THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONDUCT

An Outline of Ethical Principles

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PREFACE

The purpose of this book is twofold. First; to present in convenient form the elements of ethical science, by brief introduction to subjects usually included in the course in ethics offered in our colleges and normal schools.

In planning the book for such use, it is presumed that the student will be directed to the fuller discussion of these subjects by the great writers of ancient and modern times; and that such reading will be worked over, by discussion in class room, and by written exposition of special topics. The book is made as brief as possible, to leave opportunity for this supplementary discussion; which, in such a subject as ethics, is much more important than anything that can be taken by memory from a text-book. The works that are chiefly had in mind to supplement this introduction are Seth's Principles of Ethics and Green's Prolegomena.

Second; it is hoped that the views here presented, though not pretending to any great originality, may serve to emphasize some concepts of ethics that have not been sufficiently regarded. Chief among these are the following:

1. Ethics should be treated as a natural science, and the distinction between the methods of treating moral science and the natural sciences entirely abandoned. Its principles are grounded in the same eternal scheme of things, which we call nature; they are discovered by similar processes of induction, and are as absolute and permanent as the laws of psychology or biology.
2. The distinction, so generally made, between Christian ethics and philosophic ethics rests on a misconception of both. There is but one ethics, and its principles are eternal. Revelation does not alter facts nor principles; it only makes them known.
3. The principles of ethics must not be confused with *our*

conception of those principles. Our laws and customs can never be anything more than our conception of those principles. Our conceptions change, but the principles cannot change.

4 The offices of instinct, taste, and imagination are more fully considered, as important factors of conduct.

In the study of ethics, we are greatly embarrassed by the unsettled state of its terminology. The significance of so many of its most important terms is vague, and their usuage so inconsistent, that it is difficult to understand what has been written, or to be sure that we shall be understood.

The word conscience, for example, is one of the most conspicuous terms in every discussion of moral phenomena, and it is specially unfortunate that it is used, even by careful writers, in at least three distinct and widely different senses. It is used to denote the mind's ability to distinguish right from wrong; and in such cases means the faculty elsewhere called perception.

It is used to express the sense of moral obligation, or the impulse to act in certain ways, without conscious regard for the ends to be reached by such action; and in this sense it is simply an instinct.

Again it is used as the equivalent of judgment; as when we say, conscience approves or disapproves. Finally, it is used to express the distress of mind commonly called remorse. It seems best, therefore, to avoid, as far as possible, the use of the term conscience, and to denote each of these functions by its more specific name, perception, instinct, judgment or emotion.

The word law is also ambiguous. Sometimes, especially with the older writers, it means a rule of conduct prescribed by some superior authority which the inferior is commanded to obey, but may disobey. More frequently, especially in all scientific discussion, it means simply an order of events, or method of action—e. g., the law of gravitation. In ethics it is necessary to use the word in both senses, and great care is needed to avoid confusion.

The terms mind and soul are not well discriminated. In these

pages we have, for the most part, used the word soul when we meant the whole spiritual man—intellect, feelings and will; and mind when we referred rather to the intellect alone.

In the whole field of ethics we need to give careful attention to definitions and to discriminate sharply between synonymous terms.

Following these suggestions the reader will, we trust, find the science of ethics not only profitable, but a most attractive field of study.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

1. Philosophy is an attempt to interpret facts. Its purpose is to explain how things come to pass as they do. It looks behind phenomena to find their causes, and traces these causes back as far as possible toward the ultimate ground of being.

It seeks the *principles* which underlie the manifestations of physical and psychical energy, and defines the laws of their activities.

2. The Philosophy of Conduct is such an inquiry into the *rational activities* of men. It seeks a rational basis for the judgments that approve or disapprove the actions, feelings and states of mind of ourselves and others. It inquires into the ground of moral distinctions, and attempts to justify the moral sentiments and the dictates of conscience. It inquires as to the standard of right; first, whether there be any fixed standard; second, whether it can be defined and, third, how it is to be applied and what are its sanctions.

3. Every such inquiry must start with some *presumptions*,—some principles which may be regarded as certainly true and permanent and settled in the constitution of the universe.

In so large a field as human conduct it is difficult to find many such principles that will command universal assent. Many propositions that are practically accepted may be questioned on theoretic grounds by this or that school of philosophy; some must be regarded as hypothetical,—probable but not demonstrable, and others must be held as the least difficult of alternatives, neither of which seems satisfactory.

On the other hand there is no other field of philosophy that is so richly supplied with data on which to work. Each individual consciousness is a laboratory well equipped for this study, and all history, biography and poetry contribute to our store of

facts and illustrations of principles.

4. We may assume the following propositions as sufficiently assured to justify their acceptance without discussion.

First; there is a *rational basis for conduct.* Man is by his very constitution a rational being. Every moral sentiment, each instinctive impulse, all feeling of obligation and sense of rightness in the normal soul is consistent with reason, and springs from some real necessity in the constitution of the world. There is always a reason why right is right; and, though we may not always be able to discover the reason, we do not doubt that there is one.

Second; there is a real difference between right and wrong; a difference in quality which is fundamental, permanent and not dependent on our judgment. The distinction between right and wrong is not made by our moral sense, but by our moral sense and judgment we discover and recognize the distinction which exists in the nature of things,—in the constitution of the world. Nothing is right because we think it right, but we think it right because it is so. The distinction is objective, not subjective.

Third; there is a fixed standard by which moral quality is determined, just as there are fixed principles of mathematics or physics. Conduct must conform to this standard, just as numbers must conform to mathematical laws.

Fourth; this standard of right is the measure of human responsibility. Consequences of its violation are just as orderly, certain and inevitable as are the consequences of physical action. The effects of wrong feeling, willing or states of the soul follow in the natural order of our constitution, and are no more subject to our will than are the effects of chemical agents or the order of the planets. We are responsible—that is we respond, react or are affected by our moral states and conduct just as certainly and orderly as we react to physical forces.

5. There is nothing variable, nothing arbitrary, nothing subjective in the laws of ethics. There is no reason to regard the

philosophy of conduct as in any manner or degree less positive or less exact than any other branch of philosophy or science. The only uncertainty is our knowledge, but that does not affect the eternal laws and principles.

Systems of ethics come and go, as systems of astronomy or other sciences do; but, as the stars keep on their courses quite unaffected by our systems, so the moral universe goes on unchanged from the beginning of the present order of things.

The distinctions that we make between the various systems of ethics must not be thought of as rival schemes, which may be accepted or rejected by popular vote and so become our laws of conduct. They can be nothing more than our conceptions of the relations, principles and laws which are established in the constitution of the universe. For example, Christian Ethics and Philosophic Ethics are convenient terms to denote particular points of view of conduct, or different sources of knowledge of ethical principles, but they mean nothing more. There is only one ethics, only one scheme of moral government, and this is fixed and eternal. There is no ethics dependent on Christianity, nor any that is affected by Philosophy; just as there is no such thing as Christian chemistry or a Philosophic multiplication table. That which is is. No matter what light we see by, if only we see the things that be. Revelation, as the very word denotes, is but the unveiling of the truth, and has no creative power, and Philosophy can not change the character of right and wrong any more than it can add a cubit to our stature. Thinking a thing to be right can no more make it right than thinking that the square of four is fifteen makes it so.

6. Ethics is first of all inductive. It must begin with a careful examination of the phenomena of its peculiar field. As in all science, the first important matter is the *data*,—the things given —the facts and experiences from which we may hope to infer the principles which underlie them.

7. The term conduct includes all voluntary, rational activity—

everything that is done "on purpose." It does not include mere mechanical movements, nor such bodily activities as are due to reflex nervous energy undirected by the will, such as breathing or swinging of the hands in walking, but only such activities as are guided by choice or volition, whether the action be mental or physical. It also includes states and habits of the soul so far as these are the result of voluntary effort.

8. Strictly speaking, all conduct is mental—psychical. Bodily action has in itself no moral quality. We judge of conduct only in so far as we can reasonably assume a purpose or intention. The acts of a sleep walker or the insane are non-moral, and we do not judge them as right or wrong. But since the act of normal beings is the expression of the will, and in most cases the only index of the will, we commonly include the bodily acts in our concept of conduct, and thus impute to all voluntary bodily actions the moral quality which we infer as belonging to the soul that directed the act.

9. All conduct implies a purpose; all rational activity is directed to some end, it is intended to effect some thing, to attain to some object.

These objects to which our actions are directed may be more or less remote. Few objects are attained to by a single act of will, and the immediate object is in most cases only one of a series, often a very long and greatly involved series, of objects leading to some definite end.

The remote object we call the ultimate object, or the *purpose* of the series. Of course no object is absolutely ultimate. Our purposes extend vaguely forward indefinitely, but we speak of the end definitely before the mind—the culmination of the series of acts contemplated when the will moves, as the ultimate end or purpose of conduct. It is the consummation of the course of action under consideration. For example, your immediate object of today's study is to learn today's lesson; but this only that you may master the subject, and that as a part of your education,

and that again as a part of your projected scheme of life.

The distinction between immediate and remote purposes is exceedingly important and often difficult to define, for conduct is not a series of disconnected acts, not even a chain of related acts, but a vast and complicated tissue of actions, all more or less coherent, and directed more or less consistently to certain definite ends.

Therefore we speak of a *course* of conduct, a scheme of action or a system of behavior.

10. The terms *purpose* and *motive* and *intention* are often close synonyms, and are not very well defined even in good usage. For the sake of clearness let us use purpose to denote the particular object we wish to attain, intention to include the whole series of acts involved in the attainment of the purpose—the whole program we intend to execute in the pursuit of our purpose. The motive is that which lies back of our volition. It is the desire or impulse which causes us to choose that purpose. For example, my *love* of power is the motive which impels me to seek office. I form the *purpose of going* to Congress, and *intend to use the means* necessary to accomplish my purpose.

All this is a thoroughly rational process,—it involves the emotions, the judgment, thinking and volition. Every purpose implies a reason why it was chosen. Action without a purpose is called insane, and a purpose not justified by reason is called foolish. The forming of purposes is the chief function of the mind: the pursuit of purposes is conduct.

11. But when we come to the analysis of conduct we find a great variety of *factors* entering into the formation of these purposes.

We find the immediate cause of our purposes is always a *desire* of some kind. We exert ourselves only to satisfy some craving, some sort of reaching out after something. What these cravings are depends on many things; somewhat on the native quality of the soul, due to its constitution, its inherited bent or inclination,

the character and strength of its instincts; somewhat on the effect of all the experiences of past conduct, forming habits and tastes and associations; and somewhat on the influence of environment and the sympathetic power of social customs of thought and action.

12. These are the chief factors in the formation of our purposes, but the will seems to have a certain independence, and to be able to guide conduct as the sailor steers his ship, not without the force of the wind, but yet not helplessly driven. So we feel ourselves free and self-directed, notwithstanding the fact that our will is moved by motives that are, at least to a great degree, external and beyond our control.

In every case we form our purposes for some reason that seems to us sufficient. However we may insist that we are free to choose one course or another, we always acknowledge the pertinence of the question, *why* do you choose this course? We thereby confess that as rational beings we act, not from caprice or from spontaneous impulse, but from some cause capable of rational definition, and that anything other than such rational conduct is unworthy of us.

13. This acknowledgment of our obligation to act rationally, to be able to assign, at least to ourselves, a reason for our conduct implies a *philosophy of conduct*. The function of choice implies a reason why we choose one course rather than another. It implies a judgment that one course is better than another, and all judgment implies a standard by which to judge, a measure by which to mete. All our attempts to appreciate the excellence of conduct, all our sense of honor, or beauty of character, all our feelings of admiration and esteem imply that there are principles, permanent and definable, by which we may rightly judge—some tests of moral quality, something that gives meaning to the terms right and wrong, better and worse.

14. It is true that practical morality has little thought for the philosophy of conduct. Our judgments of right and wrong, our

sentiments of approbation or repulsion, seem so spontaneous and so positive that we do not often inquire into the grounds of our decisions. We *feel* that certain things are right, while others are repulsive to our moral sense, and we feel confident that our judgments and instincts are reliable in such premises, and are content to rest in this.

But however reliable our moral instinct may be, and however positive our conviction that we know right from wrong, such instincts and spontaneous judgments are very liable to perversion, easily warped by passion or prejudice, and need the corrective authority of reason to hold them up to the consistent use of their own proper powers.

14½. It is the province of Philosophy to inquire into the character of our impulses, to test our spontaneous judgments, to establish the validity of our moral sentiments. It is the office of Philosophy to reduce to some orderly, and if possible, complete, system the loose and partial moral reflections of ordinary experience, to justify the instinctive impulses of our moral nature. It aims to determine the true tests of moral quality, and thus to define the course of highest excellence and the chief end of our existence.

15. It is evident that, before we can define the ends of our existence, we must have some adequate knowledge of our nature, our powers and capacities and relations to other beings which are included with ourselves in the scheme of things which we call nature, or the universe.

What man ought to do depends, first of all, on what he is able to do. The ends he may wisely seek are determined chiefly by his constitution and the constitution of the world. He must "run the race that is *set before him,*" if he is to run at all. He is shut up to certain limits by the finite nature of his powers, physical and mental. However free we may suppose him to be in his function of choice or volition, he is free to act only within the sphere assigned to him in the order of things. He must con-

form his purposes to the larger purposes of that world of which he is but a recent tenant, who sojourns briefly amid eternal things.

So we conceive of man as having a destiny distinctly limited, and yet having within those limits ample scope to attain its full perfection, to develop in excellence and happiness and moral beauty according to his own self-control.

"It is," says Burke, "the prerogative of man to be in a great degree the creature of his own making." We may not be able to explain the mystery of free will, but no man practically doubts that he is free to choose his purposes and direct his conduct. He feels that he is not shut up to the fatal effects of forces acting on him from without; but that he is in the midst of influences that act on him as he presents himself to them. Like the sailor, who, though he cannot direct the winds, can steer his ship to the port he chooses, and arrive there by the force of the same winds which drive another ship to another port, so man is driven by his desires, not aimlessly nor fatally, but as he himself directs.

16. The philosophy of conduct is therefore much concerned with the powers of the soul and the laws of their activities. In a word, *psychology* is the basis of ethics.

17. But, while psychology is the foundation of ethical philosophy, it is by no means the whole of it. The study of the forces and laws of our spiritual life leads us to fields much wider than our own personality. The student of physics is concerned not only with the specific qualities of the material in his laboratory, but its relations to the whole physical universe. He knows the handful of sand in his balances only after he has considered it in all its manifold relations,—what the distant sun effects upon it, how the force of gravity pulls it here or there, what the corroding acids will do to it, and how the mysterious laws of crystallization have formed its particles. Then having reduced his knowledge to certain terms of force and motion, he is con-

fronted with the question, what are force and motion. Not only is the scope of philosophy universal, but it is impossible to separate one field of knowledge from another, or to limit our study of any branch of science to any particular group of phenomena. The fields of science overlap, or, rather let us say they blend and intermingle like the colors that compose the light of day. Truth is universal and a unit.

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of your crannies,
> Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower; but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."

18. The sources of our knowledge of ethics are chiefly the phenomena exhibited in our own souls, the sense of obligation, the attraction and repulsion due to moral qualities, the bitter pangs of remorse and the sweet satisfaction of an approving conscience are examples of experiences, which, if rightly studied, should yield us knowledge of the principles that underlie the facts. The foundation of ethics must be established by induction, as the foundations of all sciences must be. We must observe and compare and interpret the facts as certified by human experience. This is a task of no small difficulty, for we find a great deal of conflicting testimony, honestly offered, as the experience of different souls; for it is extremely difficult to perceive facts clearly when passions and prejudice and habits are so largely involved. But having done our best to sift and certify this mass of evidence—having gathered and considered the facts of consciousness, we must go beyond the gates of personality, and study the relations in which we stand to all the universe, and the eternal scheme of things. In these relations we shall find the explanation of that moral obligation which we found impressed on consciousness. Here, if anywhere, we shall find the ultimate foundation of all moral law, and an answer to the question why right is right; for the principles of ethics, like the

principles of all other science, are parts of the constitution of the world.

19. The changes wrought upon the material world by all the forces acting on it have been enormous, but all the forces, working through all the countless ages, have not changed a single property of matter, or modified by one hair's breadth a single law of nature. Evolution has produced new forms, new types and species of animate existence, but evolution lays not her hand upon the constitution of the world. That constitution has never been revised. The force of gravity, the chemical affinities and the mathematical relations of magnitude and numbers are the same today as when God laid the foundations of the earth and gave laws to the universe. So the principles of morals, the quality of right and wrong are from eternity to eternity the same forever.

20. No misconception of conduct is more utterly false, and practically more misleading, than the notion that ethics is somehow a matter of opinion, something determined by taste or convenience or custom. Men change and times change with them, but the principles of moral truth are older than the earth, and shall abide when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the heavens shall be, as an outworn garment, folded up and laid aside, still the laws of nature, moral laws as well as mathematical or physical, shall abide, steadfast and unchanged.

> "We find in law firm footing for the soul,
> The strength that binds the stars, and reins the sea,
> The base of things, the pillars of the world,
> The pledge of honor, and the pure cord of love,
> The form of truth, the golden floor of heaven."

BOOK I

FACTORS OF CONDUCT

Philosophy of Conduct

CHAPTER I

SPRINGS OF ACTION

21. We hesitate to use the word "mechanical" to describe the activities of rational creatures, for all activities that involve consciousness are so much more than any machine can accomplish, or mechanical terms express.

