's applying external standards to judge himself; and the right is regarded as a continual and reasonable compromise of a man's selfish instincts with the moral or unselfish.

Sutherland's account, which is highly interesting, because of its great importance given more in detail, is as follows.

He finds the underlying feature of the daily history of animal life to be one continuous and stupendous slaughter, millions of creatures perishing that one may exist. It is only through stupendous fertility and the development of qualities procuring more or less immunity that any given species can continue to exist. The few survivors restock the world, who though limited in number are better protected. Two surviving cod, for instance, out of the millions hatched, would keep the species constant. In an average of 75 species of fishes, there are 646,000 eggs to each female. Out of 300,000 of these, with no help, care, or protection of the young, only one will reach maturity. Where there is an advance in nerve development, leading to a nobler type, chance of survival is the smallest, and there is invariably some little manifestation of parental

1 Cf. Green, *Prolegomena*, p. 257. See also *infra.*, Chap. VI., p. 59.

care. In some fishes that have a pouch beneath the body (syngnathidæ), the young have the instinct of returning for several days to the parental shelter.¹ Two much more promising courses are nest-building and hatching of eggs in the body of the female. "In the struggle for existence an immense premium is placed upon parental care, and not until this has been developed can the higher types become possible."² A prime feature of the development is the steady diminution in number of offspring as parental care increases. The average per annum is of amphibia 441, reptiles 17, birds 5, mammals 3.2, higher mammals 1.3, and in apes and mankind one in every two years. Only the development of remarkable faculties could save the human race from destruction with only one per annum. The progress most essential is parental care, and there is no gap throughout the history of life from love of fish to affection of father and mother. There is no indication in either fish or reptile even in the highest grade of that helplessness at birth which is the concomitant of any notable degree of conscious parental care.³ Slowly-unfolding maturity, essential to the finest nerve-organism, seems to involve an early period of helplessness demanding an instinct of self-sacrifice on the part of the mother. This is only primitive in fish and reptiles. So far there is no hint of affection. That begins with the *mother-sympathy* which in mammals is incalculably slow, in birds more rapid, "the creeping growth of those sweeter feelings that alone make life worth living."⁴ High and nesting birds are utterly dependent on their parents for food and "it is a likely thing that elevated nests were concomitant with helpless youth, parental affection, and an increasing scope for growth of intelligence."⁵ In birds of the six most gifted orders, whose young are hatched in the most abject helplessness, parental love is poured out in floods of unmeasured self-sacrifice. There is a gracious charm of family life and with it, by no mere chance, comes "that delight in throbbing melody which proclaims the fullest tide of joyous life."⁶ Male and female unite in tender care and show also steady attachment to each other. They construct remarkably beautiful nests, showing adaptive intelligence. The more highly developed the bird, the more helpless the young at birth;

1 Sutherland, *Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct*, Vol. I., p. 33.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

the parrot, the most intelligent of birds, being ninety days dependent. There are increasing tendencies to prolongation of family life, which is the ultimate basis of moral ideas. The nest life of one of those higher birds is marked by many graces of indubitably moral character, the conjugal tenderness of mated pair and unwearied self-sacrifice in ministering to offspring being "ethically beautiful." Growing intelligence makes the young more and more dependent upon family and social union.¹ In mammals, the period of gestation of the non-deciduous Placentalia is remarkably long,—from 150 days in sheep, goat or ibex, to 280 days in cow, bison, stag, or yak; the result of which is that the young are in remarkably complete condition, well-equipped for survival in size, speed, formidable horns and tusks; but efficiency is doubly and trebly assured by a strength and devotion of parental affection almost on a level with the highest in birds. There is a surprising smallness (with few exceptions) in the number of offspring, and therefore the maternal relationship is of a higher order, the source of many charming capacities of affection. The young require different food from the parents, and a strange reflex action begins to develop the mammæ or milk-secreting organs. In monkeys there is a lengthened period of sucking and an intensity of affection. The connection of the tissues of mother and offspring is more intimate and highly developed in these quadrumana and in the human species than in any other animal, and the period of gestation is the longest known: and there is the highest standard of unconscious preliminary maternal care, rendering possible the loftiest type of intelligence. "The monkey brings up her young very much in the same way as man, often with excessive tenderness and care, shown especially in combing, carrying, and searching for parasites. Males and females defend the young with bravery, box their ears or cudgel them if they have failed to render obedience. They lead them about in their tender years and afterwards guide them in climbing, running and leaping."² In the anthropoid apes is best discerned the coming perfection of *Parental Care* in the human species. All the details of propagation are entirely similar. The male organs are entirely analogous and in the female there is the first indication of menstrual flow. The placenta and milk glands are entirely analogous. P. C. approximates closely to that of the savage man. "The young at birth in all apes are taken into the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

² *Ibid.*, p. 93. (Quoted fr. Vogt, *Mammalia*, p. 44.)

arms of the mother, and there clasped with a fond pride." The maternal tenderness is very touching, "the long hand of the mother stroking back the shaggy hair of the brow, while she looks down with yearning affection into liquid depths of the brown eyes."¹ Next to the human babe, the infant ape is the most helpless of all new-born creatures. At the head of the highest group, foremost in all respects, stand man. The period of gestation in man is, in proportion to size, the longest known; and the union of maternal and foetal tissues is the most complex and the babe is the most helpless of infant creatures. There is greatly-increased nerve complexity. The new-born babe has a brain more than eight times as great (in proportion) as in adults, being 1-7th of its body. The care of the naked savage mother is greater than that of any of the lower animals. There is a diminution in the number of offspring (less than one in two years; in civilized the average is less than one in four years) and an increase in the period of maternal devotion. The average period of lactation is 2½ years, but savage children have been known to suck as old as 5 and 6. "It is in love for the children, concern for their sufferings, delight in their sports, that the more beautifully human creatures begin to display themselves."² In the lessons of self-sacrifice first learned is the earliest fount of moral feeling. "In the fierce competition of the animated forms of earth, the loftier type, with its prolonged nervous growth, and consequently augmented period of helpfulness, can never arise but with concomitant increase of parental care."³ The fount of maternal feelings is as automatic as the fount of milk, both being biologic features. From the fount of parental emotions, high in the ape, still higher in savage races, grow *all the varied virtues* which form the pre-eminence of man. With increasing intelligence goes diminution of offspring. Children of smaller families have the better chance. The average number of children is a trifle over four to each marriage. Abortion and infanticide, "the first unlovely marks of reason," check the growth of population. The savage in no way restrains his passion. Infanticide results "from hardness of life rather than from hardness of heart"⁴ and is no failure of parental instinct. The savage loves his offspring, and those whom he spares he spoils. Chastity fosters parental care. The educational

1 Ibid, p. 94.

2 Ibid, p. 99.

3 Ibid.

4 Tylor, Anthropology, p. 427. Quoted by Sutherland, p. 115.

care of the young, destined to be most notable in the humanizing influence of progress, begins to assert itself. In the barbarian stage there is already a beginning of systematic attempts to form the character. Training, at first, is always of an almost exclusively *domestic* character. Infanticide gradually dies out with the assertion of the more sympathetic side of man's nature.¹ In cultured races there is self-restraint, the postponing of marriage, and celibacy. The increased age of marriage diminishes the number of offspring. Celibacy of women also increases. P. C., in the form of the affection of maiden-aunts and grown-up sisters. In civilized communities young folks spend about sixteen or seventeen years under the parents' roof. (The wonderful activity in the systematic education of both sexes, together with increasing leisure through labor-saving machinery, will extend the preparatory period of youth, which with increasing intelligence and diminishing number of offspring will prolong the period of P. C.) Want of P. C. eliminates the inferior elements of each race as it does the lower races. "Thus the law that *progress lies with less offspring and greater parental care* obtains to the very highest domain of the animal kingdom and works a beneficent change in the constitution of society."² The moral class would supplant the immoral at a much more rapid rate than above. "The progress of society depends less upon education and the transmission of acquired characteristics than on a steady progress of elimination of inferior strains."³ Want of maternal love will work its own disappearance and the unnatural strain will die out before the natural. "In the highest races of men as in the lowest species of fish, *a little parental love and devotion is of more efficacy* than a great fertility. Parental sympathy has steadily developed because it has always been a notable element in securing the survival of a species or of a superior strain within a species.⁴ Increasing intelligence always implies a more prolonged period of immaturity and this demands an increasing parental sympathy." Parental Sympathy is the basis for all other sympathy and *sympathy in general* is the *ultimate basis of all moral feeling*.