Nevertheless our physical organism is, first of all, a machine —a cunningly devised and intricate arrangement of bones, muscles, nerves, and other members, all geared and adjusted to carry on the activities of life, and, however much may be added by the animating soul within it, nothing is taken away from the physical properties, nor any alterations made in the natural laws which pertain to material things.

22. The relation between the physical and mental sides of our being is full of mystery, but there is nothing lawless or fortuitous about it. Our bodies act as they are acted upon. They respond to influences from without and are subject to conditions within, just as any machine, and we may express these reactions in terms of physical science.

Reaction is the convenient term to express the movements which are regularly correlated with states and activities of the nervous system, whether these states are accompanied by consciousness or not. Reaction is a neutral term, denoting a regular order of events, without positively asserting the relation of cause and effect; but there is no reason why we should hesitate to speak of certain nerve states, or activities, as the cause of certain muscular movements, if by cause we mean one of the essential conditions of such movements. We may properly go further and assert, with Dr. James, that all consciousness is motor; that is to say, every state of consciousness is definitely correlated with a

certain state of brain and nerves which has an *immediate* and specific effect on the whole physical organism, so that every neural state gives a certain impulse to the body and manifests itself in certain specific bodily movement.

These states of the neural system may be due to external causes, or internal, or both. They may arise from the action of environment on the nervous system and produce action without involving consciousness either before or after the act. Or they may arise from external causes, but arouse consciousness at the same time they impel to action. Or they may be caused by the subjective impulse of memory, habit, or other mental conditions to which external influence furnishes merely the occasion.

23. However these neural states are produced, they are always the *immediate* cause of bodily activity.

It is necessary that every living organism be so constituted that the activities which are essential to its life and development may be performed without voluntary, or rational, or even conscious direction of the bodily powers. Such functions as breathing are always automatic and for the most part unconscious. They are called reflex, or purely mechanical, and are accomplished by the organism reacting on appropriate stimulus, just as a wheel turns when force is properly applied. In some cases such reactions are very simple, as when pepper applied to the nostrils causes sneezing. In other cases the reactions are marvelously complex, as in the wonderful phenomena called by the general name of instincts. But in all cases the quality of bodily action is due immediately to the character of the impulses given by the motor nerves, and the constitution and condition of the organism acted on. When these impulses are due solely to the external circumstances acting on the physical organism without arousing consciousness, they are purely mechanical, unrational and have no moral quality. When they are accompanied by consciousness they are called instincts, and are always more or less directed by the will. There is no hard and fast line separating

reflex from instinctive impulses, nor any absolute distinction between instinctive and voluntary activities; but just in so far as action is directed by volition is it rightly called conduct.

As the word itself implies, activities that are *conducted,* dictated, and controlled by the will, are properly called *conduct.*

24. The impulses to action come partly from external circumcumstances, partly from internal conditions; such as, appetites, habits, and the native disposition or bent of the mind, and partly from the mind's inherent power to attend to one or other of the forces acting on it.

The function of the will seems to be like that of the steersman of the ship, to so utilize the forces by which motion is produced as to conduct the ship to the desired port. We may use this figure of the steersman and his ship to set forth the relation of the will to rational behavior. Considering the various influences which act upon the soul from without and from within as the currents and winds and waves, which impel the ship and the self directing power of the soul, as the sailor who conducts it. The influences which act upon the soul are numerous and varied. We may notice only a few of the more important and consider not only what they are, but especially how they exert their power, and the relation between them and the actual behavior which we call conduct.

Taken in the most general sense, these influences which impel us to action may be called the Factors of Conduct.

CHAPTER II

INSTINCT

25. The mainspring of the whole animate world is instinct.

Every organism is dependent for its life on its adaptation to its environment. It must have organs appropriate to its need of food and the propagation of its kind, and to the performance of all its functions.

These organs and adjustments must be provided before hand for each individual, and supplied with suitable environment.

Each living germ must have the mysterious directing power sometimes called the architectonic principle—by which its forces are governed, so that it follows the particular line of development which constitutes its type or species, and brings forth fruit after its kind.

These preadjustments of the organism to its environment and its function are partly organic and structural, and partly dynamic or motor. That is the organs needed must be provided, and the necessary impulses given to cause the reactions that are required.

These are the endowment of each living organism. The activities of the lower forms of animal life and the vegetable life are due to the reactions that are reflex and mechanical and devoid of all power of choice; but slight traces of self-direction appear in the lower orders of animals, and become more and more prominent as the type of organism becomes higher and more complex.

26. Between the merely reflex action, on the one hand, and rational self-direction on the other, lies the field of instinct. As it is impossible to draw any fixed line between reflex action and instinct, it is also impossible to say just where instinct

ends and intelligence takes up the reins of government. But it is certain that instinct is not a lower kind of reason, nor the germ from which reason is developed. Many of the things done under the direction of instinct are even more perfectly done than they can be done under the direction of reason.

But the chief difference between instinct and reason is that instincts are always *impulses* to *action*.

Their aim and effect is performance, not ideas. They are motives in the strict sense of that word, for they incite movement. They are the elemental factors in conduct, and are therefore, of prime importance in morals, and a somewhat careful consideration of their character will be the best point of approach to the study of ethics.

27. Instinct is usually defined as the faculty of acting in such a way as to accomplish certain ends, without foresight of the end, or previous training in the performance of the actions leading to it.

Many of the instincts of the higher animals impel to the performance of a long and complicated series of actions, involving great skill and remarkable adaptation of means to ends, requiring patience and pains and self sacrifice, yet all done without hesitation, with few mistakes and with no knowledge—so far as we can see, of the ends or purpose of the work.

The building of dams by the beaver, or the social organization of the ant hill are familiar examples.

The instincts of the irrational creatures are so numerous and diverse and ingenious that they excite our wonder and admiration. On them depends the life and happiness and perpetuity of every species of animal life.

28. But man has a greater variety and more remarkable instincts than any other creature; and they are no less necessary to our existence, our happiness and usefulness than those of the lower animals are to theirs.

Such instincts as have to do with our bodily life are very early

supplemented by intelligence, and are therefore less prominent in man than in brutes. The care of the child by its parents, for example, takes the place of instinct to such a degree that much of the direction formerly given by nature has ceased, and the child has become dependent on the intelligence of the parent to a much greater degree than the young of any other creature; but he is still dependent on instinct for many impulses without which he could not survive, and without which the human species would soon become extinct. The millionaire's baby must work for its living just as the kitten or the calf must work. He must suck or die, and he must have the instinct to impel him to do it.

The instincts that have to do with our physical life are most fundamental; without them we could not live, could not even make a start in life; and they are necessary all through life, and furnish a large share of the impulses from which conduct springs. The appetites for food and drink and sex are primary instincts, which lead to a great variety of actions, and are the impelling forces in a large part of human conduct.

29. But the instincts that are peculiar to our higher nature are perhaps even more important factors of conduct.

These are numerous; some of the more prominent of them are the instinct of curiosity, imitation, emulation, acquisition, self-preservation, etc. All of these and others are constant motive forces driving us to all the manifold activities which fill our lives. They are complicated in their impelling force, and may be distinguished and classified as primary and secondary, simple and compound, or in other ways for various purposes, but for our purpose we need only notice some of the leading characteristics of instincts in general.

30. 1. Every instinct is organically connected with the organism to which it belongs. The instinct of nest building belongs to creatures that lay eggs. The instinct of storing foods belongs to those creatures who cannot find daily rations at all seasons—such as bees, or squirrels.

2. Each instinct is fully developed in anticipation of its use. None have the appearance of being extemporized to supply a want. The instinct of sucking is fully developed in all mammals at their birth. The new born calf struggles to its feet, hunts the mother's udder and proceeds to milk with perfect skill before he is an hour old. The instinct of migration manifests itself in birds long before the change of the season could be considered as the impelling cause. All creatures show marvelous skill in avoiding danger. The young partridge literally leaps from the shell to run and hide from his enemies, the common house fly shows a skill and alertness that is as marvelous as it is exasperating.

3. Instincts disappear when the occasion for them is past. The instinct of incubation appears just when there is need for such action as it prompts, and then passes away when the need is past, but recurs again and again as the occasion for it returns.

4. Instincts are permanent when they serve permanent needs. The instinct of hunting is life-long with beasts of prey—for their life depends on it. The instinct which impels the rabbit to seek safety in flight, the oppossum to feign death, or the quail to hide, is active from birth to death.

5. Instincts are reinforced by the actions to which they prompt, and are weakened by persistent neglect to respond to their behests. The pointer dog becomes more sensitive and eager by the exercise of his peculiar faculty. The well fed house cat becomes indifferent to mice when for a long time she has no occasion to hunt for food. Our sense of obligation becomes more delicate, and our impulse to right conduct stronger by habitual response to its suggestions, while the habit of disobedence dulls its intensity, and blunts its ability to mark nice distinctions between right and wrong. It becomes a sluggish and feeble impulse toward right actions with little power to move the will —"Seared as with a hot iron" is the strikingly accurate description of its condition. It is probably never extinguished, but it is

benumbed and enfeebled by disuse.

6. Instincts are supplemented and often superseded by intelligence. Much that we begin to do from instinct we continue to do from rational motives. We instinctively seek food, but we learn the art of cooking and agriculture. We instinctively seek safety, but we invent weapons of defense. The more intelligent we become the more we supplement the promptings of instinct by the use of reason, but we never grow independent of its impulses.

Instinct is also supplemented by habit which is the *immediate cause* of the greater part of conduct.

Man is indeed a rational creature, but his reason is the guide and director of his instincts and habits, rather than a substitute for them.

Not only is man in his infancy as independent on instinct as are any of the lower animals, but he has more instincts than any other creature. His nature is so much larger, and his wants so much more numerous and varied that he has need of a greater number and variety of native impulses. But, being more intelligent, he sooner sees the ends to which these instincts lead, and sooner marks the difference between the ends and the means by which they may be reached, and, as occasions offer, he adapts the means to the ends, invents new means, and also seeks other ends. All this of course is the work of reason and beyond the range of instinct.

31. The origin of instincts is an attractive subject. Until recently it was assumed that instincts, like the faculties and physical structures with which they are correlated, were part of the original equipment of the creature to which they belong; and that each living species came into existence at some definite date substantially as it is at present. This view has been greatly modified, and in some respects superseded, by the belief that all animate creation has reached its present varied and complex forms from very simple beginnings, by a long, long series of

slight variations, each of which had some small potency in the struggle for existence. Those changes that were effective to preserve life would add to the chances of survival of those individuals that possessed them, and thus those qualities would tend to become the permanent characteristics of the species, or by developing under different conditions tend to such divergence as to constitute new species. Thus by variations and heredity, in the fierce competition for food and space, the fittest to survive would drive the less fit out, and they alone survive. Such a process continued through very many generations would produce new species, develop new faculties and organs, and these in turn become the basis of still further evolution.

So it may be conceived that instincts were evolved. The experience of life proved certain actions—certain conduct—to be more conducive to the welfare of the race, and being so, by long and consistent influence of heredity became organic in the constitution of the race.

This theory lacks the evidence necessary to establish it as a settled doctrine. It is by no means certain that what we regard as the highest development of the moral faculties and instincts does tend to promote one's chances of survival. Indeed, it seems rather that the selfish man has the advantage in the struggle for existence, and the generous one severely handicapped. It seems also that the very best of our moral impulses are a distinct protest against seeking our own advantage.

Yet it seems certain that variation, heredity and survival of the fittest account for so much of the marvellous adaptation of each creature to its environment which is so universal in animated nature, that perhaps even our moral instincts may be, to some extent at least, included in the list of their achievements.

32. But whatever may have been the origin of instincts there can be no doubt as to the fact that they form a most important part in the equipment with which each individual comes into

the world.

33. The instinct which is most immediately connected with the ethical quality of conduct is the impulse to do right.

The sense of moral obligation is one of the most familiar facts of human consciousness. The impulse to do certain things because we feel that we *ought* to do them and to refrain from others because we feel we ought not to do them is universal among men.

The specific acts we feel thus constrained to do or to avoid are not just the same in the case of each individual; many influences intervene to modify and diversify the objective end of such impulses; but the feeling of obligation is the same, the motive force is alike in all cases.

This obligation is felt as a command. It does not rise from any foresight of utility or pleasure to be gained. It assigns no reasons, offers no rewards, does not seem to spring from fear or physical constraint.

It seems to have the urgency and imperative quality of a positive force, which tolerates no parley and pays heed to no excuse. In the familiar phase of Immanuel Kant it is a "categorical imperative."

34. This sense of moral obligation is a fundamental fact, of prime importance. It is from this datum that the philosophy of conduct really starts. It is the most important phenomenon that we shall have to consider.

We may not agree with the intuitionalist that this is the sole guide and standard of moral rectitude, but whatever else we may find necessary to consider with it, whatever may be its origin, whatever standard we may discover by which to test the validity of its commands and however we may differ as to its purpose, the fact of its existence, the imperative character of its commands and the weight of its authority cannot be denied.

This impulse to righteousness has all the characteristics of an instinct, and is best understood by considering it in that cate-

gory.

No other instinct is so important as this impulse to do the right. Nothing else has such potency for the individual and for the race as the sense of moral obligation, the instinct of righteousness.

The impulses which we call instincts are for the most part permanent and persistent, but they are greatly modified by intelligence and habit and other influences, and in actual experience we find it difficult to distinguish the elements due to instinct from those due to reflection or other causes.

These blended influences may perhaps be best understood if we consider them as they present themselves to consciousness and are thought of as distinct and separate factors of conduct. Examples of such factors are taste, habit, custom, etc., which we may briefly notice.

CHAPTER III

TASTE

35. Taste is, primarily, that bodily sense by which we distinguish certain qualities of food, as sweet or sour, bitter or salt; but by analogy the term is extended and applied to the ability to perceive and appreciate the quality of beauty in objects or actions both material and spiritual. It is, of course, the latter meaning that concerns us here.

36. The feeling of satisfaction that we experience from the aesthetic qualities of actions and states of mind is one of the most influential factors in conduct, and deserves much more consideration than it is apt to receive. It is, indeed, our chief guide in reference to certain lines of behavior. To some minds at least, the feeling that an action is unseemly—in bad taste, is a more powerful deterrent than the feeling that it is immoral.

There is a modicum of truth in Burke's assertion that in the age of chivalry "vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness," and though we may not follow him so far as to identify good taste with good morals, we must admit a very close relationship between them, and include taste as a prominent factor in the phenomena of conduct.

37. As we shall find moral perception to be simply the power of the mind to interpret states of consciousness due to moral sense or instinct, so we will find taste to be exercised in reference to moral qualities just as it is exercised regarding physical or mental properties.

The feeling of satisfaction, or admiration, which we experience in viewing a fine rose, or a beautiful Greek temple, does not seem to differ from the pleasure we experience in contemplation of some heroic deed or noble sentiment, except as the objects

differ. The state of mind is essentially the same.

38. Taste consists in the appreciation of aesthetic values. These values depend on the harmony, proportion or fitness of things, in their several places and relations. These are qualities of conduct quite as properly as they are properties of material things. A generous action or a magnanimous disposition appeals to our sense of beauty, and calls forth, not only our moral approbation, but also arouses our admiration and gratifies our sense of beauty. An act of cruelty or treachery not only offends our moral sense, but is repulsive to our taste—literally disgusting. We call such actions ugly, not by a figure of speech, but as actually revolting to our taste.

In regard to actions that are not so grossly offensive to our moral sense, we use milder terms to express our sense of their aesthetic fault. We call them unseemly, unbecoming, indecorus or bad form.

39. The aesthetic quality of conduct seems to correspond with what we commonly call its strictly moral quality. The Greeks expressed by the same term,—kalos meant either good or beautiful, or both.

And, while we may not consent to this identifying of the aesthetic with the moral, we cannot fail to recognize the close analogy between them and the strong similarity between their respective influences on conduct.

The sense of beauty calls forth the feeling of admiration, while the sense of rightness demands performance. This seems to be the most obvious distinction between them, and even this is a difference of degree rather than of kind; for the recognition of moral excellence is always accompanied by the feeling of admiration, and the sense of beauty is a strong incentive to appropriate conduct.

These two faculties, the moral and the aesthetic, may be regarded as distinct but analogous functions of the soul; and the analogy is so close that it is not always possible to distinguish

between them, nor to say with certainty whether the impulse to act in a particular way is due to the influence of the one or the other, or both; for that which our moral instinct urges us to do, our aesthetic sense always approves, and adds the influence of its approval to the impulse of the moral sense.

40. It is to be observed that the impulses of these two faculties, while they are always harmonious—always urge to the same conduct, do not always urge in the same degree. Some actions which are absolutely demanded by our moral instincts are but feebly approved by our taste; while other actions, highly approved by taste, may have but little moral obligation. For example; the duty of industrious labor on our ordinary tasks, which is so strongly urged by our moral sense, is not so highly appreciated by our sense of beauty, while the minor obligation of courtesy is greatly admired as a matter of taste. Such differences are explained in part by the effect of cultivation. Both taste and moral sense are capable of education, of increase in strength and in delicacy of perception, and the one may be highly cultivated, while the other is neglected. A man may have what we call a good conscience and at the same time a crude and barbarous taste, or one may have a refined sense of beauty and a conscience seared and inactive.

41. In most cases, however, when there seems to be a want of harmony between these faculties, the difference is rather in the view presented to the mind. In any particular case attention is directed to certain features rather than to the well proportioned whole. An action which I know to be wrong may not offend my taste because I do not view it in all its fullness, in its relations and effects. The skillful blandishments of the flatterer may be pleasing if I do not consider the dishonesty and selfishness that are behind the words. The meek endurance of oppression or outrage may seem offensive to my taste till I consider the whole purpose of the endurance, then it appears beautiful—perhaps sublime.