A second form of sympathy, doubling efficiency, is that of the mated pair, or *conjugal sympathy*. Sweetness and graciousness of

1 Sutherland, O. & D. of M. I., p. 145.

2 Ibid, p. 154.

3 Ibid, p. 155.

4 Ibid, p. 156.

disposition are deceptive elements in the securing of mates. The tendency is to breed by preference from the more sympathetic. Courtship depends largely on capacity for sympathy. The winning in manner are the first and best married. "At all times the gentle and loving disposition has been most readily and most permanently married."¹ In the lower scale of animals there is very little indication of conjugal sympathy. There is no instance among cold-blooded animals, and in even warm-blooded the progress is slow, birds showing more than the average mammal. There is no sort of sympathy between monotremes. It is equally small in lower marsupials where the female is devoted, but where there is no conjugal happiness. Phalangers, always seen in pairs, are affectionate; the Sirenia are sociable, also cetacea; but of true C. S. there is no evidence in the lower mammalia. Hedgehogs are permanently united in pairs and are very affectionate. Bats are gregarious, but there is no C. S. and the sexes are segregated. Among rodents, there is some C. S. and family life. There is very little improvement among the carnivora. In every species the male must court and coax and not compel the female. In the main, the birds are characterized by a C. S. that has no doubt been an element in securing for them their world-wide profusion. The lowest of the birds, as of the ostrich order, are quite on a level with any of the preceding mammalia. Swans pair for life and there is mutual tenderness and fidelity. Of wading birds, out of 223 genera, 67 mate for life, among them the plover, ibis, spoonbill, stork, screamer and jucana, in unfading tenderness. From pigeons upwards, conjugal affection among birds is striking, particularly the devotion of doves, whose loving attention to the male is continued all the year round and, in a large proportion of cases, unions are broken only by the death of one. The great majority of higher birds are monogamous and their unions are life-long. In many hundreds of species repeated instances are recorded where "each bird is nursed and fed by its mate and its death is followed by disconsolate mourning, often by the steady decline and decease of the bereaved partner."² Grosbeaks are self-sacrificing in the highest degree. Even birds of prey seem to pair for life. In mammals, only the highest species show any of this nobler conjugal attachment. Most of the monkey class are

1 O. and D. of M. I., p. 160.

2 Ibid, p. 168.

polygamous, though "some of the Indian and American monkeys are strictly monogamous."¹ The sexes are sympathetic, apart from sexual passion, and there are "many records of cases in which monkeys have died of grief after the loss of their well-beloved spouse."² In the anthropoid apes, the father takes still more prominent part in the care of offspring and the tendency to monogamy is undoubted.

In the lower ranks of savage life there is a certain degree of improvement, male and female spending their lives together; and the unions in the main are monogamous, with a permanent father and mother united by loving care of offspring. In lowest savage life there is not the remotest vestige of chastity. The young indulge in promiscuous intercourse, a special pair finally gravitating to each other. The conjugal condition of lower savages is in advance of that of the apes, but quite comparable. Yet monogamy prevails, and "There grows the natural propensity to happiness of family life." Among the higher savages there is something like customary law. "The natural tendency of the human race is to drift into monogamous unions."³ The first faint dawning of chastity is in the middle grade of savage life, the change being due to C. S., though having required long ages for its development. The chaste woman leaves behind her far more offspring than the unchaste. There is a growing sense of possession in man, particularly with the establishment of marriage which is (1st) by purchase or (2nd) by capture, which makes for chastity, as the man will tolerate no promiscuity in the wife whom he has bought or acquired. Purchase increases the stability of unions, and the selfish interests of fathers and husbands secure chastity. The chastity of men is a later ideal depending wholly upon sympathy.

The family is the birthplace of all moral relations.⁴ The fundamental sympathies towards child and wife spread out to brothers, sisters, blood-relations, and neighbors—into a general social sympathy—whenever and wherever an advantage⁵ is likely to arise therefrom. The life of the species is furthered by gregariousness. There are three conditions in the development of the social sympathies,—mere agglomeration, selfish co-operation and sympa-

1 Darwin, *D. of M.*, p. 590. Quoted by Sutherland, p. 172.

2 Sutherland, p. 172.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 185.

4 Cf. Green, *Proleg.*, p. 257. See below, Chap. VI., p. 59.

5 Fundamentally utilitarian also.

thetic union. Besides mere "physical assemblage,"¹ hunger, fear and sex-appetite are bonds of union. There are singular social customs in ants and bees, so that an ant-hill or bee-hive are no mere agglomerations. The sympathy in ants, though exaggerated, is considerable, but it is different from that in warm-blooded animals. There is no sympathy in fishes. Development keeps pace with vocal powers, there being some relation of causation. The voice is used for sexual attraction. Anseres are social, terns give assistance to wounded, flamingoes post sentinels, and there is united defence among many species. In the higher birds there are active sentiments of goodwill and actual capacity for self-sacrifice. There is cordial union among beavers. The elephant is sympathetic, the dog highly so. Sympathy is at its highest natural level in monkeys and apes. There is fellow-love in monkeys and their richness of vocabulary is next to man. The baboon is most richly endowed and the gorilla and chimpanzee head the whole mammals except man. In the lowest savages there is an advance over the highest social life of animals. "Mankind can never have lived a mere struggling crowd each for himself. Society is always made up of families bound together by kindly ties. Their habits, judged by our notions, are hard and coarse, yet the family tie of sympathy and common interests are the foundation of moral duty already laid in the mother's patient tenderness, the father's desperate valor in defence of home, their daily care for the little ones, the affection of brothers and sisters, and the mutual forbearance, hopefulness and trust of all."²

Social sympathy in mankind arises in the family. Love of own child predisposes to tenderness toward children in general, and indeed to a certain compassionateness to the young of all animals. C. S. also spreads out to regard for woman. The course of history becomes the emergence of the social. Strong social sympathies become the most profitable means of progress, as, for instance, Greece under Alexander and in Rome. There is increasing size of social unions. This assists in the conversion from wanderers to settled population. Great cities like London, Paris, New York are triumphs of social sympathies. Sympathy must deepen before it can widen. The growth of sympathy is shown in benevolence, in alms-giving, in the building of hospitals, in the poor-law system, in humaner

¹ Buffon, quoted by S., p. 293.

² Tylor, *Anthropology*, p. 402. Quoted by S., p. 352.

treatment of the insane. The nineteenth century particularly witnessed a huge growth in sympathy, shown by the lessening ferocity of warfare and the increasing growth of the peace sentiment.

Sympathy is a natural morality, "not a complete morality, but a very serviceable, home-spun article, extremely good of its kind."¹ There are three higher stages, the morality of duty, the morality of self-respect, and the "morality that springs from an ideal of the beauty of goodness." Of all these sympathy is the natural basis. *Sympathy or love is morality.* Each of the virtues necessary to right conduct is directly or indirectly founded on sympathy.

The morality of sympathy alone is an "inconstant regulator." The sympathy of a race finds expression in maxims or in laws when public opinion enforces that conduct which is accordant with the *average sympathy*, giving rise to the sense of *duty*, which is what the average sympathy of the race demands. Its absolute unconditional character is due to the sanction of ordinances existing from earliest time.² The sanctions which give to any duty its impressiveness arise from (1) public opinion, (2) imitation, (3) authority, and (4) habit. If deference to authority be not sympathetic, it gives rise only to a prudent self-concern, a quasi-morality, useful to society, but not in any way akin to the moral idea. Only when sympathetic does a feeling of reverence for authority produce a true morality. Public opinion, operating from a period of infancy unremembered by us, is the real basis of duty. The true moral duty, based on permanent sympathies, gathers force as the generations pass. Morality is not yet complete. It assumes a very noble aspect when, to sympathy and a cheerful compliance with duty whose sanction is external, there is added a complete surrender to that sense of self-respect which is only duty with an internal emotion. When the stage is reached wherein an idea of loveliness has gathered around the appearance of kindness, purity and truth, morality has assumed the highest aspect. There are two ideals of virtue,—the manly, courageous one and the soft, tender, womanly one. Practical morality rules the every-day affairs of life. The quasi-moral is of equal utility with the true. Its basis is in responsibility, which ripens into law. Necessitarianism is the outcome of

¹ Preliminary Outline, Vol. I., p. 11.

² However, only "within the individual"; far better in Spencer, who makes the moral intuitions organized **in the race**. Cf. *supra*, Chap. II, p. 14.

scientific research, and in no case do we need to suppose the individual a free agent. "The idea of responsibility in no way implies the possession of free-will, but only a mind sane enough to foresee consequences and a knowledge that the individual will reap the fruit of his action, among these the diminished or increased goodwill of his fellows."¹ Responsibility is "perihestic," i. e., within the family and "aphestic," i. e., outside the family, giving rise to public law. Law never gave rise to moral feeling, but moral feeling gave rise to law.

Sympathy is only a general term we give to that subtle susceptibility of nerve which renders an individual ready to catch the contagion of the emotions of another individual.²

Moral instinct does not teach a man what is right and wrong. Moral instincts are founded on sympathy and serve to check and limit the play of selfish instincts in the interests of the preservation of the community or of the species. Right conduct is a reasonable compromise between the selfish and the moral. But as an absolute and universal fact there is neither right nor wrong.

To this account of Sutherland of the nature and origin of the moral instinct we may add the ideas of Kropotkin.

With Kropotkin,³ too, "love, sympathy and self-sacrifice," play "an immense part" in the evolution of the moral sentiment, but "it is not love and not even sympathy upon which society is based," according to him, but upon "the conscience—be it only at the stage of an instinct—of *human solidarity*."⁴ It is from a recognition of the benefit of *mutual aid* and the increase of happiness of each by each and particularly the sense of *justice* or *equity*⁵ that the higher moral feelings are developed.