It may be taken as a universal law that, in normal conditions whatever is demanded by our moral sense is admired by our aesthetic sense; what cultivated taste admires, enlightened conscience approves.

42. This correspondence is further manifested in the parallel distinctions which we recognize in moral quality as the *heroic* and the *amiable,* and in aesthetic quality as the *sublime* and the *beautiful.* Some great deed that was performed by strenuous effort and costly sacrifice, our moral sense approves of as *heroic,* and our taste admires as *sublime;* while some other action, manifesting the gentle graces of sympathy or kindly affection, we call *amiable* in its moral quality and *beautiful* in its aesthetic.

43. The influence of taste on conduct is of very wide range, not only attracting us to deeds of heroism by its appreciation of their sublimity, and to the amiable graces of the ordinary virtues, but extending its guiding impulses to the imaginations and emotional states of our mind.

The seemliness of conduct, or the decorus quality of a thought, the dignity of a purpose or a mental attitude are among the most influential springs of conduct.

The moral value of the training of the mind which we call *culture* is chiefly in its influence on taste, whereby we are enabled more justly to appreciate the beauty of good conduct and the aesthetic value of right states of mind.

44. One of the interesting manifestations of this relation between taste and morals is in the sense of the ludicrous. The incongruity of conduct, the dread of seeming undignified or ridiculous is one of the powerful influences acting on a cultivated mind. It is all the more powerful because it acts with greatest force on minds that are highly inventive and spontaneous. A keen sense of the ludicrous, a fine sense of proportion, of fitness or congruity, is a powerful corrective of conduct, and the dread of "making an ass of one's self" often holds us back from deeds and words and purposes which our moral

sense and judgment would not prevent.

It should be observed that what we call the sense of the ludicrous is a function of taste. It is the power of perceiving proper relations, proportion and harmony, and it is a very reliable index of the refinement of the soul. It is of course not the amount of this sense but the quality of it that is indicative. A man may laugh much and have a very crude sense of the ludicrous. But tell me *what* a man laughs at, and I will make a close guess as to his culture and refinement, and predict with considerable confidence the conduct he will prefer.

45. The question of the standard of taste presents the same difficulties as are encountered in the attempt to define the standard of moral excellence; indeed there seems to be less uniformity in taste than in the sense of moral obligation. The same object may arouse admiration in one mind and only disgust in another. This is so obvious that we are often told that taste is purely subjective, and no rule can be framed by which it may be judged. *"De gustibus non disputandum"* is often quoted as a settled principle of aesthetics. If one likes the taste of castor oil and dislikes strawberries, we may call his taste unusual but have to accept it as a fact. If one prefers the glaring conflict of barbaric colors, or the discordant clash of drums and horns to the harmonious concord of sweet sounds or the refined elegance of softly congruous tones of color, we say his taste is crude, uncultivated, barbarous; and if one sees no beauty in the gentle graces, such as sympathy, nor dignity in such as honor, courage, and integrity, we regard such a one as abnormal, or even depraved.

46. The fact that we cannot frame such positive definitions for beauty as we may for mathematical relations or the action of physical forces, does not prove that taste is lawless or erratic, but only that we have not yet fully mastered its principles The incompleteness of our knowledge of aesthetic principles does not diminish our confidence in such principles as we

have grounds to accept. I assert that a rose is beautiful with the same confidence that I have in saying it is red, and my confidence is not shaken by the fact that there are those who do not distinguish its color or feel its beauty. So we admire an act of unselfish heroism with the same assurance of taste as when we pronounce peaches good to eat; and express disgust at some act of baseness with the same spontaneous impulse as when we condemn bilge-water as unfit to drink.

47. As a guide to conduct we do constantly use our taste, just as spontaneously, and with the same kind of confidence that we have in the use of our physical senses. And our confidence is grounded on the same basis in the one case as in the other—that is the constitution of the mind; we trust the testimony of our physical senses because, on the whole, they do not deceive us, though they are not infallible, and we trust our taste because, for the most part, we have found it reliable.

48. The difference between good taste and bad,—the superiority of what we call refined or cultivated taste, or the distinction that we make between lower and higher kinds of pleasures, is very hard to justify by reasons that have any force to minds that do not already feel the difference; and yet we do not hesitate to pronounce positive judgment in reference to such matters. We have no doubt but that the Greek column is more artistic,—in better taste, than the rough timber that supports the barn; or that the intricate harmonies of Beethoven's symphonies are nobler, better, higher than the noisy drumming of a child on his toy drum. We even distinguish the different pleasures of the senses as higher and lower; we despise the man who has inordinate appetite for food, we call him glutton or pig: yet we respect the man who shows the same extreme pleasure in music. Why should the sense of sound be more honorable than the sense of physical taste? It would certainly be hard to justify these preferences. In fact, they are properly not judgments, but instincts and perceptions. They are feelings and ideas which are the

direct effect of the reaction of our mind to external environment, and they are not rational, but constitutional, not the product of reason, but of experience. And all such comparisons are the spontaneous acts of perception. We say this act is nobler than that, this pleasure is of a higher quality than that just as we say this star is brighter than that or this apple is sweeter than the other.

49. Moreover it is worth noticing that the sense of taste is, after all, much more uniform than it seems at first sight to be. The apparent differences in the decisions given on cases by different minds are often due to the fact that the *cases really presented* to the mind are different. All such cases are complex, often extremely so, and are further complicated by the associations, thoughts of consequences and suggestions that give almost infinite diversity to the problem really considered, so that no two persons have exactly the same question to answer. Even so simple a matter as the style of a hat or the taste of a fruit may be judged on grounds of association or prejudice that are entirely extraneous to the object. You may tell me you think blue eyes are more beautiful than black, and you are quite sincere; but if I know that your sweetheart has blue eyes, I may reasonably suspect that your judgment was biased by that fact. I dislike quince jelly because some forty years ago my mother used it unsuccessfully to disguise the taste of castor oil, and to this day my imagination presents the taste of the oil with the taste of the jelly, which in reality is no doubt perfectly innocent of any such taste. So I admire the conduct of my friend, while if my enemy did the same thing I should probably see no beauty in it.

Such facts do not go to prove that there is no law of taste—no objective basis for our aesthetic preferences, but only that the objects on which our taste is exercised are so diversified and complex that the object actually judged in one case may be entirely different from the object judged in another, though their names and some of their aspects are the same.

50. In what then does the cultivation of taste consist? Its purpose is clearly to improve our power to appreciate the beauty of objects or actions. But if we can not define the rules of beauty how are we to know that we are improving? Does the cultivation of taste really change our sense of beauty, or does it rather enlarge and clarify our view, and enable us to set before the mind more fully and fairly the matter to be judged?

If it is the latter—as I believe it is—it might perhaps be more accurately termed the *enlightenment* of taste. It is certainly the chief purpose, if not the essential one, to be aimed at in the cultivation of taste to acquire the ability and the habit of looking steadily and comprehensively at the object as a whole. To purge the mind of prejudice, to eliminate the non-essentials, to correct the bias of associations and so to exercise the function of taste soberly and advisedly is a very important duty in the culture of conduct.

When we subordinate good taste to the passing whims of fashion, and define "good form" by a conventional code, and stand in awe of the direful tongue of "Mrs. Grundy," we sacrifice our freedom and put conduct under the direction of a blind and foolish guide.

CHAPTER IV

HABIT

51. Much of our conduct is due to habit, and the law of habit applies to both mind and body. We not only do many things merely because we are accustomed to do them, but our perception and judgment are greatly influenced by the same cause.

The way we have acted, either in mind or body, becomes somehow a line of least resistance, and it requires a positive effort of will to act in an unaccustomed way.

52. Habits when fully formed are much like instincts; and they are really more closely related to instinct than to intelligence, inasmuch as they are directed to things rather than relations, to acts rather than ideas.

Habits, like instincts, seem to impel us to certain activities without conscious intention, and often contrary to our judgment.

53. The greater part of our bodily actions are directed by habit and are only initiated by the will. Our manner of walking or speaking, for example, are shaped by habit, and conscious intelligence seems needed only to give the general order and direction, leaving the marvelously intricate action of nerves and muscles to be guided by habit. Habit contributes no new power or faculty. Its office is only to direct, to steer, not to propel; but this directing function is just what is needed to give effectiveness to our powers.

54. Habit may be defined as an acquired state of mind or body which influences the direction of our activities without conscious exercise of intelligence or will.

The unskilled player on an instrument of music may direct his fingers by conscious intelligent effort of the will, but the

result is tedious, awkward and constrained. The skilled performer is quite unconscious of the direction given to his fingers, but by habit guides them swiftly and easily through the most involved and complex movements, conscious only of the general purpose to produce certain sounds. It is practice that gives the dexterity, skill, quickness and sureness of action; but practice is only the forming of habit—the cultivation of such conditions of body as render these movements the line of least resistance.

55. Habits are as persistent as the states of body or mind to which they are due. To be out of practice is to have lost something of the condition of mind or body which gives the proper direction to the activities. It is not uncommon to find habit more enduring than memory. We often find that we can do something that we cannot remember how to do. For example, we find it very difficult to tell how to tie a knot in our necktie, but have no trouble in doing it. We perhaps never notice which side of our coat has buttons, but we never reach for them on the wrong side. You may find it hard to tell your pupils how to hold a pen, but habit directs your own fingers without hesitation. All manual skill consists in good habits of the hands; the first class mechanic, the skilled musician or excellent ball player are those who have the right habits, that is the state of body in which the proper movements are provided with lines of least resistance.

56. But the influence of habit is even more remarkable in reference to mental than to bodily activities. The mind is more versatile in its functions. It is capable of greater development and hence more responsive to the directing influence of habit.

The art of reading is a striking example of the force of habit; we associate certain characters with certain sounds, and these sounds with certain ideas; reading is the double interpretation of these characters, first, into the sounds, and then into the ideas. We do this at first by conscious and somewhat painful

labor of the memory and judgment, but soon the process is performed almost unconsciously, and the printed word and the idea are perceived simultaneously.

57. But actions which require volition furnish still more remarkable examples of the force of habit. The power to concentrate the mind on a chosen subject is perhaps the most important of all the characteristics of a student. It is possible at first only by a strong effort of the will; but it is possible to form a habit of attention so strong that we can keep our mind on a proper object almost without a conscious effort of volition. That is, we can develop such a state of mind as will tend to direct our faculties to the subject set before it and hold them there with but slight effort of the will.

58. But it is in the field of morals that the force of habit is of greatest importance, and here also it has its widest scope of influence.

So large a part of our moral conduct is impulsive rather than rational that habit is peculiarly congenial to the moral faculties.

Moreover, moral distinctions are much finer, more delicate and less obvious than physical or even intellectual distinctions. The action of the will is therefore less prompt and positive than in other fields. The evil consequences of conduct are generally more remote. The rewards of goodness are less obvious, and the common judgment more likely to be biased by passion, prejudice or self interest, so that we are more inclined to act against our judgment—irrationally—because our will is weak, and the opposing motives strong. By such acts habits are formed, and the same condition which led to their formation give them an easy field in which to wield their influence.

59. The evil effects of a bad physical habit manifest themselves promptly and generally to the discomfort of him who has the habit, and he is painfully conscious of his ill condition. This, of course, is a strong incentive to break off the habit by force of will; and it is a terrible illustration of the force of habit that we

find men, everywhere, whose habits of intemperance or lust are destroying them, and who know and lament the dreadful consequences of their deeds, are yet unable to break the bonds of habit.

60. But the consequences of bad moral habits are not so obvious. The soul that is deepest sunk in vice is generally least aware of its own pitiful degradation.

It is an essential characteristic of bad moral habits that they dull the moral sense and corrupt the judgment; thus they stupefy the sentinel who should give the alarm and destroy the court, which should arrest the evil by inflicting remorse; and nothing remains to correct the habit but the moral instinct, and it, as we have already noted, becomes enfeebled by repeated disobedience to its behests.

61. Fortunately good habits have equal power of persistence. They are reinforced by the moral sense and judgment and, for the most part, by the common sense of mankind.

62. While habits cannot be regarded as powers of the soul, they are evidently the chief means by which our powers are directed, and therefore chief factors in the actual conduct of life.

63. It is not clear that habits are directly hereditary; for the most part they certainly are not. The habit of attention, or of punctuality, or industry is not transmitted from father to child; but habits may produce effects that are transmitted, and tend to produce like habits in the child. The habit of intemperance or gluttony may produce an unhealthy state of body, which, inherited by the child, will predispose him to the same habits, by making him peculiarly susceptible to temptation on the same points. The mental and moral habits are not so easily observed, but there is every reason to regard them as transmissible in the same way. Much of what we call family traits are doubtless due to association and environment, but much also is due to such inheritance of the habits of our ancestors.

64. Indeed, some go so far as to account for all instincts as the inheritance of the habits formed and transmitted through

many generations; and, while this is hardly to be accepted, it is probably true that instincts are greatly modified by heredity carrying over from generation to generation the acquired habits of parents. The domestication of animals seems to furnish conclusive proof of this, as, for example, the native proclivities of different breeds of dogs.

65. We shall have to consider later the special duty of forming correct habits; but for the present we are concerned only to point out the important fact that, next to moral instinct, habit is the most important factor in conduct.

Instinct is the native impulse to certain courses of conduct, which lead to certain definite ends, but which are pursued without conscious reference to those ends. Habit is an acquired tendency of very similar character, and in mature minds it is probably of even greater influence in shaping our conduct.

CHAPTER V

CUSTOM

66. The tendency to imitate the behavior of those about us, especially of those whom we most admire and respect, is one of the strongest human instincts.

It is manifested very early and is persistent throughout life.

As an instinct, it is involuntary and to a good degree unconscious, but it is very early supplemented by intelligence, and made more definite by the voluntary conformity of our conduct, to that of our associates.

This conformity is called custom, and is one of the most potent factors of conduct.

67. Much of this conformity is a matter of convenience only, and has very little, if any, moral quality. But many customs that arise from mere convenience become distinctly moral either through changes of circumstances, or by complications which give them weight in the scale of judgment.

The conventionalities of social life in matters of dress or manners are usually without moral significance when they arise, but often come to have a decided influence for good or evil by their associations.

The Quaker's custom of wearing his hat in the presence of those whose dignity was recognized by the older custom of uncovering in their presence came to have—was intended to have district moral significance.

The custom of consecrating meats to some god raised a question of morals in the early church which St. Paul was obliged to notice, and his judgment was that in itself the eating of meat so consecrated was morally indifferent, but might raise a moral question if the act was *intended* as an act of worship, or if it

troubled the conscience of some one else.

Customs no matter how they arise, or however indifferent they may be themselves, have a tendency to become absolute, and to be regarded as authoritative and even sacred. They are also reenforced by habit, and by the instinctive desire for the approval of our fellows.

68. In all stages of moral development the influence of custom is a potent factor of conduct.

In the less reflective stages of civilization it often constitutes the chief standard of morality; and any departure from the established usage is regarded with disfavor and considered a moral offense, a thing not to be done, nor permitted.

In the more reflective stages of development the influence of custom is probably quite as powerful, but it comes into competition with a greater number of other influences which modify its effect.

The sanctions by which customs are enforced differ in different stages of civilization. In primitive states of society, where custom is practically the only standard of right, any considerable breach of custom is a crime, and the offender is punished without much consideration of the moral principles involved.

In more advanced stages of social development the penalties for such offenses are more distinctly social.

The savage who marries contrary to the customs of his tribe may be banished or killed. The European who marries out of his own social rank is "cut" by his former friends, or if the offense is a gross breach of custom—as the marriage of a Negress, he becomes a social outcast.

69. The conventionalities of social life are customs that regulate a large portion of our behavior. Their influence is most vividly shown in the deterioration of character which usually takes place where the restraints of custom are removed. While many of our social customs are morally indifferent, and some of them positively bad, yet, on the whole, they are based on some

permanent and reasonable ground, and are powerful for good. They are not to be lightly disregarded or defied, but to be cherished, and reformed and purified as occasion may require.

CHAPTER VI

IMAGINATION

70. The Imagination is the architect of the soul. Its office is to draw the plans and specifications of conduct. It defines our desires and sets them vividly before consciousness. It frames purposes to be accomplished and devises means for their attainment. It presents these purposes in attractive colors, and thus promotes their adoption.

71. The influence of imagination, and the part it plays as a factor of conduct, has not been sufficiently considered.

Its power to *direct attention* gives it a place at the very source of conduct; its ability to represent evil in its least offensive aspect, and to turn the mind to such points of view as may be most favorable to our desires; and its influence in the formation of taste and habit, all these combine to make imagination one of the most powerful factors in conduct.

72. Every act we perform is first presented to consciousness by the imagination. All that comes to pass through our voluntary effort was already existent as an idea, a picture or image in our mind. For some purposes this picture of the thing to be done is as effective as the overt act. The direction of the attention is accomplished chiefly by the presentation of such pictures. The more vivid the presentment the more powerfully attention is drawn to it, and the effect of such attention is to move the will to realize the idea thus presented.

73. The relation between attention and volition is so close that, in cases where the considerations for and against an action are nearly balanced, the side to which attention is chiefly directed is pretty sure to be the winning side. As Dr. James says, "The whole drama of the voluntary life hinges on the amount of atten-

tion, slightly more or slightly less, which rival motor ideas may receive."