Kropotkin doubts the reality of the 'fearful competition for food and life *within the same species*. In his travels and studies he says he saw rather Mutual Aid and Mutual Support as the factors of the greatest consequence in the preservation of life and further evolution of the species. The scarcity of food in impoverished districts and the poor health of the animals made it absolutely impossible that any *progressive evolution* could be based on keen com-

1 Preliminary Outline, Vol. I., p. 14.

2 Ibid., p. 18.

3 Mutual Aid (1904).

4 Ibid., Introd., p. 13.

5 Regarded by Spencer as a form of sympathy. See supra, Chap. II, p. 24.

petition. He refuses to admit, and holds that it is not proven, that struggle between individuals of the same species is a "law of nature." He considers Kessler's¹ law of mutual aid far more important than mutual contests. Darwin himself recognized mutual aid as a prime factor in evolution.² He differs from Kessler as to parental feeling being the source of mutual inclinations in animals, seeming inclined to attribute it to "sociability proper." However, the main thing is to establish the importance of mutual aids, the origin of which may be left to further research. Basing human ethics on love and personal sympathy, as in Sutherland, he thinks has only contributed to narrow the comprehension of the moral feeling as a whole.³ A far wider feeling or instinct he considers *human solidarity* and sociability, the beginning of which is seen in the herding of animals. The "fittest" are not the physically strongest nor the cunningest, but those who learn to combine so as mutually to support each other. The most sympathetic members would flourish best and rear the greatest number of offspring. Sociability is as much a law of nature as mutual struggle. The "fittest" are the most social, who have more chances to survive, and to attain the highest development of intelligence and bodily organization. Mutual aid thus becomes a factor in evolution of the highest importance, even surpassing mutual struggle.⁴ Kropotkin traces the growth of mutual aid in animals and mankind, showing how association and mutual helpfulness are the rule with mammals, reaching their fullest development in the higher vertebrates, becoming conscious and reasoned in man. Sociability is of the greatest advantage in the struggle for life and favors the growth of intelligence. He does not consider competition, but co-operation, as a cause of evolution; and traces its influence among savages and barbarians, in the mediaeval cities with their trade-guilds and craft-guilds, in institutions of the present time such as the village communities in Russia, in labor-unions, and in countless societies for combined action for all possible purposes. "In the practice of *mutual aid* which we can retrace to the earliest beginnings of evolution, we thus find the *positive and undoubted origin* of our ethical conceptions."⁵

1 Russian Naturalist, d. 1881.

2 Descent of Man, p. 63 ff.

3 M. A., Introd., p. 12.

4 Ibid, p. 8.

5 Ibid, p. 300.

CHAPTER IV.

IDEALISM—IMMANUEL KANT.

Having examined the evolutionary ethics, we turn now to Idealism.

Idealism is that view of life which has for its philosophic foundation the reduction of all things to ideas in consciousness. According to Idealism, nothing can be known except as affecting our consciousness, as ideas of the mind, as appearing to a conscious subject or Ego to which things are presented as objects, as phenomena of consciousness, in contradistinction to noumena which are the realities underlying phenomena, but which can never be known *in themselves*, as Dinge-an-sich, but only as appearing to a conscious subject.

Idealism is as old as Plato, but was first made prominent in modern thought by Bishop Berkeley, who may rightly be regarded as the one through whom in more recent times it obtained its position of importance, influencing also, in particular, (though he never admitted the connection of his thought with that of the Irish Bishop) the great Kant, the foremost expositor and classic figure of what is known today,—highly developed and mightily influential,—as the system of Idealism.

In his critical exposition of the philosophy of Kant, Caird¹ remarks, "We have in Kant's ethical works, the final and most explicit expression of a view of the moral life which, in some form or other, has held the balance with Hedonism through the whole history of ethical philosophy." Caird instances the Stoics and the Epicureans, and the "endless battle" between the Nominalists and the Realists.

It is as expressive of this contrast with the evolutionary philosophy, this "vital opposition," that we shall consider the ethics of Kant as typical of idealism as Spencer's were of evolutionism; particularly as in his case, also, his leading ideas and fundamental principles form the basis of the ethical, as of the metaphysical, labors of his successors.

Kant's ethical system may be found in the (1) "Grudlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," (1785); (2) "Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft" (1788); and in (3) "Die Metaphysik der Sitten" (1797). "Die Kritik der Urtheilskraft" also contains some ethical matter.

¹ Vol. II., p. 172.

Our chief concern, according to Kant, is with what we should *be* and *do*, not with what we can know.¹ The chief questions are practical questions. Kant resorts to ethics as a means of deliverance from his speculative scepticism. Ethics as the means of giving authority to truth of every kind is the corner-stone of all knowledge and the test of all faith. It is a highly curious fact that as it was an ethical interest that led Spencer to philosophy so it was a speculative difficulty that prompted Kant's system of ethics.

"In order that an action should be morally good it is not enough that it should conform to the moral law but it should be done *for the sake of the law.*"² A *good will* alone is good; and a good will is good, not for what it effects, but for what it intends, even when it fails to accomplish its purpose.³ The essential thing in the moral worth of actions is that the moral law alone, independent of every other consideration, should directly determine the will.⁴ Kant appeals to the universal consciousness of man to decide whether it does not recognize the *moral law* as *altogether a priori.*⁵ Consciousness attests that as far as the relations of time and the senses are concerned we are under the law of necessity; but so far as we are conscious of ourselves as noumena or things in themselves we are certain that we are free.⁶ The essence of a man is his character,—that permanent something to which he imputes his several acts.⁷

The moral law is to be obeyed as law and not to be sought as good.⁸ Virtue, however, is worthy of happiness. It is one and the same reason which, whether in a theoretical or practical point of view, judges according to *a priori* principles.⁹ The existence of God is implied in the realization of the summum bonum by the sole agency which is conceivable as adequate to its achievement—that of the Supreme.¹⁰ "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within."¹¹

1 Porter, Kant, p. 23.

2 Preface to *Metaphysic of Morals*, Abbot's Translation, p. 4.

3 *Metaphysic of Morals*, p. 10.

4 *Critique of Practical Reason*, Chap. III., Abbot, p. 164.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 185.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 188.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 191.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 204.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 217.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 222.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 260.

According to Kant reason is self-determined. The essence of morality lies in the abstraction from all particulars. Nothing in the world, or even without it, can even be conceived as good without qualification, i. e., as absolutely good, except a good will.¹ Gifts of fortune or of nature, such as health, wealth, intellect, judgment, etc., are not good in themselves. We can conceive them, as they often are, perverted to the basest purposes. At the very best, they are but as the setting that holds, and perhaps displays to better advantage, the gem; but the gem would be a gem independently of them, because of its *own intrinsic worth*. And the only thing that has moral worth is a *good will*, and no act has moral value that is done from any other motive than that of the right. Duty must be for duty's sake. There must not be the least admixture of advantage or pleasure or any material consideration or sensuous element in it. It cannot proceed from an affection of the sensibility. It must be solely self-determined by reason. A kind act done by a person naturally amiable has less moral worth than that of a person of colder temperament who acts solely out of respect for the law.²

It is this that gives Kant's ethics their ascetic character, in their severe austerity, their renunciation of every element of pleasure. Every act must proceed purely out of reverence for the moral law. In the antagonism between duty and inclination lies the essence of the moral law.

This law is stated as follows, in what Kant calls the *categorical imperative*,³ as distinguished from the hypothetical imperative which is dependent upon some condition of happiness:—"So act as to be perfectly willing that the maxim (subjective principle) of your act become a law of the universe."⁴ The test of an action is its *universality*. Kant proceeds immediately to apply this to such actions as stealing, lying, suicide, etc. These are wrong because they cannot be universally applied without defeating themselves; they would do away with property, with the making of promises, etc., and are therefore *inconsistent with themselves*; and it is on these grounds that Kant rejects them as immoral—though it is just here that Kant comes in for the greatest criticism on the part of Hegel, Schopen-

1 Met. of Morals, trans., p. 9.

2 Ibid, p. 14.

3 Ibid, p. 31.

4 Ibid, p. 39.

hauer, Bradley, Caird¹ and others. The fact that an act is to be consistent with itself, it is shown, does not give it any *moral content*. Kant's method is mere *formalism*. Out of the abstract idea of law, i. e., out of the idea of self-consistency, no particular rules or laws of action can be developed. The abstract universal is barren; it does not differentiate itself. In the sphere of practice no less than in the sphere of theory, the formal laws of identity and contradiction are *merely negative* criteria of truth. The *bare idea of universality*, in which we abstract from all particulars, cannot help us to reach *any particular moral determination*, to the exclusion of all others. Hegel maintains that reason, guided by the formal principle of universality, can as little select, as it can suggest, the particular rules of action. If we abstract from everything but itself, we can universalize *any* particular rule without contradiction. Kant's demonstration, for example, is self-contradictory, *begs the question*. It *presupposes* that right of property which, at the same time, it denies. Every rule thus universalized would result in a contradiction. (Bradley finely shows that the essence of morality is a similar contradiction. "Negate the sensuous self." But if the sensuous self is negated, the possibility of morality disappears. *Morality*, on Kant's principle, is thus *as inconsistent as theft*. "Succor the poor" both negates and presupposes poverty. If you are to love your enemies, you must never be without them: and yet you try to get rid of them. Is that consistent? In short, every duty which presupposes something to be negated, is no duty: it is an immoral rule, because self-contradictory.)² Kant's way of connecting* the principle with the particular rules of morality seems to involve that each such rule should be treated as in itself universal, absolute. But in morality there can only be *one absolute*. Treated as universal, two such commands as "thou shalt not steal" and "thou shalt not kill" must ultimately come into collision with each other, for if all other interests are to be postponed to the maintenance of the rights of property it is impossible that all other interests should be postponed to the preservation of human life. To make either property or life as absolute end is to raise a *particular* into a *universal*. The true moral vindication of each particular can be found only in *determining its place in relation to the others*, in a complete system of morality. The different inter-

1 Vol. II., Chap. II.

2 Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p. 140.

ests must alternately give place to each other, becoming in turn means and end, in the *one moral life* which manifests itself in them all.

Kant's pure law of reason becomes an abstract universal, i. e., a universal opposed to any and every particular. But it is only its relation to the particular that gives to the universal any meaning. The attempt to find a content for it within itself ends in depriving it of all content. Kant forgets that a negative implies a positive, and a negative treated merely as a negative is no relation at all, is nothing.

The progress of the moral consciousness is the *transformation* of that matter which in its earliest stage it receives into itself, its *negation* and its *reconstitution*. Man as a "natural spirit" is in contradiction with himself. The *waking of self-consciousness* is the distinction of himself from his own natural individuality, and carries with it the consciousness of a good or end in which not only the desires, but the self, shall be satisfied; i. e., *the satisfaction of the desires* is brought under the form of a *satisfaction of self*. Kant neglects this in his extreme opposition of the self as active to that self as determined by particular desires. The ideal, the consciousness of which arises out of this opposition, *cannot be absolutely alien* to the desires, any more than the knowing self can be alien to the particular objects which exist only for it. In fact, the relation in which these desires are brought to the unity of the Conscious Self *in its being opposed to them*, is already the first step in the way of making explicit the ideal involved in them; and thus the *antagonism of desire and duty* can only be understood in relation to a *unity* which is presupposed in that antagonism, and which is *realizing itself through it*. The opposition represents the *transition*.

Kant is obliged to bring in utilitarian¹ considerations in applying his principle of universal law. He does not succeed in leaving out the consideration of human happiness altogether. "Both in form, and by every one of the examples employed in illustration, the tests of right conduct and the law of duty are found by Kant in the *effects* of conduct, or in the tendencies of conduct to affect human *well-being*, and that the euphemistic phrases of the fitness of a rule to become a

¹ Cf. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p. 6. "A plump descent into selfish utilitarianism," Porter, p. 78; p. 76.

universal law can signify nothing less than the tendencies of conduct with respect to *individual and social welfare*.”¹

“Kant reasons well,” says Porter,² “when he reasons that certain sensibilities, such as might be supposed peculiar to human beings, are in no sense essential to moral responsibility, e. g., some of the human appetites or tastes, such as are dependent on the body or the special physiological constitution of the human race. But Kant reasons incorrectly when he excludes as accidents of humanity and as non-essential to the discernment and enforcement of the moral law, every species of sensibility whatever as the possible subject of rational discrimination and moral relationship.” The satisfaction of desire through the satisfaction of self changes its character.

Rational being determines itself by its own nature, therefore makes its own being its end. Kant's teaching is here more concrete. The imperative of practical reason is, “Always treat humanity, in your own person and in the person of others, as an *end*, never as a means.”³ Each, moreover, should seek so far as in him lies, to further the ends of the other: for the ends of a conscious subject must, as far as possible, become my ends. Here Kant passes from the abstract universal to the universal as realized in the individual. This leads to the conception of a *kingdom of ends*, which is a *social community* of beings each of whom is reciprocally end and means to the other. “Act in conformity with the idea that the will of every rational being is a universally legislative will.”⁴ The kingdom of ends involves the idea of the *organic unity* of rational beings, but the idea is not fully worked out in Kant.

According to Kant, human society can never be *known* as organic though the *idea* of it as an *organism* underlies all ethical life. The kingdom of ends is possible as a *moral principle*, or “typos,” which commands us to do our part in realizing it; but we can never expect to find it realized in experience. However, the “ought-to-be” will spring out of a deeper appreciation of that which “is.”

The opposition between *inclination and duty* in which, according to Kant, the very essence of morality lies, must be made consistent

1 Porter, p. 76. Also p. 149; p. 127; p. 125; p. 78 ff. Cf. “Virtue as worthy of happiness,” Critique of Prac. R., trans., p. 216 ff; p. 157.

2 Porter, p. 82.

3 Met. of Morals, trans., p. 47.

4 C. of Pr. Reason, trans., p. 119.

with the doctrine that all our desires are *desire for the good*, i. e., an object *adequate to the self*.

It has been said of Kant's "Will," that it is "a will that wills nothing,"¹ that it is merely formal. "To act," says Bradley,² "you must will something and something definite. Duty for duty's sake is false and impossible. We know not duty but duties,"

The permanent value of Kant's ethics, and that which constitutes their characteristic distinctiveness, is the emphasis which he lays upon the opposition, the essential antagonism, between spirit and nature in the moral life.³ It is this which gives them their ascetic and even severely austere character.

1 Jacobi, quoted by Caird, Vol. II., p. 216, note.

2 Ethical Studies, pp. 138-140.

3 Caird, Vol. II., p. 196.

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY AND CRITICISM.

Having studied the essential facts in both evolutionism and idealism, to what conclusion are we driven? What indeed are the distinguishing facts in each system?

The distinguishing facts in evolutionism are, (1st) that the moral sense is looked upon as a *product* of evolution, as *derived*;¹ whether through *sympathy* (Sutherland, Darwin), or *sociality* (Kropotkin), or *sociality plus intelligence* (Darwin), or *justice* (Huxley,² Kropotkin), or striving of social organism for *efficiency* (Leslie Stephen), or through experiences of utility together with political, social and religious restraints (Spencer, Sutherland): it is essentially *heteronomous*.

(2nd) That morality is *relative*, in the sense that it is regarded as a mere means³ of race preservation (Sutherland), or "quantity of life" (Spencer), or social welfare (Stephen), or of further evolution (Darwin).

(3rd) That its *end* is *happiness*, proximate or remote, *pleasure* in some form (Spencer); utility, efficiency, "health of the social tissue" (Stephen); vitality of the organism, individual or social welfare. Its imperative is the *hypothetical* imperative.

Its origin is society, its sanction is utility, its criterion is pleasure or fitness to promote the general happiness, its authority is law, custom, religion, public opinion, etc.⁴

Idealism, on the contrary, looks upon the moral sense as (1st) *underived*, or solely derived from, or inherent in, reason; self-determined, original, *sui generis*, inexplicable by any account of purely natural processes, above nature⁵ and even contrary to nature;⁶ as distinct from intelligence:⁷ it is *autonomous*.

(2nd.) Morality is *absolute*, an end in itself, done purely for the sake of the law, without any other motive or intention, the least admixture of which vitiates its character as moral. Its imperative is the *categorical* imperative.

1 Fiske, O. of C. E., Vol. II., p. 327.

2 Evolution and Ethics, "justice of the pack," p. 56.

3 Schurman, I. of D., p. 125. Martineau, T. of E. T., Vol. II., p. 304.

4 Ultimately with Spencer the "intrinsic effects" of actions. Cf. supra, Chap. II., p. 17.

5 Martineau.

6 Huxley.

7 Schurman, I. of D., p. 147 ff.

(3rd.) So far from happiness or any form of pleasure being the end, the essence of the moral consists in its *antagonism to inclination*. It is not utility or efficiency, for a good will is good not for what it effects but for what it *intends*, even when it fails to accomplish its purposes.¹

Its origin is reason, its criterion is its universality, its motive is reverence for the law, its authority is the rational self-legislating will.

Evolutionary theories of the origin of morality do not seem to account adequately for the facts they attempt to describe. That which constitutes the very essence of the moral, the unique character of the sense of duty, the "oughtness of the ought," is left unexplained on all purely naturalistic theories however ingenious. Sutherland, for instance, makes morality synonymous with sympathy,—but morality, as generally understood, is a wholly different and far wider² thing than sympathy; nor does sympathy even constitute the characteristic feature of morality. According to Kant they are diametrically opposed. Sutherland's identification of morality with sympathy is a view against which Kant's conception of duty and the essential nature of morality would be fundamentally opposed. With Kant actions done out of love possess no moral worth whatever, even though virtuous in themselves. The following words seem particularly applicable to Sutherland. "It is a very beautiful thing to do good to men from love to them and from sympathetic good-will or to be just from love of order: but this is not the true moral maxim of conduct which is suitable to our condition among rational beings, as *men*, when we pretend with fanciful pride to set ourselves above the thought of duty, like volunteers; and, as if we were independent of the commands, to want to do of our own pleasure what we think we need no command to do."³ "Duty and obligation are the *only names* that we must give to our relations to the moral law."⁴ Far from morality being synonymous with sympathy, "It is practical love and not pathological, a love which is *seated in the will* and not in the propensions of sense: in principles of action and not of tender sympathy; and it is this love only which can be commanded."⁵

As Mackintosh very pertinently remarks, "It is easy to show that morality is an outgrowth of sympathy if you define what is

¹ Kant, *M. of M.*, trans., p. 10.

² Kropotkin, p. 12. Cf. supra, Chap. III., p. 39.