If we may go so far to say that "all ideas are motor—"that is to say, every idea formed in consciousness has an *immediate* effect on the will and "bodily action follows directly on the perception of the exciting fact" we must then attribute to imagination the dominant position among the factors of conduct.

74. However this may be, we are not dependent on any theory of psychology for our conviction that the course of our conduct is determined largely by our imagination. We do not, for the most part, perceive the sensible object of our desire, but the image of it,—the idea, and this as it is presented by the imagination. Whatever attractive or impulsive power the idea may have will depend on the image presented to consciousness, and this image is formed by the mind already biased by its desires. The dishonest man does not allow his imagination to present his contemplated crime in all its true colors, but rather frames up some picture of his necessities, the prevalence of dishonesty, the circumstances of his case, and everything that can mitigate the protest of his moral instinct; and thus he wins over the consent of his will.

It is even held by some that no man ever commits a crime without first persuading himself that he is justified in doing so. This is probably more than we can say, but it is certainly true that this process of presenting the deeds we wish to do in the most favorable light our imagination can provide is the customary way of gaining consent of our will against the protest of our moral sense and judgment.

Lady MacBeth voiced a common experience when she cried, "These things must not be thought of *after these ways. So*, they will make us mad."

75. But the influence of the imagination on conduct is not confined to these efforts of the mind to gratify its desires against the protest of our "better self." The influence is con-

stant and fundamental. We live in a world of imagination; we "dwell upon" the presentments of our own mind till they seem more real than reality, and we become bewildered and confused. Our perception becomes obscure and we see only what we look for—we perceive only what we have already in mind.

"To the pure all things are pure," and to the corrupt soul all men are rascals. The sudden fall of men esteemed to be of strict integrity is often due to the fact that, while their outward life was upright, their inner life was false and the imaginations of their heart corrupt. The crimes of youth are often traced to the false ideals formed by the influence of bad books on their imagination. The drunkard and the libertine find it easier to correct their conduct than to control their thoughts.

Indecent pictures and the scenes of crime are forbidden by law, because they excite the mind to evil; but the secret chambers of the soul may be full of all uncleanness ready to break out in open villainy on suitable occasion, and nothing but the soul itself can cleanse it.

The author of the book of Genesis in his description of the utter vileness of the human race before the flood asserts that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" a terrible indictment in which every word is emphatic, and in which the source of his corruption is pointed out as the imagination.

76. Happily the imagination is as powerful for good as it is for evil. Many a hero never has occasion to sacrifice himself and so to demonstrate his heroism, but in his own soul lives a noble life—a life of latent heroism in the noble company of high imaginings.

77. But perhaps the most potent means by which imagination acts on conduct is in the formation of habits.

We have already considered the effect of habit upon our life. It is ever a fruitful theme for moralists and for psychologists,—see for example Dr. James' great chapter X in his

Psychology. But we must not forget that while habit has a physical basis, and is defined as a "pathway of discharge formed in the brain by which certain incoming currents ever after tend to escape," it is none the less a mental state, and is formed by acts of the mind as well as by bodily action. Ideas of action may be inhibited and lead to no bodily act and yet form habits quite as strong as those formed by overt acts. Honesty for example is a habit of mind, formed, for the most part, by the imagination—by thinking honesty. So with all habits, while they may be intensified by bodily actions, they are chiefly states of mind produced by mental acts—by feelings and imaginations oft repeated till that way of thinking—of looking at things and feeling with regard to them becomes a "line of least resistance"—the easiest and most spontaneous way.

78. Since the imagination is so potent a factor in conduct it seems important to consider its relation to the other faculties or functions of the soul, especially its relation to the will.

We have seen that it is often a powerful influence in volition, but, on the other hand, it also is subject to the will. Or perhaps we shall conceive the matter more correctly by regarding the will and the imagination not as different "faculties" or powers of the soul, but rather as two activities of the same undivided self, or soul, and this self, or soul, self-directing and self-controlled. We have no more right to misuse our imagination than we have to misuse hand or foot or tongue. To corrupt our minds by false images is a kind of self-mutilation, and to form habits of wrong thinking by making false pictures of truth is just as destructive of character as to form bad habits by evid deeds.

It is indeed more important to cultivate right habits of thought—right and true habits of looking at things, than to cultivate right habits of action, for the imagination is more fundamental than the actions of the body,—more closely related to the source of conduct. Outward actions may be re-

strained from motives of prudence, or fear, while the inner self may be guilty of the offense.

The really truthful man is he who "speaketh the truth in his heart" and on the other hand he that hateth his brother is a murderer who dares not kill.

79. We have called imagination the architect of the soul, for it sets before consciousness the plans which may be executed, but we must remember that conduct is not the building of life according to plans proposed and accepted as a whole, or at one time. Life is not static, but dynamic. The task of the imagination, therefore, is not one that may be finished, and the plans handed over to the will to be executed. The work is continuous, changing, enlarging, modifying continually to meet the ever new conditions. All that is possible in most cases is an outline, a sketch, a vague ideal to be approximated and elaborated as time and opportunity permit. It is therefore most important that we keep our imagination in good condition, that we may see truth clear and whole, that we may not be self deceived by prejudice or bigotry,—which are both due to false imagination,—and that we may be able to get all points of view, and so to understand our fellow men who differ with us in opinion. Very much of the strife and friction of social life is due to the lack of well trained imagination. The proverb, "To know all would be to forgive all," is an exaggeration, for there is some real baseness that is not mere stupidity nor ignorance; but it is true that the trained faculty of putting oneself in the other's place, of getting his point of view, of imagining the case as it looks to him, would aid immensely in the understanding of our fellow men and clear the path of duty of much of its fog and darkness.

80. The imagination may be trained, as any other faculty is trained, by exercise according to its laws. It is not such a lawless and erratic faculty as we often suppose, and there is no more excuse for false imagination than there is for false reasoning; no more reason for refusing to imagine what we do not like than

there is for refusing to speak truth that is disagreeable. It is one of the first factors of conduct, and no clear or comprehensive understanding of ethics can be had if it is ignored or left out of account.

Practically it is the foundation of that most noble of graces, *magnanimity*: it is the mother of sympathy, and the destroyer of bigotry and fanaticism.

CHAPTER VII

CONSCIENCE

81. Thus far, we have avoided using the term conscience because, as it is familiarly used, it is ambiguous and inexact in meaning. Sometimes it means the impulse that urges us to right conduct; as when we say one is honest, not from compulsion, but for conscience sake, or when we say one is restrained from an evil deed by his conscience. In such usage its meaning is nearly equivalent to *moral sense* or the instinct of righteousness.
62. It may be used to denote the ability of the soul to perceive moral distinctions; as when we speak of one having a sensitive conscience, or a conscience seared as with a hot iron. In such cases it means *perception* of moral quality.

Again it is often used to denote the action of the mind in *passing judgment* and *inflicting penalties* or giving rewards; as when we say my conscience approves or disapproves. We conclude therefore that the term conscience may mean either the moral instinct, or perception or judgment and the power to execute judgment in the form of remorse or peace of mind.

Psychologically there are three distinct functions of the mind; each of them exercised in reference to moral qualities exactly as they are exercised toward any other qualities.
81. There is no good reason for assuming a special "moral faculty" to account for the mind's action on moral questions. The mind that perceives the moral quality perceives sensible qualities by exactly the same process; and the mind that judges the moral character of a man is the same mind that judges his physical condition, and both judgments are performed in the same way.

It is quite true that conscience is a "divine spark," "A God ruling within us" as Cicero calls it, or a "demon which tells

us what to do"—as Socrates describes it; but this is poetry, and true only in a poetical, not in a scientific sense.

83. Bearing in mind, then, that conscience is only a convenient term used to denote three distinct and different functions of the mind, we may consider some of the more important phenomena of morals that are popularly attributed to conscience.

First: as an instinct. We have already noticed the fact, universally admitted, that a feeling that certain things ought to be done, and certain other things ought not to be done is constitutional in human nature. We are impelled to certain conduct as somehow obligatory upon us; though we may be utterly unable to account for the impulse on rational grounds. We *believe* such conduct to be reasonable, but we *feel* the obligation and the impulse quite independent of our rational judgment. This we have called the instinct of righteousness.

84. We shall be best able to conceive of conscience as an instinct by considering the general characteristics of instinct, which are applicable to this particular field.

First, conscience may be cultivated as any other instinct is cultivated. It may be made more sensitive so that the impulse to right conduct is more keenly felt, and the impetus to action is more powerful. The impulse to benevolent action is natural in all normal souls, but it is much stronger in some than in others. This difference is, no doubt, due in part to the native temperaments of different souls; but it is also due in large measure to the training and culture it has received, either by conscious, voluntary effort to that end, or by the unconscious influence of environment, or the unintentional effect of our conduct reacting on our soul. As the instinctive tendency to find pleasure in the concourse of sweet sounds grows stronger and more discriminating by persistent practice, so is it with the native tendency to find pleasure in such conduct as we call good.

The ear for music, the taste for the fit and proper in art

and life are all analogous with the appreciation of moral excellence as an object to be attained.

This instinct is not merely the ability to perceive the moral quality, but a response of the whole soul to the attractive power of the quality so perceived.

On the other hand it may be weakened by disuse, or misuse, so that it becomes enfeebled and gives but little impetus toward the actions perceived to be right.

Second, conscience may be enlightened, so that its perception is clearer and its judgment more reliable.

Perception is always an interpretation; the more perfectly we apprehend all the features of a state of consciousness the more clearly we perceive the moral quality. Whatever aids in bringing the case in all its fullness to our consciousness aids perception. One man may see nothing wrong in a certain course of conduct, because he has not considered the facts and implications involved in it, while another more intelligent, more thoughtful, more enlightened, sees distinctly that it is not right.

This dependence of moral perception on the point of view and the breadth of thought accounts for much of the conflicting perception and judgment in regard to what is right. Human slavery seems right or wrong according to the features to which we direct our thought; so that quite recently good men perceived no necessary evil in it; while other men, no better than they, regarded it with horror and condemned it absolutely.

So true it is that our moral perception and judgment are dependent largely on our point of view, that we do, both consciously and unconsciously, turn our attention to those features of a case as will most readily give us the conclusion that we want to reach, and shut out the view that is unpleasant to us.

And in like manner we shift the scene to such position as shall give us the perception we desire.

"Compounding sins we are inclined to
By damning those we have no mind to."

Instead of striving to enlighten conscience we deliberately darken it, lest its clear perception of the baseness of our conduct put us to shame; or we consent to the "god of this world blinding our eyes" by the glitter of those things which appeal to passion, appetite or selfish ambition.

85. This enlightening or darkening of conscience is a figure of speech which applies with still more aptness to that function of the mind which we call moral judgment, for judgment depends not only on clear perception of moral quality, but on the *relation* of these qualities in any action or course of conduct.

All action is *conditioned;* its moral quality depends on these conditions. Sound moral judgment is therefore impossible without a *comprehensive knowledge* of the conditions,—our intelligent apprehension of the facts, consequences and complications of the act. Such knowledge is enlightenment, and is acquired as any other knowledge is acquired, namely by instinct, by observation, and by reason. And judgment must be formed upon the facts and conditions unbiased by feelings. This does not mean that feelings have no place in the case to be judged; for the moral impulse is a very important factor in every case, but it is the very office of judgment to decide as to the due and proper claim of feeling. The feeling,—or affections as we prefer to call them, are the plaintiffs in cases submitted to conscience for adjudication, and the judicial function is exercised in allowing or forbidding the impulses of the affections to be carried out in action. In other words *the affections are the motive powers of the soul* and the moral judgment is to control, suppress or modify these motive impulses, according to the laws of our moral nature. Prejudice is decision according to feeling without the warrant of judgment according to the facts and the law. It may sometimes impel to the right action, but it is always unsafe, unwise and irrational

to guide our lives according to the impulses of feelings that have not been submitted to the judgment of reason, and pronounced right by the standard of moral law.

By an enlightened conscience therefore we mean a *mind* intelligent, informed, unblinded by passion, unbiased by prejudice and capable of judging the claims of the affections according to the law of our moral nature.

86. But conscience may not only be darkened, but it may be corrupted; so that it not only fails to direct us aright, but actually misleads, and dictates conduct that is wrong. To state this condition of the mind more fully we may say: The moral sense, or instinct, may become so disordered that it puts evil for good and good for evil. Such a state is perhaps rarely reached in human experience. Certainly the soul has to be depraved to the lowest depths before it craves evil for its own sake; yet it is not at all unusual to find the mind so thoroughly under the influence of evil habits, passions and malevolent affections that the impulses of these evil powers are not distinguished from the voice of conscience; like a diseased appetite it craves the very thing it should abhor. The state which we call a corrupted conscience is however much more accurately a disordered state of the faculty of judgment. When the mind is blinded by false perception, biased by prejudice and perverted by evil habit it becomes incapable of fair judgment and positively inclined to dictate evil rather than good. Like the false balance, it is incapable of justice, and is *set* to indicate the wrong.

So far from being an infallible guide, conscience is especially liable to err; because it involves the instincts, the perceptions and the judgments, and a defect in either of the functions vitiates the action as a whole.

87. It is not surprising that the dictates of conscience are not uniform in all men; but marvelous that they so largely agree in all essential matters. This substantial agreement is strik-

ing evidence of the strength and uniformity of the constitutional impulse toward righteousness, and the clear perception of right which is given to each human soul—a native appetency for the good and antipathy for evil.

88. The most distinctive feature of the mental processes which we call conscience is the emotional states produced by our judgments on moral cases

Condemnation of our own conduct is accompanied by the peculiar and most painful emotion, called shame, or remorse.

Approval of our conduct gives us a pleasing state of mind, called peace of conscience.

These emotions are considered more fully elsewhere, but we observe here that they are an important part of the functions included in the ordinary use of the term conscience, and because these emotional states are persistent, and, because they are extremely painful or pleasant, they are the most obvious of all functions ascribed to conscience. Poets and novelists find in this a perennial source of themes, prophets and moralists appeal to it as the sanction of their warnings and exhortations.

The sense of guilt, the apprehension of remorse holds back from evil. The suffering of remorse urges us to repentance and reformation of our conduct.

"My conscience hath a thousand several tongues and every tongue brings a several tale, and every tale condemns me for a villain." We check the impulse of passion and the urgency of desire for fear of consequent self condemnation when all other consequences would be disregarded or defied.

> "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all."

On the other hand good conduct finds its sure reward—whatever else may fail—in the approval of our soul.

> "A peace above all earthly dignities,
> A still and quiet conscience."

89. Taking conscience then to mean the perception of right and

duty, the impulse to do the right, and the emotional effects which follow moral judgment, it may well be called the supreme authority of the soul and its dictates "Categorical imperatives"; and we may accept the statement "If it had strength as it has right, had power as it has manifest authority it would absolutely govern the world."

CHAPTER VIII

MORAL PERCEPTION

90. The sense of moral obligation prompts to actions which lead to certain definite ends, but it does not spring from conscious recognition of those ends, nor from foresight of their utility or worth.

Thus far the feeling of moral obligation is an instinct and nothing more. It differs from other instincts in its quality and mode of operation only as the ends which it accomplishes are different, and the correlative faculties which it serves are dissimilar; but essentially it belongs to the same category as the impulse which leads the thrifty ant to lay up her meat in summer and impels the wild goose to seek the south in anticipation of the coming winter.

91. But man is a rational creature, and very early his reason begins to supplement, and gradually to supercede the blind impulses of his nature which we call instincts. He begins to question his states of consciousness, to inquire whence they come and what they mean. This inquiry into the source and meaning of our states of consciousness is the first step in all rational activity. It is called perception.

Perception is the interpretation of consciousness. Sense perception is the interpretation of states of consciousness which are due to sensation. Moral perception is the interpretation of states due to the moral sense or the instinct of morality. The process is the same in all cases.

We find by experience that in the presence of certain objects we have uniformly a certain state of consciousness. We infer that the state is produced by the object. I find for example that the presence of a certain object gives me a state of con-

sciousness by means of my sense of sight, touch and taste. I have learned to call the object which produces this particular state an orange. Somewhat later I learn to distinguish the different elements of this state, and to analyze it so as to attribute certain features of it to impressions made by the sense of sight, other features to the sense of smell or taste or touch. The whole group of impressions gives me the state of consciousness which I attribute to the presence of an object having the qualities which produce in consciousness the peculiar features which I find by analysis to be present in the state I experience. I have no knowledge of the object except by inference from my state of consciousness. The qualities which I think of as belonging to the object are attributed to it by the mind attempting to interpret its own state. These qualities are therefore properly called *attributes*. The senses give us impressions produced by the various qualities of the object, and by a rational process we interpret these, and thus perceive the object, and by further rational process we perceive the various attributes of the object.

92. The process of moral perception is just the same as that of sense perception. The only difference is in the source of the impressions made on consciousness. In the presence of a certain course of conduct we experience a state of consciousness, due not to any of our senses but to a feeling which we have called the instinct of morality. For example, under the stress of some strong desire to escape trouble or disgrace we are tempted to lie, but the thought of lying produces a state of consciousness, with very marked features, due not to any sensation but to the instinct which urges us to truth and protests against falsehood. By interpretation of such states of consciousness we get the idea of truth. We perceive an action as wrong, and distinguish the qualities of conduct that produce the various features of the state of consciousness that we experience in view of the proposed action, just as we perceive the qualities of material objects by sense per-

ception.

93. Logically, no doubt, perception of moral quality precedes the sense of obligation, and the obligation is grounded in the perceived quality of the action. But instincts are not logical; they are constitutional. They are earlier than reason; they precede perception, and introduce the qualities and relations about which we may then reason if we will.