³ Critique of *Pr. R.*, trans., p. 175.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

'moral' as equivalent to what is sympathetic."¹ You merely get out what you put in: and this criticism may be applied to all evolutionary accounts of the origin of the moral sense; they virtually presuppose what they endeavor to explain; under the name of "sympathetic" or "social" or "intelligent" they slip in the moral element and then pretend, or even deceive themselves in believing, that they have deduced it independently, by simply allowing ages for its evolution. But in every case, it is the moral with which they start. Writers like Westermarck and Hobbouse trace the evolution of ethical ideas, but merely as they find them already existing in society: and those who endeavor to go back of them and account for the moral instinct itself as due to sociability in animals combined with the growth of intelligence, or to a variation due to natural selection (which in this case would be nothing short of marvelous itself, and itself in greatest need of explanation) set themselves the impossible task of deriving the moral from the unmoral. By no such conjurer's trick, by no such mixing, however skillful, of the ingredients of "intelligence," "sympathy," "social instincts," "justice of the pack," etc., in any witches' cauldron of evolutionism can you produce the phenomenon which we term the *moral consciousness* in man, with its sense of *duty*, its feeling of *obligation*, its authoritativeness of *conscience*, the special and unique character of which none of these theories succeed adequately in describing, let alone satisfactorily accounting for. The "rules" set up by social opinion are not really moral at all, but merely instructions how to reach the end happiness. They have no more ethical authority, says Martineau, than the receipts of a cook-book!²

Moreover, as Huxley has so well remarked, if the moral sentiments have been derived, "the immoral sentiments have been no less evolved," and there is as much justification, i. e., "natural sanction," for the one as for the other. "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." The good does not derive its sanction from being the result of natural development. On the contrary, the moral seems to be a something in contradiction with the whole course of merely natural development, over against it, regulating it, mitigating it, and that, too,

1 Fr. C. to K., p. 180.

2 T. of E. T., Vol. II, p. 353.

not instinctively but consciously, "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."¹ That which restrains nature must surely be above nature, different from it and independent of it. As Green says of the principle of knowledge, "how can that explain nature which is a product of nature";² and, similarly, how can that which sets itself in opposition to nature and restrains and alters and moulds³ nature be itself a product of nature? Furthermore, "To a being who is simply a result of natural forces, an injunction to conform to their laws is unmeaning";⁴ and yet all evolutionists accept the validity of the moral law, and are bound and hold others bound by the same moral laws that govern the conduct of other men. Why man should obey any moral law⁵ whatever its origin, why he should feel himself constrained or restrained,—in which lies the very essence of the "ought," or the sentiment of responsibility and of duty, which is wholly different from any feeling of sympathy or affectionateness or any reasoned calculation of justice,—is the very thing to be explained, but which is not satisfactorily accounted for on any purely naturalistic origin of morals.

The moral as it appears in man is absolutely different from anything at all resembling it in even the highest animals. It has never been proved that animals have a conscience, or that there exists in them any moral feeling at all. The chief element in man is his *consciousness*, and his consciousness of himself as a free being. Animals may be conscious but they are not self-conscious.⁶ In Kant's language, they live in the world of phenomena, not of noumena. They never propose any ends to themselves, possess no idea of motive, are not guided by any conscious conception of the good, but act wholly from feeling, habit and instinct. "We have no evidence of the presence in 'brutes' of such an intelligence as that which forms the basis of our knowledge and *if that be absent, there can properly speaking have been no development of our mind from such a mind as theirs*;"⁷—much less of our ideas of mor-

1 *Evol. and Eth.*, p. 80. Cf. Martineau, "Naturalizing ethics rather reverses the idealising process which rather **ethicises nature**." (*T. of E. T.*, Vol. II., p. 424).

2 *Proleg.*, p. 11.

3 Cf. Alexander, *M. O. and P.*, "whether morality may not throw light on the development of the lower world, as that development on morality," p. 15; also p. 262.

4 Green, *Proleg.*, p. 9. "Consistent evolutionist must abolish practical or prescriptive part altogether."

5 See note 4.

6 Caird, p. 183.

7 Green, p. 89.

ality which, according to the evolutionist view, presuppose mind, consciousness being one of the most important factors on which the evolutionist relies for his explanation of the moral from the feelings and instincts of animals.

Even holding to the naturalistic explanation of the rise of the moral sentiments, it must be remembered that natural processes are not merely natural. Behind the natural processes, behind all biologic change (as will later be shown),¹ stands an Eternal Mind, to which the processes are organic, and which realizes itself through them; and through which alone they have any meaning, or are even rendered possible, being absolutely dependent upon its free, creative, intelligent and moral activity. "Human action is only explicable by the action of an eternal consciousness, which uses them as its organs and reproduces itself through them."² "This conclusion can in no wise be affected by any discovery or (legitimately) by any speculation, in regard either to the relation between the human organism and other forms of animal structure, or to the development of human intelligence and the connection of the lowest stages with the higher stages of the intelligence of brutes. If there is reason for holding that man, in respect of his animal nature, is descended from 'mere' animals—animals in whom the functions of life and sense were not organic to the eternal or distinctively human consciousness—this does not affect our conclusion in regard to the consciousness of which, as he *now* is, man is the subject; a conclusion founded on an analysis of what he now is and does."³

Such an analysis reveals man as a *free moral agent*. "In himself, i. e., in respect of that principle through which he at once is a self and distinguishes himself as such, he *exerts a free activity*—an activity which is *not in time, not a link in the chain of natural becoming*, which has no antecedents other than itself, but is self-originated."

"That countless generations should have passed away during which a transmitted organism was progressively modified by reaction on its surroundings, by struggle for existence or otherwise, till its functions became such that an eternal consciousness could realize or reproduce itself through them—this might add to the wonder

1 See below, Chap. VII.

2 Green, p. 86.

3 Ibid, p. 87.

with which the consideration of what we do and are must always fill us, but it could not alter the results of that consideration and cannot affect the analysis of knowledge on which we found the theory of a *free or self-conditioned and eternal mind* in man."¹

The lower cannot explain the higher. The lower is itself explicable only in its bearing on and relation to the higher.² Consciousness can never be explained by anything less than consciousness, nor can morality—which according to the evolutionists themselves is dependent upon consciousness—exist apart from free, rational beings. The evolutionary theories do not bridge the chasm between the moral and the unmoral. "In this case, as in many others, development means transformation."³

As for pleasure being the end of action, it is never pleasure as such that the self seeks, but pleasure viewed as a *good* of the self, pleasure as related to the conscious self in furtherance of the ends of its being. The motive of every imputable act is *desire of personal good* in some form or other,—which is absolutely different from *animal want*. In the satisfaction of his desire a man seeks the satisfaction of *himself*. "That view for which we plead," says Green, "is that the quality of the absolutely desirable life which renders it such in man's thoughts, is that it shall be the *full realization* of his capacities; that, although pleasure must be incidental to such realization, it is in no way distinctive of it, being equally incidental to any unimpeded activity, to the exercise of merely animal functions no less than to those that are properly human: that, although we know not in detail, what the final realization of man's capacities would be, we know well enough, from the evidence they have so far given of themselves, what a fuller development of them would be: that thus, in the injunction to *make life as full a realization as possible of human capacities*, we have a definiteness of direction which the injunction to make life as pleasant as possible does not supply."⁴

The end of life is not happiness, but *self-realization*; even though the latter should involve pain, suffering and sacrifice. "It is not the realizedness of the form that is good, but the realization of it."⁵

1 Green, p. 88.

2 Ibid, p. 83. "The constituent elements of an organism can only be truly and adequately conceived as rendered what they are by the end realized thro' the organism."

3 Mackintosh, p. 123.

4 Green, p. 463 ff.

5 Bradley, E. S., p. 133.

Fullest realization cannot be attained by one man except in so far as it is attained by all.¹ He cannot think of himself as satisfied in any life other than a social life.² His highest good is "an ideal of a perfect life for himself and other men, as attainable for him only through them, for them only through him: a life that shall be *perfect*, in the sense of being the fulfilment of all that the human spirit in him and them has the real capacity or vocation of becoming, and which (as implied in its being such fulfilment) shall rest on the *will to be perfect*."³

1 Cf. Spencer, "No one can be perfectly free, moral or happy till all are so." (Soc. Stat., p. 273. See below, Chap. VI., p. 57.

2 Green, p. 415.

3 Ibid, p. 419. Also Soc. Stat., p. 255.

CHAPTER VI.

CONVERGENCE.

“Nothing is more striking at the present time,” writes Professor Alexander,¹ “than the convergence of the main opposing ethical theories—on the one hand, the traditional English mode of thought, which advancing through utilitarianism has ended in the so-called evolutionary ethics; on the other, the idealistic movement which is associated with the German philosophy derived from Kant.”

This convergence he finds to be “not of course the mere agreement in practical precepts, which are only the data of the science and the common property of every thinker; nor is it found in those ultimate philosophical principles from which ethics can never be kept far removed, for they are as divergent as possible.” It is rather an “*agreement in spirit*, which, though often impalpable, is shown both in *general method* and in *certain general results* which, though fundamental for ethics, are what Bacon calls ‘*media axiomata*’ in comparison with the ultimate first principles of philosophy.”²

The agreement in *method* is described as “consisting in an *objectivity* or *impartiality* of treatment, which we understand by the ‘scientific’ habit of mind and are apt to associate with the study of the natural sciences because natural objects make fewer appeals to the prejudices.”³ This scientific treatment he further defines as “willingness to submit to examination things that might seem to the feelings too valuable to endure the desecration of analysis.”⁴

The convergence in *general results* he finds “harder to define, but some measure of it may be obtained by comparing the *idealistic* doctrine, that *morality* is a *common good* realized in individual wills, with the view held by ‘the evolutionist Leslie Stephen,’ that conduct is *moral* according as it contributes to *social vitality*.”⁵

The result which evolution has reached, “this mutual interconnection of a man and his society, is not new; it was part of the final outcome given in the first quarter of the (nineteenth) century

1 M. O. & P., p. 5.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 6.

5 Ibid.

to German idealism at the hands of Hegel, who took Kant's abstract formula and gave it body and life by treating the law of morality as realized in the institutions of society and the state. It is in this *concrete social form* that idealism has been transplanted into England." ¹

What Evolutionism and Idealism, then, in spite of their great and fundamental differences, have in common, is their *scientific*² and *social* character. Both are scientific. Both look upon ethics as a science, and hold that the truths of ethics are to be scientifically treated and established. We have seen how this was the aim of Spencer's ethical, and even philosophical, labors—to put ethics upon a "scientific basis," to find for the highly important moral laws, the "regulative" principles of society (the loss or even the impairment of which he looked upon as exceedingly "disastrous") a philosophic foundation;—the "secularization of morals"³ he called this, and morality thus derived "natural morality" in contradistinction to "supernatural." The dictates of the moral sentiments had to be "interpreted and made definite by science."⁴ For the "innate perceptions of right" to serve as guides of conduct they must be "duly enlightened and made precise by an analytic intelligence." His ethics are "rational ethics."⁵

In Kant, too, we find explicitly stated the need and desirability of scientific form for the treatment of morality. "Even wisdom," he writes, "which otherwise consists more in conduct than in knowledge yet has *need of science* not in order to learn from it, but to secure for its precepts admission and permanence."⁶

According to Kant, it was absolutely necessary to set forth moral principles in a scientific form as well as to critically examine and deduce them by a thorough-going philosophical analysis, purely in the light of reason, independent of feeling, or revelation, or popular unwillingness to engage in more than superficial thought, or any other consideration whatever. No less than Spencer he was absolutely convinced of the need, and indeed the indispensableness, of absolutely objective treatment. He even thought that this

¹ M. O. & P., p. 7.

² Used here, not as contrasted with philosophical, but as denoting impartiality and objectiveness of treatment of experience, characteristic of both science and philosophy in narrower sense.

³ D. of E., preface. See supra, Chap. II., p. 13.

⁴ D. of E., Sec. 63.

⁵ Ibid., Sec. 105.

⁶ M. of M., trans., p. 21.

would greatly promote the observance of moral commands, when they were seen to be not arbitrary or something externally imposed, but to rest on highest considerations of pure abstract reason.

"Science ¹ (critically undertaken and methodically directed) is the narrow gate that leads to the true doctrine of practical wisdom, if we understand by this not merely what one ought to do, but what ought to serve teachers as a guide to construct well and clearly the road to wisdom which everyone should travel and to secure others from going astray. Philosophy must always continue to be the guardian of this science, and although the public does not take any interest in its subtle investigations, it must in the resulting doctrines which such an examination first puts in a clear light." ²

In another passage he says, "If there is no genuine supreme principle of morality but what must rest simply on pure reason, independent on all experience, I think it is not necessary even to put the question whether to exhibit these concepts in their generality (in abstracto) as they are established a priori along with the principles belonging to them, if our knowledge is to be distinguished from the *vulgar* and to be called *philosophical*." ³

Such a rational ethics, as distinguished from merely popular precepts, "a metaphysic of morals" is "not only an indispensable substratum of all sound theoretical knowledge of duties, but is at the same time a desideratum of the highest importance to the actual *fulfilment* of their precepts." ⁴

Another thing which the Evolutionary and the Idealistic systems have in common is their recognition and emphasis of man as related to his fellows, as a member of *society*. Society, in the view of both is an organism, in which the whole is dependent upon the parts, and the part—the individual—derives his true character only as an expression of, and as related to, the whole. "It is fundamental to the physical view of morals that there can be nothing good which does not contribute to moral stability;" ⁵—to the help or vitality of the "social tissue," as Leslie Stephen calls it. Even morality itself, by most evolutionists, is looked upon but as a means to this end, a

¹ Kant does not, of course, mean natural science.

² C. of Pr. R., trans., p. 262.

³ M. of M., p. 26.

⁴ Ibid, p. 27.

⁵ M. O. & P., p. 166.

product of natural selection because of its special fitness to promote the social welfare. In Kant we have the doctrine of the Kingdom of Ends which, as we have seen, is a social community in which each serves as reciprocally means and end to the others. Each being a rational being, is to be treated by every other rational being as such, and his ends are to be respected as well as my ends, and each should seek, so far as in him lies, to further the ends of the others. It is the very fitness of the maxim of an action for a place in a scheme of *universal legislation* that stamps it as a good action. Spencer refers specifically to Kant's dictum, "Act according to the maxim only, which you can wish, at the same time, to become a universal law," and remarks, "This implies the thought of a society in which the maxim is acted upon by all and universal benefit recognized as the effect."¹ Of the evolutionists, Spencer's ethics are the most individualistic, and yet they are marked throughout by a recognition of the claims of, and the duties towards, others.² The intimate relation of a man to his fellows and to all other men is everywhere brought out; and Spencer even maintains that "it is only by entire fulfilment of the moral law (which includes social obligations) that life can become complete." Individual perfection is dependent upon social perfection. "The co-existence of a perfect man and an imperfect society is impossible."³ In his own fine words, "No one can be perfectly free until all are free; no one can be perfectly moral until all are moral; no one can be perfectly happy until all are happy."⁴ The philosophical moralist "treats solely of the *straight* man, describes how the straight man comports himself; shows in what relationship he stands to other straight men; shows how a *community* of straight men is constituted."⁵ Spencer's ethics are what he calls Absolute Ethics, as distinguished from Relative Ethics, and formulate the laws of "the ideal man as existing in the *ideal social state*."⁶

According to Alexander, morality is social as society is moral.⁷ The very essence of goodness is "its adjustment to the order of

1 D. of E., Sec. 108.

2 Soc. Stat., p. 273.

3 D. of E., Sec. 108.

4 Soc. Stat., p. 273.

5 D. of E., Sec. 106.

6 Ibid, Sec. 108.

7 M. O. & P., p. 15.

action, its compatibility with the systematic whole. The moral sentence expresses this adjustment."¹

In Green the social character of morality is brought out still more strongly. The end which a rational being proposes to himself is his highest good, but this cannot be attained apart from his fellows in society.² The divine idea of man can only be fulfilled *in and through persons*, i. e., in and through *society*. Without society there can be no persons, as only through society is personality actualized.³ Life consists in continual and progressive realization on the part of the self, but this self-realization is not only compatible with, but dependent on, the like realization of themselves by others. There is a unity of the human spirit throughout its individual manifestations, in virtue of which the realization of its possibilities, though a personal object to each man, is at the same time an object *fully attainable by one* only in so far as it is attained by the *whole human society*.⁴ "The spring of all moral progress can still lie nowhere else than in the attraction of heart and will by the ideal of *human perfection*, and the practical convictions which arise from it."⁵

"Taking human society together, its action in one mode supplements its action in another, and the whole sum of its action forms the motive power of true moral development; which means the apprehension on our part, ever widening and ever filling and ever more fully responded to in practice, of our possibilities as men and of the reciprocal claims and duties which those possibilities imply."⁶ "Do what is best for mankind" Green uses as a popular equivalent of Kant's formula—"Treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, never merely as a means, always at the same time as an end."⁷

Thus Evolutionism and Idealism are at one in the stress they lay upon the *social character* of man's nature and man's duty.

There is also a basis of approach between the two philosophies in the importance each attaches to the *family* as the birth-place of moral ideas. According to Sutherland, morality is "perihestic," i. e.,

1 M. O. & P., p. 148.

2 Proleg., p. 199.

3 Ibid., p. 200.

4 Ibid., p. 422.

5 Ibid., p. 341.

6 Ibid., p. 337.

7 Ibid., p. 342.

originated around the hearth-fires of primitive man, taking its rise in parental and conjugal love and filial affection, and developing with a tender regard of brother and sister and the mutual and reciprocal offices and kindness of the members of the same family-group. With Green, too, "the form in which true good, or good on the whole, was first conceived was that of family well-being."¹ The most primitive and elementary objects that could supply the soul's demand for a permanent good and give some definite content to the *idea of true good*, . . . "must have been those that contribute to supply the *wants of a family*—to keep its members alive and comfortably alive."² In providing for them he provides for himself. They constitute his other self. His own life is carried forward in theirs. This provision for the wants of a family, which gives its content to the idea of good, is not a merely instinctive process. It is connected with the good will and rests on self-consciousness. It is "in promise and potency an interest in the bettering of mankind."³ It reveals an interest, moral and spiritual, different from the mere satisfaction of animal wants, and leading to the conception of "that permanent welfare of the family, which it was their great object to promote, as consisting, at any rate among other things, in the continuance in others of an interest like their own; in other words, as consisting in the *propagation of virtue*."⁴

Through the family, then, by identifying one's permanent good with it, and the care and cultivation of its members, there has arisen "a conception of good things of the soul, as having a value distinct from and independent of the good things of the body; if not as the only things truly good, to which all other goodness is merely relative."⁵

1 Proleg., p. 246.

2 Ibid., p. 247; p. 257.

3 Ibid., p. 258.

4 Ibid., p. 260.

5 Ibid., p. 261.

CHAPTER VII.