94. Right means, primarily, that which we feel obliged to do, and wrong means that which our moral instinct forbids. We may reach a high degree of moral excellence without much further insight into the nature of right and wrong than this. But if we are to inquire into the philosophy of conduct we must consider how intelligence lays hold of conduct and how rational direction takes the place of instinct.

Perception is the first step in this process. This process of interpretation is an immediate inference. It is not a process of reasoning but a rational act of direct apprehension from data furnished by consciousness; and the process is the same however this data may have been furnished. Sense perception is the interpretation of data furnished by the senses. Moral perception is the interpretation of data given by the moral sense. We may also speak of mathematical perception, which is the interpretation of the intuitive sense of quantity and relations, or of aesthetic perception of beauty. We are concerned at present however, only to show that moral perception is the legitimate and rational process by which we arrive at ideas of right and wrong.

95. Now, the moral instinct has to do with actions. It gives but one of two impressions to consciousness, either an impulse to perform some act or a sense of prohibition from it. Hence moral perception has but two categories to which all actions are assigned. Every act that has moral quality at all is either right or wrong.

Actions may differ in degrees of rightness—or at least they may differ in degrees of wrongness. Right is more nearly abso-

lute,—if an action is right it can hardly be more so, but one wrong act may be worse than another, i. e., further from right. This distinction is important in the consideration of merit and demerit, and in the governmental function of assigning rewards and punishments.

96. Since moral perception is the interpretation of consciousness, and deals with data furnished by the moral sense, the results of such perception will differ as the data differ. Thus it is that the perceptions of right and wrong are not entirely uniform in all men, nor indeed in the same man at all times. The different degrees of strength and delicacy of the moral sense give different impressions to consciousness, and hence the interpretations of them will be different.

Moreover, actions are very rarely so simple as to give but a single impression to consciousness. They are commonly much complicated containing many and often dissimilar attributes, and our perception of their character as a whole will depend largely on the importance we attach to one or other feature of the case. Few actions are wholly wrong, fewer still are absolutely right in form and purpose. Yet we must in each case render the verdict right or wrong, and decide to do or not to do.

In view of these obvious difficulties, the wonder is, not that men sometimes differ in moral perceptions, but rather that they so generally agree.

We conclude that moral perceptions are not infallible—more liable to err indeed than the moral instinct, yet the perceptions of right and wrong are, on the whole, remarkable in their agreement in all ages and among all people.

97. It will be noticed that perception always involves the mental process of comparison, which is usually called judgment. These two processes are not identical, but they are so intimately related that it seems best not to distinguish between them as factors of conduct. Judgment will be more fully considered in the chapter on Motives.

CHAPTER IX

SELF-DIRECTION

98. The factors of conduct thus far considered are all impulsive in their character. They are motive forces which impel us to action, usually arousing consciousness and causing sensation and emotions. They are capable of producing action without the help or direction of the will, but such cannot properly be called *conduct,* for it is not conducted, directed or controlled by the rational self.

Mere reaction of an organism, however, complex or wonderful, can never be anything but mechanical, cannot be called good or bad or possess moral quality.

The mind's control of its own activities is the essential feature of all intelligent being, and the exercise of such self-direction is conduct.

The familiar dictum of Kant, that "There is nothing in the world, or even out of it, that can be called good without qualification except good will" means simply that moral quality belongs not to impulses that beat upon the soul from without or from within, but solely to the consent of the soul itself to be moved by such impulses.

99. This self-directing power of the soul—or self—is called volition or will.

It is not to be conceived of as something independent of the other powers of the soul, but rather as the whole soul, or self exercising its function of control or government.

Volition has no power to initiate or originate impulses to action, but only to choose and coördinate and unify the impulses that spring from instinct and other reactions, so that they may form a definite and efficient motive to action.

The process by which the will exercises this function of self-direction is not well understood. It is certainly a very complicated process, for the influences that act upon the mind are very many; and the reaction of the mind depends upon its state; and its condition at any given time depends, not only on its native disposition, but upon all its past experience and its present mood.

The mind responds to its environment, that is, to all that acts on it from without; but the force of environment depends on the mind itself. *There is practically no such thing as an environment except the environment of each soul at each particular moment,* for *things* act on the mind as impulses only as the mind is susceptible to their influence; they become motives only in so far as they arouse some desire in the mind.

100. The whole process of self-direction begins with apperception, which is the assimilation of the various influences which appeal to consciousness. These influences are partly from without and partly from within. From without they come to us by sensation and perception: from within they arise from instinct, memory, fixed purposes and habits. These influences are not only numerous and varied, but are always more or less conflicting—impelling us to different actions. To arbitrate these conflicting impulses, and reduce our activities to a definite and consistent scheme, requires first of all a proper adjustment of all the appeals to consciousness, that the *idea* may be definite, the issue distinct, and the action called for clearly set before us by the imagination. This may be taken as the definition of apperception.

101. But volition, or self-direction, is more than apperception; it involves a certain deliberation, or weighing, of one impulse against another, and the judgment of their relative importance; for, as we have noticed, impulses have force and value only as they meet with response in the mind itself, and the power to respond or not is, to some degree, possessed by the mind. This response is made chiefly by the attention given or with-held; and

attention is partly voluntary and partly instinctive. We can not entirely control the tendency of the mind to attend to the objects presented to consciousness by sensation or memory, but to some degree we can, and in so far as we control attention we control activity. The connection between the idea of an action and its performance is very close; so close that a fully formed idea is in itself an intense motor impulse—a strong force impelling us to perform the action.

102. But the function of volition includes not only the direction of motive forces, but the power to inhibit action. This ability to interpose its authority between the impulse and its reaction is perhaps the most distinctive feature of intelligence. It is that, more than anything else, that differentiates the rational from irrational activity, and gives rational activity the quality of conduct.

The mind seems to *issue injunctions* on the impulses that make for action, and thus hold them back, till the fitness of the action is considered in relation to all its consequences and implications.

Then, having judged the case, the mind gives the executive order, and the motor nerves carry the message to the physical organism; or it may be that the decision is conditional, and we await the proper time and conditions for its execution.

103. The common phase, to make up our mind, is an excellent expression of the process of self-direction; for it is really the ordering or making up of the numerous and varied motive forces which are present to consciousness.

In this "making up," the mind chooses and gives precedence to this or that motive or impulse, inhibits or modifies others as it seems good to it.

It should be remembered that conduct does not consist of a *series* of volitions. It is cumulative and continuous, every choice and every act modifies both the conditions of all sub-

sequent choices and the character of the mind itself.

The weight and impelling force of any state of consciousness depends first upon our native disposition and on the present mood, but by our own conduct we continually change the character of our minds, making them more susceptible to certain influences and less moved by others. We form mental and bodily habits also, which become more and more influential; and our fixed purposes become more definite and constant. These qualities become constitutional, and form what we call *character;* and character tends more and more to become fixed and permanent.

104. The factors of conduct we have mentioned are perhaps the chief elements that enter into our conduct and determine our behavior, but they are by no means the only ones. They are examples rather than a catalog, and are presented rather to show how the mind is acted upon—and responds, rather than to fully account for all its behavior.

The function which we have called self-direction, by which the mind acts as arbiter of its own conflicting impulses, chooses its course of action, forms its purposes and directs its energies to the accomplishment of those purposes, involves the profoundest questions of psychology. We cannot attempt the consideration of all of these, nor are they necessary to the understanding of ethics.

It is necessary, however, to consider somewhat carefully the way in which considerations of right and wrong act on the mind and influence the will.

The common term used to denote this aspect of our soul's activity is conscience. The phenomena presented the mind under the influence of moral distinctions are so important and so peculiar, that conscience is often considered as a special faculty. This is apt to be misleading, and we should try to have a clear understanding of the mental process in the matter, rather than attempt to determine the meaning of the

words.

105. The function of the will is to conduct the activities of the soul, to regulate and direct the impulses that are the motive forces of the soul and body.

It is in this connection that we may best understand how the pursuit of virtue seems to be a constant conflict,—a pulling against the stream.

It is such in the nature of the case, for when instincts, or natural reactions do not conflict, either with other instincts or with the judgments and purposes already formed, they are allowed free course, and require no direction by the will, and are hardly to be considered conduct.

But when they conflict, the will acts as arbiter and inhibits some of the impulses to action and thus conducts our behavior.

Hence it is that moral laws usually assume the form of prohibition. They have to do with restraints. Their office is chiefly to indicate what "thou shalt not" do.

> "All constraint
> Except what wisdom lays on evil men
> Is evil."

BOOK II

THE PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

CHAPTER I

MOTIVES

106. In judging ourselves or others in respect to conduct, we do not regard the overt act as the object of our judgment; we look behind the act and seek the motive, intention or purpose which led to it, and form our judgment on the act according to the purpose or motive which prompted it.

It is evident that mere physical action has in itself little or no moral quality. I may fire a gun to scare the crows from my corn field, or I may fire it with malice afore-thought to kill a man. The physical action is the same, but the moral quality very different; because the purpose is different.

107. In order to exercise moral judgment with wisdom and fairness, we should have a clear notion of the relation of motives to conduct. In the study of physics we learn that one of the fundamental laws of matter is the law of inertia; that is that matter cannot of itself change its state. It moves only as it is impelled by some motive force, and its motion will be determined in all respects by the character of the matter acted on and the character and degree of the force acting upon it.

These factors account for every physical change; and the same force acting on matter in the same condition will invariably produce the same result.

This law of inertia is strictly analogous to the law of motives in moral conduct; and the activities of the mind are just as absolutely subject to law as are the motions of matter. Conduct is determined by the state or character of the soul and the quality and intensity of the motive, and the same motives acting under the same conditions will produce the same results. There is nothing fortuitous in moral conduct.

108. But the influence of motives on conduct is a much more complicated affair than the action of forces on matter. The chief difficulty in the way of the analysis of motives is the highly subjective character of their influence. The force and effect of any object set before the mind as an aim, or incentive, *depends on the mind's appraisement of the object's desirability;* and this depends on the mind's own appetencies. No object can of itself move the mind to choice or volition. It has influence only as it finds a responsive craving in the mind. It is therefore rather misleading to speak of objects as motives. The motive—the influence that really moves the mind—is rather the desire, the craving or appetencies of the soul. Perhaps the best term for these appetencies is *affections. The affections, then, are the real motive powers of the soul,* and if the term motive is to be restricted to any one of the several conditions that must unite to move the mind to choice and volition, it is best to confine it to the affections.

109. But before we look more closely at the affections, let us consider a little more fully the order of the mental process involved in each voluntary act. Each begins with some craving, some want of the body or the mind. If this craving is due to some bodily state want we call it an appetite; if it is from some more spiritual demand we speak of it as an appetence. These are the fundamental source of all voluntary activity. They are comparable to the elemental forces of the physical world, as heat or gravitation. They are partly due to our nature,—our constitution; and manifest themselves in those impulses which we call instinct. But these instincts are constantly controlled and directed and modified by our will. In this way habits are formed by which certain impulses are made more powerful, and others weakened by restraint; so that the effect of our appetencies is due to habit as well as to instinct. In other words our constitutional impulses are worked over by our will, so that some of them are almost ex-

tirpated and others are intensified by exercise, till our conduct is largely due to habit. Certain impulses are strong to-day because we have so often yielded to them heretofore.

110. When these appetencies become definite to our consciousness, we call them *desires;* and an object which seems to us adapted to satisfy the felt want is called an *object of our desire,* and we are impelled or induced to action to secure the object. When the object is clearly perceived, and the impulse toward it unopposed, the action follows very simply.

111. But actual experience is rarely so simple. In almost all cases there is more or less serious conflict of desires. We desire many things, and can secure but few; hence we find constant need of choice. We must secure *this* by the payment of *that.* We must relinquish the hope of one thing to attain to another; hence we are under the necessity of judging between the one and the other object of desire, or, more frequently, between one or other of various *groups* of desire.

112. We may assume that the choice will be determined by the desire, and will be in favor of the strongest desire; but the difficult question still remains, *how is the greatest desire to be determined?* It is obvious that it can not be determined by the character of the objects; for an object may be very attractive to one mind, and not at all desirable to another; or the same object may seem very desirable at one time, and not at all attractive at another time. How then is the choice made. By what power or influence is the will moved? Has the mind some self determining power, by which it can give efficiency to the influence of one desire rather than another? This is the old and perplexing problem of the freedom of the will. No solution of this question has been found free from difficulty, but we may at least simplify the problem by eliminating some features that are not essential.

First: it is not a question of the mind acting without motives. It is no more possible for the mind to act without motives than for matter to move without force.

Second: it is not a question of the mind's ability to choose. It does choose, every voluntary act is the result of choice; and the power to choose is the distinction of rational creatures.

Third: it is not a question of the power of objects to create desire. It cannot be solved by any consideration of such objects, for they are only the occasion and not the efficient cause of any act of will.

112. The question is simply this; can the mind, by some inherent power, give force to certain desires by attention to one rather than another of the varied impulses acting upon it? Has it power to break the dead-lock which would seem to occur whenever conflicting desires are nearly balanced?

In answer to this question we are able to say that our consciousness seems to answer very positively, yes. We feel that we have in us the power to put one desire before another, and, when we have so chosen, we feel that we could have chosen otherwise. We also assume that other people could have done other than they did, and blame them for not doing so, or praise them for their good choice.

113. The psychology of this matter is not well understood, but in the ordinary use of words, we may properly assert that man is free when he is not constrained by anything outside of his own mind; and there is nothing outside of our own mind that can constrain it. In this sense then man is clearly free to will.

CHAPTER II

AFFECTIONS

114. The whole psychological process of conduct is comparatively clear; but the discussion of it is often obscured by the ambiguity of the terms employed.

The process by which each voluntary act is achieved is this; first, there is some want or need of body or mind which creates uneasiness or discomfort; this takes the form of a craving or hunger; the consciousness of this need is called an appetite or appetence, and shows affinity for such objects as will supply the want. When the imagination forms an idea of this want and the object for which it has affinity, this idea is called a desire, and the object toward which it is directed is the object of desire. When the attainment of this object is set definitely before the mind as an end to be secured it is called an end or purpose.

But it is not always possible to reach this end immediately; it must be secured by means of a series of acts leading to it; these means are each in turn an object of our efforts, but only that we may reach the ultimate end. All these acts are involved in the plan to reach the ultimate end together with the end itself is called our intention. The intention is the entire program set before the mind to be performed in order that the object of our desire may be secured. This ultimate end, this object of desire is often called the motive or sometimes the purpose of our action, but it seems more conducive to clearness of thought to use the term motive to denote the force or impulse which really moves the mind to action.

And this impulse is the craving or appetence of the mind. It is this which gives impetus to the mind and urges it toward the object for which it has a propensity or affinity.

115. The attitude of the mind in respect to all objects is due to its emotional states, its tastes, its propensities, its affections or whatever we may name the cravings or likes and dislikes with which it regards the ideas of objects presented to consciousness.

The most suitable term seems to be affections, and we therefore use this term to denote the impulses which impel the mind to action. In other words the affections are the motive powers of the soul.

116. These affections are, to some extent, the natural endowment of each individual soul, but the character and degree of the affections differ in different souls. This natural endowment, the quality and intensity of our affections is called the disposition of the individual.

There are some affections that are common to all normal souls, though in different degrees. For example, parental affection, love of companionship, love of the esteem of our fellow men, and of the beautiful, desire of pleasure, of victory, of amusement; these and a host of other appetencies are instinctive, universal and persistent.

117. But our affections are extremely susceptible to cultivation. They are greatly influenced by our environment, modified by our mental development, and most of all, changed by our exercise of them whereby habits of thought, of taste and of point of view are formed.

The state of the mind, so far as moral quality is concerned, is due to the quality and intensity of the affections that are dominant in it at any particular time. What we call character is the combination of affections that rule the mind.

"Tell me what you love, and I will tell you what you are" is strictly true concerning moral character. "As a man thinketh *in his heart* so is he."

118. While it is true that the affections are subject to change, and in fact are continually in a state of change, it is also true that these changes are not lawless nor capricious; they de-

velop according to certain laws of their nature, and are capable of cultivation by the mind itself. We cannot greatly change our affections by mere act of will or choice. We cannot say I have loved the praise of men, henceforth I will not love that, but rather the pleasures of music; but we can say I have loved this too much; I will henceforth *cultivate a love* for that.

We can, and do, both voluntarily and involuntarily, both consciously and unconsciously, cultivate affections in certain consistent groups and proportions which strengthen and sustain one another, so that our character tends more and more to a settled and fixed state, not easily changed. It becomes more reliable, stronger, better able to withstand the strain of any erratic appetency by the resistance of other well-established affections.

119. It is because of this tendency to well organized affections that character becomes so difficult to change in mature years. We may easily be convinced that we do not love the best things, but the love for the worse things is difficult to move, and the conviction of our judgment will not change our character till it somehow reforms the affections. To love the right things is to be perfect. Or, as the Scriptures have it, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is true philosophy that puts love at the basis of all conduct; and regards *right affections* as the essence of character, for Love of the right things is "the fulfilling of the law."

120. Since to love the right things in the right degree is the very essence of good character, and character is the source of conduct, it is evident that the cultivation of right affections is the first step toward the attainment of good character. While the impulses to action, the prime motive powers of the soul

are its appetencies, and these are determined by its affections, still it is reason which directs and controls the affections. While we cannot change our affections by mere effort of the will, we can, and should, choose the objects of our affections on rational grounds, and cultivate a love for those things which reason approves. It is the office of reason not merely to "serve the passions" by devising means for the attainment of their objects, but rather to govern and discipline them, and to direct them to right objects.

Man is, after all, a reasonable creature—a thinker, and not merely the passive subject of his impulses and emotions. There is no ready-made ideal which he may adopt. He must choose and select and adapt his plans and his ideals to his means and needs and circumstances. He must *adjust himself to his environment.*

It is necessary therefore that he have some appreciation, some sense of values, some standards of relative worth of his own affections.

121. It is hardly possible to appraise the various affections, or to frame a just scheme of their relative importance, for their value is to some degree dependent on the demands made on us by our peculiar station and circumstances in life, and also by the *combinations* we can make with the various affections of the soul

The degree of love for my children may be too great in proportion to my love for my neighbor, or my desire for pleasure too strong for my love of honesty; whereas I might well love my children more, or even love pleasure more, if my love of my neighbor and my zeal for honesty were more intense.

122. We can more easily judge of ideals—groups of qualities, than of the separate qualities which go to make up such ideals. We can appreciate the whole, more easily than analyze it.

However, it is well to consider what are the chief affections, what is their relative value and their order of precedence. We

have already noticed that the early Hebrew conception of character as depicted by the great lawgiver, and endorsed many centuries later by the great Galilean, placed the love of God as the first and greatest of all its essential factors. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." This emphatic statement of the supreme importance of a right attitude of mind, a right choice of the supreme object of the affections, has never been—can never be revised or modified.

123. The important point to notice in this connection is that it is a *moral principle* that is here defined. The Hebrew conception of God as the sovereign, creator and ruler of the world makes this law the equivalent of a command to cultivate the right attitude of mind toward *constituted order* of the universe, to put one's whole soul in harmony with the author of the world of which we are a part, and under whose laws we must abide. But it is very much more than mere submission to authority sanctioned by omnipotence. It is not the counsel of prudence, but the dictate of wisdom. It exhorts us not to mere obedience, but to harmony of view, concord of sentiment, unity of affection. Love what God loves, and the doing of his will becomes the spontaneous impulse of the soul. This is the very corner stone of Christian ethics, but it is no less the fundamental ground of philosophic ethics. Aristotle said no act is good till it is pleasant. It is, as we have put it, theistic in its conception, but is essentially the same principle that we should have to adopt if we assumed a purely agnostic position on the question of theology.

124. Since there is an order of the universe which we cannot change, which is comprehensive and self-consistent, it is evidently necessary to put ourselves—reason, emotions and will—in harmony with it—to *"love"* it; otherwise there is no possibility of peace and happiness or excellence. As we must order our thinking according to the immutable laws of logic, our

manual labors according to the laws of physics, so must we adapt our conduct to the principles of righteousness, which are the laws of the moral universe.

125. But this adapting of ourselves to the inevitable, impersonal order of things cannot be done cordially or completely unless there is some personality back of this order; for our best affections have affinity for persons, not mere things, or abstractions. As a basis of moral conduct there is no substitute for the cordial affections of the living soul for the living God.

126. The second principle of ethics as thus conceived is little more than a corollary of the first. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" follows as logical consequence of the right love of God. Harmony with the attributes of God, implies concord with His purposes and unity of affections with Him, since all men are equally the objects of His supreme sovereign benevolence, they must be equal and co-ordinate in our affections, according to our various relations to them.

On these two commandments hangs all the law; and all the exposition of the law by the prophets must be tested by these elemental principles.

CHAPTER III

OBLIGATION

127. The distinctive feature of moral judgment is the feeling of *obligation,* which seems, not only to accompany, but to form a part of the judgment.

Psychologically, moral judgments are performed just as mathematical or aesthetic judgments are; but when we judge that a certain course of conduct is right, we feel a peculiar constraint, an obligation to act in that way and no other. Moral judgments have an *imperative quality,* which judgment on other subjects do not have, and this imperative quality is proportioned to the importance which we judge the action to have.

There is no doubt whatever about the fact. It is one of the most familiar experiences of consciousness. The question is whence comes this imperative quality. What authority is behind it? What is its place in the moral order of the world?

128. To this we may answer, first, that it is instinctive. It is one of those impulses of the human soul which we find to be characteristic. It is a constitutional feature; just as the impulse to build nests is a constitutional feature of birds. However we came by it, we have it; as we have the impulse to admire the beautiful or to seek to excel our fellows.

But we can go at least a little further into it, and following Kant's suggestion notice that moral judgment is in *itself an imperative.*

Kant's thought is that man is a reasonable being. His reason is his law. His judgment on conduct is the law of conduct. A judgment that a certain course of conduct is right is, *ipso facto,* a command to do it; for to decide that anything is right is only another way of saying that it is the thing to do.

129. This seems *conclusive* so far as the *sense of obligation* is concerned, but it brings us to the more difficult question of responsibility. We agree that we ought to do right, but suppose that we refuse to do it; what then?

The very idea of obligation implies some provision for securing the end of the obligation. Such provisions are called *sanctions*. In ethics, sanctions are the incentives which are used to secure the performance of right; and they are generally conceived of as rewards and penalties. It is more scientific, and more radical, to think of them as consequences,—results which follow,—effects of which conduct is the cause. Responsibility is the ability to respond, to answer, to experience the consequences of conduct.

130. In all the activities of nature, there is the invariable feature of causation. Certain events follow certain others in inevitable order; the first is called the cause, the following the effect; the order and degree of their relation is called the law of the particular force which produces the event.

The law of gravitation, for example, is the manner and degree in which the force of gravity is exerted. From these laws of nature there is no escape. So long as the constitution of the universe is unrevised: two plus two shall be four, the broken staff will not reunite, and what a man sows that shall he also reap.

In this sense there is no limit to human responsibility. We are free to act, but every act whether physical or moral brings its inevitable consequences. There is no possibility of escape from the effects of any act. If I drink poison I suffer the consequence of my deed—always, inevitably; and all the conditions being the same, the consequences will always be exactly the same.

If I do wrong I suffer the consequences, always and inevitably. There is no such thing as chance or accident known in the constitution of the universe.

It is true that other things may be done to counter-act the effects of what has been done. I may take an antidote for the

poison, that will have its proper effect and so prevent my death. I may do something else to rectify the wrong that I have done; but in no case is the law of nature annulled or modified.

All this is just as true of moral law as of physical. The soul is as absolutely bound by the laws of its nature as the body is by the laws relating to it.

131. But the problem of moral responsibility is complicated and made difficult by the intricate relation between the motive and the intention and the outward acts.

The moral consequences follow the moral acts, and the physical effects the physical causes, but these are so intimately bound together that it is not easy to separate them even in thought.

Saint Crispin stole leather to make shoes for the poor, thereby no doubt promoting the general welfare, but he stole. Shall we say he did wrong? In the actual experience of life we are constantly meeting cases which are extremely difficult to decide. Either because we do not clearly see the principles involved, or because the principles seem to conflict.

When we honestly endeavor to do the right, but actually do the wrong, do we justly suffer the consequences of our mistake. If we say yes, it seems a great hardship. If we say no, then the conclusion seems to be: "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise," which is certainly a very unsatisfactory conclusion.

132. Such cases can only be decided in detail. Each on the merits of the case, that is after full consideration of all the circumstances and conditions, and these are capable of infinite variation.

The study of such cases is the field of a special branch of ethics called Casuistry. The science of jurisprudence also finds it an important field of study, and every man finds frequent occasion for the consideration of such cases as confront him in his daily life. It is worth while therefore to look at some of the more fundamental principles involved in which we call responsibility.

CHAPTER IV

RESPONSIBILITY

133. In the discussion of responsibility we shall simplify the problems by viewing them from the personal point of view, asking how and how far am I personally responsible. We may simplify still further by eliminating some of the cases that are obviously not under our jurisdiction.

134. First: we are not morally responsible for actions that are wholly involuntary. If I fall on the icy payment and break my leg, I am not to be blamed for thereby missing my train, or failing to keep an engagement.

135. Second: We are not responsible for failing to do what we would do but cannot. The doctor who does his best to save a life but fails is not blamed; and the leader of a forlorn hope is praised for his heroic dash to defeat.

136. Third: we extenuate the faults that are due in large part to unfavorable environment. The child of the slums is not judged by the same standard as the child of opportunity and means of culture.

137. In all these cases there is a mixture, and more or less confusion, of the object of our judgment. We have in mind partly the outward conduct,—the overt acts,—and partly the motives and intentions, and partly—perhaps chiefly, the person, his character and the affections from which the impulse to action chiefly springs. But in all such cases we limit or discharge from responsibility in our judgment much for which nature holds every one to strict responsibility. We judge that the child born in the gutter, reared in an atmosphere of vice and ignorance, is not responsible for his low character, his moral degradation and vicious tastes, yet nature does not excuse him, but holds him by the

inexorable law of cause and effect. Poison taken by mistake is no less deadly than the same dose given with murderous intent; and vicious influences deprave the soul and bring it to misery and ruin with the same inevitable certainty, however those influences may be brought to bear upon the soul.

138. The fact that "there be wicked men to whom it happenth according to the work of the righteous, and righteous men to whom it happenth according to the work of the wicked" is a perplexing problem, which we shall discuss later. Our present inquiry is with regard to the responsibility which we find actually resting upon us, and which our sense of justice approves.

139. This is best understood by approaching it from the point of view of obligation; and obligation is best understood from its relation to rights.

140. *Rights may be defined as those powers and opportunities assigned to us in the constitution of the world*; such as life, liberty, and the means of happiness. All such rights are limited in two ways: first, by their own nature, and, second, by the rights of others. Our obligation consists in using these rights according to their nature, within their proper limits, and so as to promote, or at least to not interfere with, the rights of others.

141. Rights, obligations and responsibility are correlative. I am responsible for the use of my powers so as to keep within my rights and meet the obligations involved, which will depend to a good degree on the relations I occupy toward other persons, and all outward circumstances. Where I fulfill my obligations I merit approval and esteem, when I fail to do so I incur blame and deserve punishment. So far as my powers are limited by weakness or ignorance or outward circumstances my obligation is limited, and my responsibility modified.

142. But the limitations themselves are matters of obligation. To a good degree I make my own environment. The free choice of today puts me, tomorrow, in circumstances over which I have no control. My responsibility extends to the past acts,

and I am judged by the whole course of my conduct. I may by my free actions form habits which I cannot overcome. I am judged not merely by the acts committed because of the force of the habit, but by the acts which formed the habit.

143. Moreover, there is a still more difficult complication of the matter in the fact of heredity and parental control. The free acts of parents have tremendous influence on the possibilities of the children, and thus the whole race is to some degree a unit, and every individual's rights and obligations and responsibilities are bound up with those of the family, the community and all mankind.

144. In view of these complications it is easy to see that responsibility is an extremely difficult thing to measure, and a matter to be handled with greatest care; and we can appreciate the wisdom of the precept of Jesus, "Judge not:" and the satirical line of Horace, "change the name—the circumstances —and the story may be told of you."

145. But we are not to conclude that there is therefore no ground for praise or blame, no such thing as merit to be ascribed to men on the ground of their conduct. It is the inevitable consequence of approval of conduct that we feel a certain degree of respect and admiration for those whose conduct we approve. This is something more than approval, more than mere judgment that they have done the right thing. It is a sentiment, an attitude of mind toward the person. We approve the conduct of a good man and therefore honor the man. We infer from what he does that his character is good.

146. This feeling of respect or admiration is an appreciation of excellence, a recognition of worth, and an acknowledgment of a certain claim of reward due to the man who does well. It is more than a judgment that he is worthy of reward; it is a sort of first payment of this recognized claim. We feel an obligation to pay honor to whom honor is due. It is the spontaneous tribute of respect paid to him whose conduct is ap-

proved.

147. But our moral sense seems to demand more than this. We feel that he is entitled not only to our respect, but to some good fruit of his right conduct. We feel that he deserves a degree of welfare proportioned to his goodness. And on the other hand we feel that the man who does wrong deserves some kind of punishment. We give to the bad man our disapproval of his conduct, our contempt for his character, and feel that he ought somehow to suffer for his wickedness. It has been generally held that society should punish men for doing wrong, not only to deter them and others from further wrong doing, but to vindicate justice; that is to inflict punishment *because it was deserved.* However, this function is liable to abuse, and great cruelty has been done in the name of *vindicatory* justice, nevertheless our instinct of justice, of fair play, impels us to resent and punish outrage by inflicting pain on the offender. We hardly hear with patience the sentimental protest against the instinctive impulse to thrash the bully caught in the act of abusing a child, and we scorn to justify our thrashing him on the ground that we aimed only at his own good or the prevention of such crimes.

Even in holding a vicious character in contempt we admit the right to vindicate justice; for what is contempt but punishment? often the severest that can be inflicted.

CHAPTER V

THE STANDARD OF MORAL JUDGMENT

148. All judgment implies a standard by which to judge,—a measure with which to mete. Conduct is called right or wrong according as it conforms or fails to conform to some rule or law which we assume as a standard. Good and bad denote the measure in which conduct fulfills some ideal of goodness that we have in mind.

149. The correctness of our moral judgment, therefore, depends, first of all, on the correctness of the standard by which we judge; and the most important question of ethics is the question of the moral standard. Our moral sense may strongly urge a certain course of conduct, and we may *feel* that it is the only right course for us to follow; but this feeling does not wholly satisfy our judgment. We may be satisfied that a certain course of conduct is our duty, and still be unable to justify our conduct at the bar of reason.

If ethics is to rank as a philosophy at all, it must answer the question, why is goodness good and righteousness right?

150. The best thought of many centuries has been directed to this problem; the greatest names in the history of philosophy are found in the list of those who have discussed it; and many and varied have been the answers proposed. Much has been done to elucidate the matter, to isolate the question and clarify it of all extraneous complications, and thus prepare the way for its solution but there is not yet any consensus of opinion, nor any answer that is satisfactory to all.

151. It is in the very nature of the case that no standard of morals can be conceived that will be complete or perfect; for the conception of such an ideal requires complete knowledge and

perfect moral taste; neither of which has yet been attained by any man. All that can be reasonably hoped for is a general and somewhat vague ideal, a vision seen "Through a glass darkly" and not face to face; for we know in part and can only prophesy that part. However, it is to be noted, that the limitations of our knowledge does not of necessity throw doubt on that which is within our field of vision. We may not be able to conceive a perfectly beautiful human face, but we can say with confidence that the face of the Sistine Madonna is beautiful, and the face of Medusa is not.

152. The various definitions of the standard of right are chiefly distinguished by the point of view which one assumes. An ideal of conduct presents many features, all of them in some degree essential; but the ideal as a whole will depend very largely on the *degree of emphasis that is placed on one or another of these features.* There are therefore many definitions of the standard of moral judgment, differing greatly in detail, but they may be conveniently classified under these general heads.

153. First: good conduct may be conceived of as that which conforms to law. The law thus taken as the standard may be thought of as the settled custom of the community that which has somehow come to be considered the proper thing to do. This seems to have been the conception which prevailed when the philosophy of conduct was first named ethics,—from, ethos, custom or manner of life.

But the law, that is assumed as the standard, may be thought of as a command given by some superior authority, as the state or the church or the gods or God. In this case, right is obedience; goodness is conformity to the will of the lawgiver, and evil is that which transgresses or fails to conform to that will.

154. Second: if we view conduct from the point of view of results, we may conceive of the standard as that which effects good results, and these results may be measured in various terms.

We may think of them in the general terms of human welfare; or in more specific terms of happiness, or, in more profound conceptions, as the glory of God.

155. Third: it is possible to regard good conduct as simply that which our conscience—our moral sense or instinct, approves. We may say of moral judgment as we say of aesthetic taste it is not capable of being subject to reason. *"de gustibus non disputandum."* If we like the taste of caviar we like it, if we do not, we do not, and no argument can persuade us, or alter the fact. So it may be held that goodness can be judged no further than by appeal to the normal moral taste, popularly called conscience.

156. Fourth: in recent years, the tendency to view all things from the point of view of evolution has led to a conception somewhat different from either of the foregoing and combining some of the features of each of them.

This view presents the standard of right as that which realizes, or tends to realize, our highest or most rational self. In its practical application it means that we ought always to do that which promotes the progress of mankind in the line of his true development. If it may be defined at all, it would be stated thus. The standard of right is harmony with human progress as that progress is evolving by the inherent powers of the soul. All these conceptions are capable of various forms, and give rise to different views which we will discuss more fully later.

157. It is difficult to distinguish these varied concepts of the moral standard as actually held by different writers, because they are not mutually exclusive, but differ rather in the emphasis placed on one or another feature of the ideal. Certain groups however are distinguished and named. The most prominent of these are the Imperative, the Utilitarian, the Hedonistic, the Intuitional, the Rational and the Evolutionary, with a host of compromising theories composed of features taken from different points of view.

CHAPTER VI

THEORIES OF ETHICAL STANDARD

158. Of the various conceptions of an ethical standard probably the oldest and most widely accepted in the past is that which regards the will of the gods, or of God, as the ultimate standard of right. Goodness is obedience to the will of God. Men ought to do God's will because He commands it, and has sanctioned His commands by rewards and penalties.

This is simple, easily apprehended, and analogous with the obligations of parental and civil government, and, as far as it goes, is certainly true.

159. But a little reflection convinces one that this cannot be the ultimate ground of goodness. It is true that we ought to obey God's revealed will, for He is wise and good. If either His wisdom or his goodness were doubtful the ground of our obligation would be destroyed. It might be prudent to obey an unrighteous god, lest we should incur his wrath and enmity; even as slaves obey a cruel master, but we would feel no moral obligation. Our sense of justice revolts against the command that has no better sanction than mere power to punish; and we conceive of moral law as based on something deeper than the arbitrary will of a being however powerful that being may be.