RECONCILIATION.

We referred above¹ to Caird's statement of the "vital opposition which has affected the whole history of Ethics," and which he finds in its most pronounced form in Kant as contrasted with the hedonistic philosophy. This opposition we have endeavored to illustrate as revealed in the two antagonistic systems of Evolutionism and Idealism. We have attempted to make plain the characteristic distinctiveness of each, and our study has emphasized the fundamental contrasts between them. Our last chapter was devoted to setting forth some of the points which they nevertheless have in common, such as their scientific and social character, and the importance each attaches to the family as the birth-place of moral ideas.

The author whom we have above quoted, after stating that "each side represents a real interest of the moral life," goes on to remark that "we are taking up the consideration of it at a stage at which the antagonism has reached its ultimate form, and therefore is *on the way to be reconciled.*"²

Kant himself, "though he expresses the negative view of the moral life in its relation to sense and passion in no hesitating terms, yet has continually present to him the necessity of a reconciliation."

This reconciliation is found in the *higher unity* which embraces both interests, and in relation to which alone they are at all to be understood. The ideal, the consciousness of which arises out of the opposition of self as active from that self as determined by particular desires, cannot (as has been shown above)³ be absolutely alien to the desires, any more than the knowing self can be alien to the particular objects which exist only for it. In fact, the relation in which these desires are brought to the unity of the Conscious Self *in its being opposed to them*, is already the first step in the way of making explicit the ideal involved in them. The antagonism of *desire* and *duty* can only be understood in relation to a *unity* which is presupposed in that antagonism and which is *realizing itself through it*. The satisfaction of the desires is brought under the

¹ Chap. IV., p. 40.

² Vol. II., p. 172.

³ Chap. IV., p. 44.

form of a satisfaction of self. The absolute universal of Kant becomes the concrete universal of Hegel. The antagonism becomes *realization*.

To quote a passage from Bradley,¹ "The universal to be realized is no abstraction, but an organic whole, a system where many spheres are subordinated to one sphere, and particular actions to spheres. This system is real in the detail of its function, not out of them, and lives in its vital processes, not away from them. The organs are always at work for the whole, the whole is at work in the organs. And I am one of the organs. The universal, then, which I am to realize is the system which penetrates and subordinates to itself the particulars of all lives, and here and now in my life has this and that function, in this and that case, in exercising which through my will it realizes itself as a whole, and me in it."

There is a Good Will in the world realizing itself through human wills, through mankind, through society, through history, through nature; using all things as its organs, through which it expresses itself, and as its instruments, through which it accomplishes its purposes. "The good-will in the world realizes itself by and in imperfect instruments, and in spite of them."²

The deepest analysis of the phenomena of life and of human consciousness, and of the process we call knowing, reveals in man the presence of a "principle not natural,"³ a "spiritual"⁴ or "divine"⁵ principle which is a part or a manifestation of an Eternal Consciousness⁶ or Mind⁷ or Spirit realizing itself in the self-consciousness of man, in his self-conscious and free activity and effort after continual improvement, mental, material and moral; whose realization constitutes its own rational, self-conscious end,⁸ for which it uses every material, natural and human agency.⁹

This good-will, in constant progress of self-realization, on its *scientific side* we call Evolution, with whose process we identify it.

"The slowly wrought-out dominance of Mind in things is the central fact of evolution;"—so writes Hobhouse,¹⁰ one of the latest

1 Ethical Studies, p. 159.

2 Ibid, p. 165.

3 Green, p. 14.

4 Ibid, Chap. I.

5 Ibid, p. 188.

6 Ibid, p. 72; p. 86.

7 Ibid, p. 87.

8 Ibid, p. 411.

9 Cf. Job 32, v. 8, "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

10 Morals in Evolution, Vol. II., p. 284.

writers on the evolution of morals; and this is the conclusion to which he comes after a most careful study of the facts of evolution and their application to the origin and development of morality, treated historically and scientifically. He reaches the idea of "a self-conscious evolution of humanity," and finds therein "a meaning and an element of purpose for the historical process which has led up to it." For him the whole "plan" of evolution implies a "planning" Mind.¹ "For progress," he writes, "is not something that goes on of itself by an automatic law, or an inherent tendency of things. . . . There remains the possibility, however difficult to conceive in concrete shape, of a spirit subject to conditions, and achieving its full growth only by mastering them. . . . Progress is made only in so far as the conditions of life come more and more under the dominion of Mind."²

As Schurman says, in criticism of Darwin's view that morality is but a product of highly developed intelligence; "Were intelligence not at the heart of the cosmos, it could not have turned up as the crowning glory of the development of life."³ Huxley in his famous Romanes lecture has expressed a similar idea. "Fragile reed as he may be, man, as Pascal says, is a thinking reed; 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."⁴

So far from the knowledge of nature being itself a part or product of nature, there is a sense in which man is related to nature as its *author*, as well as its child,⁵ through the presence in him of a principle not-natural, by which he makes his world of experience through the unifying power of consciousness, (which Kant calls "the synthetic unity of apperception" or "understanding"). "The understanding makes nature" is Kant's celebrated dictum.⁶ Spirit cannot be derived from "nature." Nature, as a "process of change" is explicable only through spirit.⁷ Man does not merely, like the plant or animal, undergo a process of development, but seeks to and does

1 M. in E., Vol. I., p. 4, footnote.

2 Ibid., Vol. II., p. 280.

3 I. of D., p. 146.

4 E. of E., p. 83.

5 Green, p. 15.

6 "Macht zwar der Verstand die Natur aber er schafft sie nicht," quoted by Green, p. 15.

7 Green, p. 37.

develop himself.¹ "If it were not for certain demands of the spirit which is our self, the notion of human progress could never occur to us." "It is the consciousness of possibilities in ourselves unrealized, but constantly in process of realization, that alone enables us to *read the idea of development into* what we observe of natural life, and to conceive that there must be such a thing as a plan of the world."² The very idea of Evolution and the discerning of a Plan in the process of nature is a *spiritual product*, a manifestation of Mind or Conscious Intelligence.

Evolution is but the *mental side* of what on the *active side* is *self-realization*.

"Evolution," writes Bradley, "gives us over neither to chance nor alien necessity, for it is that self-realization which is the progressive conquest of both."³ "If 'progress' signifies that an advance has been set going and is kept up by chance in an unknown direction: that the higher is, in short, what is and what before was not, and that what will be, of whatever sort it is, will still be a step in progress; if, in short, the *movement of history towards a goal* is mere illusion, and the stages of that movement are nothing but the successes of what from time to time somehow happens to be best suited to the chance of circumstances,—then it is clear, in the first place, that *teleology being banished*, such words as *evolution* and *progress* have *lost their own meaning*, and that to speak of humanity realizing itself in history, and of myself finding in that movement the truth of myself worked out, would be simply to delude oneself with hollow phrases."⁴

In other words, if Evolution is to have any meaning at all, it must have a teleological significance. It cannot be merely blindly mechanical. Only in the light of ideal considerations, as being a process of self-conscious self-realization, is it at all rational or intelligible.

After remarking that the word "evolution" may be used to stand for anything whatever, though it has none the less a meaning of its own, Bradley continues, "'Evolution,' 'development,' 'progress,' all imply *something identical throughout*, a *subject of the evolution*,

1 Green, p. 182.

2 Ibid, p. 196.

3 Ethical Studies, p. 172.

4 Ibid, p. 173.

which is one and the same. If what is there at the beginning is not there at the end, and the same as what was there at the beginning, then evolution is a word with no meaning. Something must evolve itself, and that something, which is the end must also be the beginning. It must be what moves itself to the end, and must be the end which is the 'because' of the motion. Evolution must evolve itself to itself, progress itself go forward to a goal which is itself, development *bring out nothing but what is in*, bring it out, not from external compulsion, but because it is in."

In other words—we reach the same conclusion—Mind is back of all evolution. The whole evolutionary process, whether in nature or in morals, posits Mind,—a purposive intelligence, a directing force. Evolution is not a mere fortuitous process, given over to "accident," or "necessity,"—blind chance or meaningless change. It implies, and indeed exhibits, orderly development; and, moreover, the triumph of such evolutionary thinkers as Spencer, or Darwin, is to have reduced the whole process to law, and to have discovered the formula, or the "mechanism," of development. That which reveals the omnipresence of law in every particle of material creation, from protoplasm to highest man, cannot itself be without law, in the sense of being lawless, irrational. On the contrary, it is itself the ground of law, the basis and cause of rational procedure and development. Evolution does not so much explain Soul, as Soul explains evolution. Evolution without soul is inexplicable and begs the question. Soul supplies the energizing spring of the whole evolutionary process, and is explicable,—self-explicable: the very definition of soul, or at least the knowledge of it, as we are conscious of it in ourselves, implying all those faculties and powers which evolution assumes but does not account for. *Evolution* viewed from the highest rational standpoint, and on the only theory that will adequately explain all the facts, becomes *one with realization*;¹ is identical with the self-conscious, self-realization of the Spirit of the universe.