The decalogue for example is to be thought of as a *definition* of righteousness, not as the ground of right. It is binding upon us not because God revealed it as the rule of our obedience, but He gave it as our rule because it was eternally right that we should so conduct ourselves. So the whole revealed will of God is—as the word *reveal* denotes, simply the unveiling of that which was not seen, the making known of that which was unknown but true from the beginning of creation.

160. This conception of God's law is more easily apprehended by us in these days, because it is the same sense in which we use the word law in all other sciences. The law of gravitation for example is simply a statement of fact, a definition of the order of events, and the method of action of certain forces. So all the laws of physics and chemistry, and of all the forces of the natural world, are simply convenient statements of the way these forces act. The laws of God are simply the expressions of His eternal character, embodied in the constitution of the world. The forces of nature, working according to these laws have evolved the present universe from the void and dark chaotic mass of that beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, but not one jot or tittle has passed from the laws imposed on matter in the beginning. So the principles of moral law date from that time when the moral universe was constituted. The giving of the law on Sinai, by the hand of Moses, and the giving of the law of gravitation by the hand of Newton were both only the fuller, clearer, revelation of laws which are and ever have been in the very constitution of the world. The publication of the decalogue did not make murder wrong, but the law was given that we might know that it is wrong. The standard of right is not law in the sense of a rule or commandment, but in the sense of an established order of the moral universe. It has its basis, not in commandments, but in creation.

161. This conception of the ultimate source of moral law is in harmony with modern philosophy, which teaches with renewed emphasis the doctrine of cosmic unity. There is no clashing of physical forces; the laws of chemistry, of mathematics, of physics and of psychology are found to be harmonious. The laws of ethics are also a part of the scheme of the universe. They are a department of the established order of the world.

162. We should expect therefore to find the practical outcome of obedience to moral law conducive to human welfare and happiness. As we find the activities of our physical powers that

are necessary to our life and health conducive to happiness and excellence, so we would expect to find that conduct which is according to the laws of our moral nature—in harmony with the moral order of the universe—productive of peace and blessedness.

162. And we are not disappointed in this expectation. We find that honesty is the best policy, that courage and kindness win honor and esteem, and godliness profitable in the world that now is.

But we must not mistake cause for effect, nor reason *post hoc, propter hoc.* It does not follow that, since honesty is found to be good policy, that therefore honesty is mere policy; or that an act is honest because it is politic. This seems to be the fundamental error of the utilitarian theory of ethics, which holds that conduct which leads to the welfare of mankind is good conduct, which is true; and that is good *because* it leads to such welfare, which is not true. Good results are the *evidence* of good conduct, but this is very different from the statement that good results *makes conduct good.* True, men do not gather figs of thistles, but the fruit is not the cause of the fig tree it is only an indication of its character. "By their fruits *ye shall know them.*"

163. The failure to distinguish between evidence and cause has been a fruitful source of confusion.

It is true that all that God requires us to do is right. It is quite true that happiness is only to be found in good conduct. It is generally true that what our moral sense urges us to do is right and should be done. But it is not true that conduct is right *because* God commands it nor *because* it leads to happiness nor *because* our moral sense approves it.

The order is the other way around. God commands only that which is good and right. Happiness is the consequence of right conduct. Our moral sense, when uncorrupted, indicates the right. All of these are useful guides to what is right.

They are the best evidence of moral quality, but they are nothing more.

I may test sugar by tasting it; but the taste does not make it sugar, it only convinces me that it is sugar. The character of the sugar is objective, my knowledge of it is subjective. A mistake on my part cannot affect the character of the object; nor can the object be changed by any new knowledge of it that I may acquire; any more than I can add a cubit to my stature by taking thought.

The excellence and the defects of the various theories of ethical standard are best seen from this point.

If we distinguish clearly between the reason why a thing *is right,* and the reason by which we *know it to be right,* it is clear that the fact that welfare, or pleasure, always follows as the result of good conduct is a good guide—a convenient index—by which we may judge practically what is good conduct. Yet it does not follow at all that this good result constitutes the goodness of the conduct.

164. It is certainly true that the safest and easiest way to learn what conduct is good is to observe results. The utilitarians have done most valuable service in pointing out so clearly the close and uniform correspondence between good conduct and human welfare; but as a basis for moral distinction, or a definition of moral rightness these facts are of no more value than the fact that ice is always cold and hard is to account for its becoming ice when water falls to a certain temperature.

165. So the intuitional position is certainly sound and strong in its assertion that certain feelings, such as benevolence and love of justice, spring spontaneously in every human heart, and that they urge us with impressive authority to certain conduct.

Kant's "categorical imperative" is one of the unquestionable facts of all our experience. But all these are nothing more than guides, indexes, monitors to urge us in the way that *is*

right.

166. So the teleologist tells us that the end justifies the means, that the only thing that can justify any means is good ends—good results attained, or at least intended. This is perfectly true, but *justify* in such a case means nothing more than vindicates,—*proves* to be good—shows that the act was good. It can not possibly make it good. There is no other ultimate basis for moral distinction, than such as there is for mathematical or physical or chemical distinction, namely that the world was made that way; or if you prefer the phrase, *The world is that way*. The law of gravitation, the binomial theorem, the order of the seasons and the fundamental distinction between right and wrong all rest alike on the ultimate facts of the constitution of the universe.

167. But by far the most important question here is the relation of this fundamental law of nature to the commandments which, we believe, God has given; or, in other words, what is the relation between philosophic ethics and revealed moral law?

It is reasonable to presume that there are not, cannot be two systems of ethics. It is hardly possible to suppose that conduct that is right in the nature of the world can be wrong by divine command, or by a revealed code of moral law. Yet we often hear revealed ethics spoken of as in some sense different from the ethics of philosophy, and it may be well worth while to look into the matter.

168. We have tried to point out the difference between the idea of law as it is used in science to denote a mode of action, or the constitutional relation between two or more events, and the idea of law as a command or rule laid down to be obeyed; for example, it is a law of mathematics that the square of the hypotenuse of any right angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. This is a law of nature, an eternal principle in the constitution of the universe. It is of universal application.

But my workmen are not sufficiently skilled in mathematics to apply this law in its general form, I therefore direct them to measure six feet on one side, and then eight feet to the right from the end of that line, in such direction that the distance from the beginning of the first line to the end of the second shall be ten feet, and the angle thus formed will be a right angle. This is a commandment, a rule laid down for obedience. It is simply an application of the principle, a concrete case under the general rule, a partial revelation of a great natural law.

169. The decalogue and all the divine commands, are of this kind first of all. They point out certain concrete acts which shall or shall not be done. They do not create new obligations, but reveal that which was from the beginning. But they do more than this, they *indicate certain principles* which are general and universal.

Thou shalt not kill enjoins us from a specific crime, but it also implies a natural law, not only forbidding murder, but also all infringement of man's right to live. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer" is only a fair interpretation of the command thou shalt not kill; for the prohibition of killing is by a figure of metonymy the prohibition of all that may cause murder.

170. All such laws—commands—imply still more; they recognize and *endorse the rights* which the forbidden acts would destroy or diminish. To forbid you to kill me is a recognition of my right to life.

The laws—statutes—of divine revelation are great landmarks from which we may find out the principles of morals which are immutable as heaven.

171. Any discovery of a right rule of conduct answers the same purpose—or would answer the same purpose; for it is not important what light we see by if only we see; but it is matter of history that no other code or law has ever been devised that can for one moment be compared to the ten comandments given by the hand of Moses on Mount Sinai. This is the

greatest landmark in the whole history of ethics. And the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, where he pointed out the principle of their interpretation, is beyond comparison the greatest contribution to philosophic ethics that the world has ever received.

172. But that teaching reached its profoundest depth when it pointed out that the source and fountain of conduct is the affections; and that right affections consist essentially in right attitude of mind and soul toward God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind."

That is the only scientific statement of the matter. It is ultimate, it is complete.

THE STANDARD IMPERATIVE

173. The simplest conception of the moral standard is that which regards it as the will of some superior being. According to this view, goodness is conformity to rules laid down for our obedience; and proper inquiry as to these laws is limited to the question, what is the will of the law giver? This view is illustrated by the relation of children to parents, of servant to master or soldiers to their officers,—"Their's not to reason why."

174. The ordinary obligations of our daily life are measured chiefly by this standard. We regulate our conduct so as to conform to the laws of the state, the rules of custom, the conventionality of society; and are not much concerned to ask whether these regulations are well founded or not, unless they seriously interfere with our freedom. We recognize many of them as the dictates of convenience only. When we drive on the streets, we keep to the right, and so avoid collision; in England they keep to the left, for the same reason. The one rule is as good as the other; which we do is of no importance,

but to have some agreement, some regular custom, is very important. If any man, acting on the fact that one rule is as good as the other, insists on keeping to the left, where the rule is keep on the right, he makes trouble for himself and everybody else: and we devise punishment to prevent such conduct. These punishments may be such as fine and imprisonment, or they may be social disfavor, or merely the bad language of other drivers whom he annoys; but, whatever form they take, they are all for the same purpose, to *sanction* the rule,—to secure conduct according to the will of the community. Thus the will of the community, or state, is made the standard of right conduct. Certainly a large part of our statute laws are based on such considerations and, if they answer some useful purpose, we do not trouble ourselves to look for any more remote reason for them. We obey them because they are sanctioned by authority, with power to punish.

175. When we inquire further as to the limits of this authority—as to the right of the community to lay down rules for the individual—the right of the majority to say what the minority may do, we find it is a very difficult question, and are obliged to look for some more fundamental principles by which to determine the matter. In other words, we find that we must have some standard by which to measure the rules we may impose on one another.

176. In practise we compromise, we grant to the community certain authority which we deny to the individual. The community may take money from one and use it for the benefit of another; as in taxation for the support of free schools. The community may take away a man's property and even his life, as a punishment for crime against an individual. Now, if it may do these things, why not others also? Why not take all the money from the man who cannot, or does not, use it wisely? Why not take life from the man who is dangerous to the community? In short, what are the limits to the authority of the

people acting as a whole? What laws may they not make? and why not?

177. It is evident that the will of the people cannot be taken as a standard of moral judgment. The laws framed by the community, either as statutes or customs, may be the expression of the grossest ignorance or the most utter selfishness and, so far from forming an obligation, may properly provoke resistance on the part of every upright citizen.

We must look somewhere else than to the will of the people if we hope to find some source of law that can be regarded as morally binding, or taken as a standard of right.

178. The only will that can be thought of as having inherent authority is the will of God; and it is regarded by some as the ultimate standard of duty.

This is right and reasonable, if by a standard of duty we mean a practical index,—a means of determining what we should do, and what we should avoid. It is not unreasonable to say that the duty God requires of man is obedience to his revealed will, if we have reason to believe that God is just. But in that case we do not really regard the *will* of God as the standard, but his *justice*. That is to say, we acknowledge our obligation to obey God's will because it is the expression of his character as a *just* ruler. It is his justice and not his command that we regard as the standard of moral judgment.

THE STANDARD INTUITIVE

179. Closely related to the concept of right as obedience to the command of some superior is the theory of *intuitive perception* of moral quality. This view has been widely taught, and by many of the wisest of moralists. It is capable of a variety of different forms of statement, but essentially all amount to the same thing. It assumes that man possesses a special "faculty," by which he immediately recognizes moral quality. He per-

ceives envy to be wrong just as simply as he perceives sugar sweet, or the sky blue, and this perception is *ultimate*. Right *is* that which the moral faculty approves, wrong is that which it condemns, and there is no appeal from its decision, for there is nothing more fundamental to appeal to. Its decisions, so far at least as they relate to motives, are to be regarded as infallible. It cannot be educated, for education is training according to reason, and this faculty is regarded as superior to reason.

"That conscience intuitively recognizes moral law, that it is supreme in its authority, and that it cannot be educated are three propositions which hang or fall together. The philosophic accuracy of all three seems to me established on the fullest evidence."—*Calderwood.*

180. This whole concept is so foreign to our current psychology as to be rather difficult to clearly apprehend. We are not accustomed to regard the mind as divided into "faculties," and do not always get the exact idea intended by the word in older writers. Dr. Calderwood introduces this view of conscience thus, "A function of intelligence, so remarkable in its nature, and so influential in our life, as recognition of first principles of all reasoning in morals, must, both in common language and in philosophic usage, be identified with a distinct faculty or power of mind. Its central place and its regulative function in thought and conduct must secure this, for whatever the achievements of observation and induction, an original power recognizing universal truth must appear the source of true wisdom."

It would seem from this definition of the "moral faculty" that no other standard is needed, even if possible; and hardly possible, because this faculty is defined as superior to reason, and therefore more reliable than the judgments of reason derived from any standard whatever.

181. That this is the view taken by this school as indicated by Kant's famous phrase, "The Categorical Imperative," as the

descriptive term for the dictates of conscience; or Bp. Butler's dictum, "Had it strength, as it has right, had it power as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world."

182. The chief contention of the intuitional school must be granted. The power of the mind to perceive moral quality in conduct is certainly a unique and remarkable function, which no other creature on earth is able to perform.

The imperative character of the feeling which accompanies such perception is one of the marvelous phenomena of our mental experience; and the terrible penalty which the soul suffers in that anguish called remorse—all these are facts of the very first importance. The world owes a great debt of gratitude to Kant and Butler and every one who has contributed to the emphasis placed on these functions of the soul.

183. But the whole matter is greatly clarified by distinguishing more sharply between the different functions of the mind formerly included, and confused, under the term conscience, or the moral faculty; and also by discriminating more carefully the *knowledge* of right, and the *ground* of right.

The whole subject of conscience has been discussed above,—for the present it is enough to remember that the term conscience is used to denote three different mental activities: first, the ability to perceive moral quality—to distinguish right from wrong. This is perception, nothing else.

Second, the sense of obligation—the impulse to do or not to do a certain act, is distinctly a feeling or sentiment and belongs to the emotional side of the soul.

Third, the violent emotions which rise from retrospect of our disobedience to these dictates of conscience also belong to the emotional nature, though quite distinct from the feeling of obligation.

There is no ground for regarding these three functions as applied to morals as forming a distant faculty, no ground for the assumption that the perception of moral quality differs in

character from the perception of any other qualities. This combining of such diverse functions under one term is confusing and unwarranted.

184. Moreover in this, as in many other connections, much confusion is occasioned by failing to distinguish between the knowledge of right and the ground of right. I may learn the deadly character of poison by my own experience, or I may be told of it by some one else, or I may infer it from some other knowledge. The means of my information has nothing to do with the fact, that is just the same whether I know it by one means or another, or do not know it at all. So the character of right and wrong, and the standard of moral judgment is not affected at all by the means through which that character or its standard are discovered.

All that is important regarding the intuition of moral quality has been considered under instinct and perception.

CHAPTER VII

THEORIES OF ETHICAL STANDARD—*Continued*

THE STANDARD UTILITARIAN

185. As we have already remarked, it is possible to regard the consequences of conduct as the measure of moral excellence. It is not only possible, but actually held by some of the most astute moralists of our time that the only reasonable standard of moral judgment is utility. Goodness, they maintain, can be nothing but such a state of activity as produces good results, "Anything good must be good *for* something," "By their fruits ye shall know them," and other epigrams are quoted as the basis of their theory.

186. The best definition of the theory is Sidgwick's, "By Utilitarianism is meant the ethical theory that the conduct which, under any given circumstances, is objectively right, is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness on the whole; that is, taking into account all whose happiness is affected by the conduct."

187. The leading word here is *happiness*. It is taken to be the measure of the good results of good conduct; and therefore the production of happiness is the standard of moral excellence.

188. This is very plausible, and appeals strongly to superficial reasoners; but it will not bear examination.

In the first place, happiness is a very vague term; the nearest definition we can frame for it is, satisfaction of desires. If we substitute this phrase for the word happiness, we have the proposition, that conduct that will satisfy the most desires is the best conduct. But this gives us a form without content, and one that even as a form is false; for, since our desires are imper-

fect, they cannot make a perfect standard of anything. If by happiness we mean the satisfaction of such desires as all men *should* have we are no nearer a standard than we were before.

189. If, on the other hand, we define happiness in the only way it can be defined, as the satisfaction of the individual's desires,—and all desires and all happiness are individual—we have the intelligible, but repulsive, doctrine that goodness is selfishness—the gratification of my desires.

190. These alternatives compel the advocates of this theory to divide into two different, and irreconcilable, schools; one holding, with some logical consistency, to the doctrine that the standard of goodness is the happiness of the individual,—that is right for me which, in the long run, gives me the most pleasure. This is known as Hedonism,—

This doctrine, while intelligible and consistent, is so repulsive that it is hardly considered respectable.

191. The other school—sometimes called Universalistic Hedonism, but more generally, Utilitarianism, attempts to evade the difficulties of their position by asserting that universal happiness is to be aimed at because it is *reasonable*. This we may readily accept, for by this explanation it ceases to be utilitarian at all, and becomes simply rational. On the whole Utilitarianism cannot be separated from Hedonism. Hedonism must be individual or universal. If individual, it lands us in the repulsive doctrine that selfishness is goodness,—might is right, and the satisfaction of my desires is the true end of moral excellence. If universal, it means nothing more than the empty form, "the greatest good of the greatest number," with no definition of the "good" demanded.

192. The plausibility of the whole theory lies in the fallacy of false obversion, for while it is true that to be happy one must be good, it does not follow to be good one needs only to be happy.