Applying these considerations to the evolution of morals;—all that evolutionary thinkers such as Darwin, Sutherland, and Spencer have said as to the naturalistic origin of the moral sense may be

¹ "According to Hegel," says Sidgwick, "the essence of the universe is a process of thought from the **abstract to the concrete**; and a right understanding of this process gives the **key** for interpreting the **evolution in time** of European philosophy."—*History of Ethics*, p. 280.

true, without invalidating the idealistic character of ethics. Even granted that our criticism has not been valid, and that the feeling of moral obligation and the sense of duty may have indeed arisen, as these writers claim, through sympathy and sociality and intelligence, immensely furthered through natural selection, together with later enactment of positive law, and that the whole process may be exhibited in unbroken unity from lowest animal to highest man;—in the light of what has been set forth in this chapter it still remains an incontrovertible fact, that evolution at the most merely reveals the *historical order of events* and does not explain their *intrinsic* character, due to their derivation from the Ideal Cause, the Ground of the Moral Order and Moral Progress of the universe, which can be nothing else than Eternal Reason, realizing itself progressively in time.

There is a *moral order* in the Universe. The cosmos is intrinsically and originally moral, founded in moral as in natural law, moral in purpose and in essence.

There is an ideal trend to our nature. There are facts of the moral life and the transcendent character of duty, feelings and aspirations and motives and impulses of the soul, moral instincts in short, which no merely evolutionary or utilitarian considerations can adequately explain, which defy analysis as mere products of hereditary hedonistic forces. The sense of honor, the feeling of integrity, the moral sensitiveness that “feels a stain like a wound,” the heroic ethical loyalty that “swareth to its own hurt and changeth not;” all that we term the grandeur of righteousness and the beauty of holiness:—these things are beyond any mere analysis of ethical feeling to explain, they transcend any and every merely *social* explanation and justification. They have their *sanction* in a higher source, viz., in their *idealistic* and *divine origin*. Ethics, by the very nature and character of the ethical, demands a *theistic*, at least an *idealistic*, interpretation of the universe and of life.

The Evolutionary account of the origin of ethics is perhaps correct so far as it goes. It may possibly be accepted completely as a description of the historical process in time: but as penetrating to the core of the character of the ethical, as revealing the full worth and grandeur of the moral instinct, particularly of the higher forms of duty, it falls short as a complete satisfactory account that shall do full justice to the thing attempted to be explained. The latter

has its rational and full comprehension only in that Ideal Source whence it springs.

Kant's lofty words perhaps convey better than any formal statement, or mere scientific declaration, the high character and origin of the moral sentiment:—

“Duty! Thou sublime and mighty name, that dost embrace nothing charming or insinuating, but requirest submission, and yet seekest not to move the will by threatening aught that would arouse natural aversion or terror, but merely holdest forth a law which of itself finds entrance into the mind, and yet gains reluctant reverence (though not always obedience), a law before which all inclinations are dumb even though they secretly counter-work it! *What origin is there worthy of thee*, and where is to be found the root of thy noble descent, which proudly rejects all kindred with the inclinations; a root to be derived from which is the indispensable condition of the only worth which men can give themselves?”

“It can be nothing less than a *power* which elevates man above himself which can enable a man to appreciate the obligation and elevation of such a life” “This power,” he proceeds to say, “is nothing but *personality*, that is, freedom and independence of the mechanism of nature, yet, regarded as a faculty of a being who is subject to special laws, viz., pure, practical laws given by its own reason, so that the person as belonging to the sensible world, is subject to *his own personality as belonging to the intelligible world.*”¹

This Power, this Personality, this Eternal Reason, is what both philosophy and common speech, as well as religion, unite in calling, and in reverencing as,—God.

“God,” says Green, “is not merely a Being who has made us,” but “He is a Being in whom we exist; with whom we are in principle one; with whom the human spirit is identical, in the sense that He is all which the human spirit is capable of becoming.”²

Even according to Mr. Spencer, the greatest authority on Evolution, at the end of all scientific and philosophic inquiries, we are brought into the presence of “an infinite and omnipresent Energy from which all things proceed.”³

“Science and philosophy,” writes Macpherson, “long divided by

¹ Cr. of Pr. R., trans., p. 180.

² Proleg., p. 198.

³ Macpherson, Spencer and Spencerism, p. 90.

such watchwords as Materialism and Idealism, are now beginning to unite in recognition of the fact that Matter is not dead, inert, but alive and everywhere palpitating with energies, and that organic life is no special creation, but simply a highly specialized and complex form of the universal life of Nature. So far from Mr. Spencer being a Materialist, he might more correctly be described as an Idealist. So far from thinking that life is a product of Matter, he has clearly indicated that in his view Matter itself is a form of life. In his own words: 'Under one of its aspects, scientific progress is a gradual transfiguration of Nature. Where ordinary perception saw perfect simplicity, it reveals great complexity; where there seems absolute inertness it discloses intense activity; and in what appears mere vacancy it finds a marvellous play of forces. Each generation of physicists discovers in so-called "brute-matter" powers which but a few years before the most instructed physicists would have thought incredible. When the explorer of nature sees that, quiescent as they appear, surrounding solid bodies are thus sensitive to forces which are infinitesimal in their amounts—when the spectroscope proves to him that *molecules on the earth pulsate in harmony with molecules in the stars*—When there is forced on him the inference that every point in space thrills with an infinity of vibrations passing through it in all directions; the conception to which he tends is much less that of a universe of dead matter than that of a *universe everywhere alive*; alive, if not in the restricted sense, still in the general sense.'

Thus even Herbert Spencer, High-priest of Science, and Arch-materialist though he is supposed to be, prefers, and is philosophically led, to interpret the universe *in terms of spirit* rather than of matter. So also Wallace, co-discoverer with Darwin of the origin of species through natural selection, reaches the conclusion "that the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually *is the will of higher intelligence, or of one Supreme Intelligence.*"¹

With such views as the foregoing, philosophy is no longer merely philosophy. It has become religion. Ethics, through metaphysics, has "passed on"² to religion. Morality "issues in,"³ and thereafter "survives within,"⁴ religion. Evolution becomes *immanent teleology*.

1 Quoted by Williams, R. of E. E., p. 20.

2 Martineau, T. of E. T., Vol. II., p. 405.

3 Bradley, E. S., p. 280.

4 Ibid., p. 298.

We may sum up the conclusions we have reached as follows:— In Evolution, God is but realizing Himself, His will, His purpose, in the universe which He has created according to fixed laws and for a definite object. In more scientific language, the highest explanation of the universe is teleological. The facts of science, and the reasoning of philosophy, disclose an intelligent and a moral order. The universe is best understood in the light of the ideal: there are ideal implications throughout, that express themselves, particularly in the moral realm, in ethical values and in ethical judgments. An Evolutionistic explanation of the universe does not lead necessarily to a utilitarian ethics, because of the ideal factors involved. The ideal remains the chief element in the moral; and an explanation of the origin of the moral that does not take into due account this factor, is not a complete explanation of the origin of morality. The chief intrinsic factor has been omitted. It is like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. Morality is not fully understood, its character not completely accounted for, until it is carried back, or up, to its source and origin in the nature and will of the Ground of all existence, the Spring of all progress, the Cause of all development, the Mind and Heart and Will of an omnipotent, omniscient and eternal God.

‘Were it not,’ remarked Martineau,¹ “for this last and culminating stage, the evolution even of human conduct would never earn even the name of moral at all. So long as it is pushed on from behind, knowing not whither it goes; so long as it only slips more and more happily into the groove of movement and advance, it is simply success without a particle of character.”

“Not till this necessary causation is replaced by the free, and for the spontaneous is substituted the voluntary, not till the ‘selection’ passes from Nature to Thought, and is determined prophetically for an end, instead of mechanically from the beginning, does the progressive change in human action and in social laws become any more moral than, in the pigeon, the acquisition of his tumbling trick or the growth of his portentous crop. And when the transference of the process to the Will has taken place, the theory of evolution is no longer an hypothesis in natural history, but merges in the conception of indefinite possible approach to moral perfection.”

¹ T. of E. T., p. 406.

Thus Evolutionism and Idealism in Ethics, supposed to be so contrary, and even diametrically opposed, to one another, not merely converge in many particulars, but *merge*, and *absolutely blend*, in the unification of morality with religion, through the identification of Evolution with Self-Realization of Conscious Will. Their differences and discordances are reconciled, and completely harmonized, with the uttering of that one word, and the attaining, though by different paths, to that sublime thought, which is the summit and crown of speculation as of life,—the Word of Words, the Thought of Thoughts, the Fact of Facts; Ground of all Reality, Basis of all Progress, Goal of all Development; Sanction of all Morality, Ideal of all Religion; Substance, Mind, Spirit, Reason; Generalization of all particulars, and of every generalization the Highest Generalization; Absolutely Supreme Unifying Principle and Essence and Energy,—GOD!

“That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off, divine event
To which the whole creation moves.”