The best discussion of this theory may be found in Sidgwick's

Method of Ethics, and in Green's Prolegomena or Lecky's History of Morals.

THE STANDARD EVOLUTIONARY

193. The general acceptance of the principle of evolution as an important factor in the history of man has greatly changed, often revolutionized, many of our concepts in all the fields of knowledge, with the possible exception of mathematics.

194. Nowhere has evolution encountered more perplexing problems than in the domain of ethics; and nowhere is there, as yet, any well defined system of adjustment of the doctrines of evolution to the facts of ethical experience.

195. Indeed the doctrines of evolution are still far from any definite and orderly system; and when one uses the term it is well to define its intended meaning. For our purpose here, we may define evolution as the doctrine that the present state of the universe, including man, reached its present condition from a much simpler one by a series of slight changes, due not to any new or external forces, but by the orderly activity of forces working on matter and in it according to certain invariable order —called laws. These forces and laws and properties are sufficient to account for all phenomena. They give no account of their origin, and no indication of their ultimate aim, if they have any. These changes, which are incessant, tend, on the whole, to more and more complexity of form and interaction. Organisms of all sorts have reached their present state from simpler ones, but many of them long ago reached a state of development which has not changed, and indeed seems incapable of further development.

196. The descent of man is supposed to have been from the lowest, simplest form of life through various stages similar to those still occupied by lower orders of being, reaching consciousness, self-consciousness, intelligence and moral, or spiritual,

consciousness, each in their order and at enormous intervals of time. Moral consciousness—the ability to distinguish good from evil and to act from motives that are distinctly ethical is his latest, and highest, achievement.

197. Now supposing this to be a fairly correct history of the descent of man, does it give us any clue to the question, what is the standard of moral judgment? what is the essential nature of goodness?

198. There are many and varied answers given to this question. On the one hand it is urged that such a view of man's descent destroys all ethical distinction, and, of course, blots out the science of ethics altogether, and reduces the study of man to the tracing of his history, with perhaps some vague guessing as to the general direction in which he seems to be drifting. If evolution gives no sure indication of its purpose, or still worse, indicates that it has none,—and is to be regarded as "blind," then indeed we can hope for nothing from it that will help us to answer the question what is goodness

199. But it is not at all necessary to grow discouraged on account of evolution. Even if it contributes nothing to our knowledge of goodness, it at least takes nothing away. It raises no question as to man's present condition. It is concerned only to show how he got where he is—a question which ethics does not ask, and is but little concerned with. Ethics is concerned with his present condition and his possible future. We are dealing with conditions not theories of origin; and evolution, and evolution theories are quite aside from our purpose.

200. But while the doctrines of evolution have little relation to the problems of ethics, the point of view of the evolutionist does bring out with greater clearness certain features of man's present state and circumstances which are important to ethics.

201. First; the most prominent features of evolution is *continuity*. Man's history is not a series of disconnected events, it

is a development, an unfolding of that which was enfolded, an evolution of that which was involved, and must be regarded as the performance of a program somehow prearranged and decreed.

202. Now the more we emphasize the doctrine of continuity, —of positive law, of orderly development, the more we emphasize the necessity of an ultimate end or purpose to be realized.

Evolution may tell us nothing of what that end is, but it teaches, with most positive assurance, that the forces acting under law are evolving something that will be what those forces must produce and nothing else.

203. This is all we could ask of evolution. It is all we want —the assurance that there is an end,—an ideal, a consummation "To which the whole creation moves." We could not expect evolution to tell us *what* it shall be. We rejoice that evolution says *that* it shall be.

204. There is one point on which there is great danger of misunderstanding; that is on the relation of the individual to the race.

In the history of man our view is restricted to the race as a whole. We think in general terms, such as environment, heredity, tribal custom, racial character, and often get lost in the fog of our own generalities, lose sight of the concrete facts of the matter, and forget that there is no such thing as environment except the environment which environs an individual, no heredity except as some individual inherits something, no tribal custom except as individuals act, absolutely no consciousness but individual consciousness, no life but individual life.

205. From the obvious analogies between the life of the individual and the continuance of certain relations which constitute a state, or nation, we drift into concepts of the life of the state, or the morality of a tribe that are utterly absurd. Can a tribe eat? can a tribe be angry? can a tribe be killed?—obviously only as its component members have such experiences can they be

experienced at all. Social consciousness, tribal self, racial characteristics are figures of speech; they belong to poetry, they have little place in science, none in philosophy and are the source of much confusion to the superficial mind.

206. The effect of environment is very great, and the reaction of the individual on the environment formed by the conduct of other individuals is a most important factor in the evolution of character, and in the direction of conduct; and therefore social progress, tribal conscience, and all such terms are very convenient for purposes of generalization but they cannot express any concrete reality. One may speak of poisoning a whole community, but poison can affect nothing in the world but individual lives. We may speak of the moral sense of a race, or tribe or family, but we can locate such a sense nowhere but in the personal experience of individuals.

207. Evolution of morals can be nothing more or less than the changes wrought in the personal characters of men by the development of higher powers of perception and judgment and taste, through the powers of the soul reacting on the environment of individuals. Such evolution may increase our knowledge of moral principles and give us clearer vision of truth, or lead to higher excellence, but it can no more change the standard of moral judgment, or affect the principles of ethics than it can alter mathematical principles, or modify the law of gravitation.

SELF-REALIZATION

208. The effort to define the ultimate standard by which goodness may be measured has led to the adoption of various formula which may express, at least in a general way, the concept of such a standard. Such forms are necessarily general and vague and give little more than a hint, or suggestion, of their significance. "The greatest good of the greatest number" is the "pet phrase" of the Utilitarian School; "the Categorical

Imperative" the favorite catchword of Intuitional. The most popular phrase of recent moralists is *Self-realization.*

209. It is obviously very little, if anything, more than a form capable of being filled with any content one may put into the word self. In itself it is almost as empty as the jesting assertion, "It will do you good, if it helps you at all." But, while it is quite vague, it is a useful term to indicate the point of view from which to regard our question.

210. It indicates that the standard of goodness is *teleological.* It has reference to some end to be reached—some purpose to be accomplished. It suggests the thought that there is something definite to be made real, which at present may be ideal—something that may be built up according to the plans and specifications formed in the imagination,—some present possibility that may become actual.

211. It also indicates that the standard is *Personal.* It is a *self* that is to be realized. Self is individual, personal, and not a general concept, nor an abstraction. The best possible attainment for myself may differ from the best possible to you. Yet each may be the standard of goodness for us respectively. This does not imply conflict of principles, but only diversity of individual capacity and relations. One star differs from another star in glory, but all are glorious.

212. And it suggests that the standard is *Practical.* It is to be applied to conduct. It is something to be realized *by* self, not merely in self—an ideal to be made actual by the effort of the soul itself. It is not the mere result of evolutionary forces acting on the soul, but self-directed progress, in a definite course, toward a definite end.

213. And finally, it is *Progressive.* It is not a state to be received or adopted or put on as a garment ready made, but a condition to be achieved, cultivated, approached by stages, gradually. The self one may hope to realize should be better than any self that he can now imagine. *It cannot be achieved by*

the addition of features but the constant remodeling and adjusting of the new to the old, purifying, enlarging and harmonizing as our vision grows clearer, and our powers increase.

214. This concept of the standard of moral judgment is perhaps the best that we can form. It is the latest result of ethical philosophy; and, like most new things, it is essentially what Aristotle taught some twenty-three centuries ago.

215. Its statement has, however, been modified and the whole concept greatly influenced by the doctrine of evolution. It is, incidentally, a fine illustration of the unity and harmony of truth. Aristotle's line of approach is totally different from that of the modern evolutionist; yet, when they reach conclusions that are well established, we find they are essentially the same. We think of self-realization now in terms of evolutionary philosophy; putting emphasis on the idea of reaction to environment, the principles of coordination and of continuity, and thus give a new dress to the ancient doctrine, which fits it to associate with modern ideas, and observe good form in its relations to current thought.

216. On the whole, we have pretty well agreed that no form of Hedonism, nor any concept of mere law, can be accepted as an ultimate test of goodness, and that, in the very nature of the case, *no complete* and *definite standard can be framed, or even adopted by man in* his *present stage of development.* Nevertheless, we have approximated a definition, and discovered a good working hypothesis when we agree that the ultimate standard must have the qualities indicated by the phase self-realization. It must be teleological, personal, practical and progressive.

217. The filling out of this form with specific content is the task to which we must address ourselves with patience. Experience and reflection, aided by whatever revelation may be vouchsafed to us, must be our guide; and an increasing power to appreciate the excellence of virtue lead us to more perfect

judgment of morality.

218. The specific qualities which constitute subjective goodness, and the activities which such goodness shall prompt and demand must ever be the objects of our most serious consideration.

These we will consider under the names of virtues and duties; the former signifying qualities of the soul—right affections, the latter denoting the course of conduct corresponding to right affections.

BOOK III

PERSONAL ETHICS

CHAPTER I

VIRTUE

219. Virtue is moral soundness, or health of the soul.

It is a state of mind,—the state of mind in which the moral sense, the judgment and the will act freely and with due force in harmony with the standard of right.

Virtue is essentially the possession of right affections. To love the right things in the right degree, and in due proportion is to be virtuous.

To be virtuous is to be in harmony with the universe of which we are a part; or, in other words, to be in loving subjection to the will of God.

220. This definition of virtue is, on the whole, acceptable to the great moralists of all ages. Aristotle, Isaiah, St. Paul, J. S. Mill and Dr. Martineau would all consent to it in a general way, but they would differ widely in their exposition of its terms.

221. The Greeks, especially Socrates, placed emphasis chiefly on *reason* and regarded virtue as dependent upon knowledge and good judgment, basing their concept of virtue on the thought that man is, above all else, a rational creature in a rational universe, and therefore perfect knowledge would lead to right appreciation of moral values, and right desires would spring up as the fruit of right views. Thus they all tend to identify virtue with wisdom. The Hebrews, on the other hand, were much more deeply impressed with the emotional side of the soul, and perceived more clearly the innate tendency of man to follow the impulses of his passions, appetites and desires. Hence they put more emphasis on *obedience* as the chief feature of virtue.

222. The Christian moralists have, of course, followed the Hebrew prophets and put the emphasis on obedience; but they substituted the idea of *faith* as a more profound expression than obedience. Faith is the acceptance of authority in place of reason. Faith does not imply the denial of reason, but accepts in place of immediate judgment the inference that certain things are so because one, who knows better than we can know, says they are so. All inference is defined as believing something to be true, because of its relation to something else which we believe to be true. I believe my physician knows how to treat my disease better than I know; therefore I accept his judgment, and obey his orders. This is faith.

223. The Christian moralists associate the concept of virtue very closely with faith because they believe that the problems of life are too vast and too complex for human reason to solve, and they also believe that God has at sundry times and in divers manners revealed truth that reason could not discover, nor even comprehend. Their conclusion is expressed in the words of Job, "Behold! the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

224. The influence of Greek philosophy has been constantly exerted on Christianity, and has been effective in broadening the views and humanizing the doctrines of the church by developing the principles taught by the prophets and apostles, and defining their applications to the varied conditions of men and society.

225. Recent ethical philosophy has been profoundly influenced by the doctrine of evolution, and has adopted many new forms of expression, of which the most popular at present is the term *self-realization,* which is used to express the modern concept of virtue. This term is perhaps the most significant index of current ethical philosophy. It expresses most fitly the vagueness of evolutionary ethics; and, at the same time, indicates the immensely important teaching of evolution, that there is a defi-

nite plan in the universe, a program being executed, a continuity of human experience moving on to some definite and worthy end, realizing itself, and finding its excellence in that realization.

226. It is evident that the difficulty with this concept of virtue is not with its form, but with its content.

"To realize one's best self," "to live according to nature," "to fear the Lord and depart from evil," may all be accepted as good forms of sound words; but they do not in themselves give any very definite direction to conduct, nor specify the qualities that characterize the virtuous life.

227. The actual condition of mind that is properly called virtuous has been conceived in many and widely different ways. These conceptions of virtue can be compared and judged only by the careful study of the various qualities which form the actual content of the virtuous life as conceived by different moralists, or schools of ethics.

We must also be on our guard against the ambiguity of terms, for the same word may denote widely different ideas as it is used in different ages, in different connections or by different writers.

228. It is impossible to notice all varied views as to what constitutes a virtuous life, but we may profitably consider the chief divisions of opinion, and especially the different standards of judgment used in the efforts to form our ideal of virtue.

229. First: we may observe that the difference between the varied ideals is due chiefly to the degree of emphasis placed on one or other of the qualities which all men agree should be possessed by the virtuous man. For example, courage is one of the qualities demanded by practically all ideals of virtue. But with the Greeks and Romans it occupied the chief place of honor; it was preeminently *the virtue*. In the teaching of Jesus it occupied a very subordinate place, and the place of honor is assigned to meekness.

Justice is universally recognized as a fundamental virtue, but, while the natural man makes justice the ground of his de-

mands, the Christian willingly waives such demands in the interest of peace or benevolence, but admits the full claim of justice against himself.

Temperance, also a cardinal virtue of the Greeks and no less highly esteemed by the Christian, has greatly changed its significance. The Greek frankly loved the pleasures of life and sought by moderation to get the utmost satisfaction from the senses.

The Christian has always looked with suspicion on all sensuous pleasure, and feared their seductive power to draw the soul away from higher excellence and more enduring joys.

This difference of emphasis, this various appraisement of the virtues gives such variety of form to the ideals of virtue that they seem totally unlike, though they all find definition in the general form of self-realization.

230. Second: the different concepts of virtue are differentiated by their teleological considerations. The dictum, that anything good must be good for something, is quite true if properly guarded, and our judgment of good character, or virtue, must not neglect the consideration of the ends and uses, the consequences and results of states of mind.

We have refused to measure goodness by happiness, or even by utility in the narrow sense of producing results which seem beneficial to the individual or to mankind. But the relation between virtue and happiness, between ideal character and usefulness is an extremely important consideration and must have great weight in our judgments of the contents of the virtuous life.

231. These two elements,—emphasis and teleological aim,—are the most important differentiae which give such great variety to the concepts of virtue formed by different thinkers.

They are not the only ones, but are perhaps sufficient to show the necessity of some definite standard for the measurement of virtues—qualities of excellence, before we can fill out our for-

mal definition of virtue with a content that will really express an actual or conceivable state of the soul, and thus furnish a model to which we may strive to conform our lives.

232. And this brings us to the consideration of Christian ethics as the most widely accepted, and completely elaborated system the world has ever known.

In the presentation of Christian ethics we shall assume nothing as to its origin, or its claim to the sanction of divine authority, but present it solely on its merits as a definition of virtue, not in the abstract terms of formal definition but in the specific terms of a manual of conduct based on a clear conviction of man's relation to God and to his fellow man.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

232. The conclusions we are able to reach from the study of philosophy of conduct seem, at first sight, disappointing.

We are able to define virtue as "self-realization," but this definition gives us form without content. It means nothing till we define the "self" which is to be realized; and this we have not yet been able to do.

233. The conception of a perfect self—an ideal character—must somehow precede the realization of that concept. But the conception of an ideal character is possible only to one who has already realized such a character. The ability to appreciate the excellence and the beauty of the qualities which constitute character is the very highest function of the soul. The nice discrimination of judgment required to discern the right degree and proportion of the various virtues and the proper harmony and concord of them all demands such clearness of vision, breadth of view, purity of affections and refinement of taste as transcends all human attainment, and may be regarded as ideally perfect character.

Our concept of ideal character changes as we change, improves as we improve, and deteriorates as we decline in wisdom or virtue.

234. But we are not shut up to the lame and impotent conclusion that, because we can form no perfect ideal, we can have no useful concepts of virtue. "Self realization" is a rather empty phrase, but it serves as the form for a definition of virtue which may be filled with contents gathered from various sources.

Partial knowledge may be extremely useful knowledge. We may see a great deal that is important, even though we see

in a glass darkly, and we may know much, even though we know only in part.

If we seek a certain goal, but do not know where it is, it is something to learn the direction we must take. We may be unable to form an adequate ideal of the character we should realize, but it is something to know that it is in the direction of sincerity, of devotion to justice and the love of mercy.

We find that living up to that which we perceive to be right, following the impulses that we have called the instincts of righteousness, and accepting as our rule of conduct the best dictates of our judgment we thereby clarify our vision, strengthen our conviction and ennoble our ideals.

235. In this respect ethics is not peculiar, but is just like all the sciences which we call normative, which have for their chief object the discovery of the value or worth of things. They do not assume any existing models as perfect expressions of principles of true science, but strive rather to approach more and more nearly to perfection, and more and more perfectly to adapt their powers and resources to their changing needs. Such sciences as architecture, medicine or jurisprudence are, like ethics, engaged in the discovery and application of eternal principles to changing conditions. The field of art affords a still closer analogy with ethics. The perfect picture or the perfect poem has never been produced, and probably never will be, for each advance of art widens the horizon, and refines the taste, so that the ideal,—the ultimate aim, of the artist or poet seems farther away than it was before. It is just at this point that the office of the artist, the poet and the moralist may best be understood. It is they who, with deeper insight, clearer visions and finer taste than common men, perceive and reveal more perfect beauty, sweeter hopes and nobler ideals. They reveal these ideals in words, or body them forth in marble or on canvas, and mankind, by slow degrees, appreciates them, and toils painfully toward their realization. Then another seer, standing on

the vantage ground thus gained, sees a little further, frames a nobler ideal, and points the way to higher attainment. So the world makes progress.

235½. Moralists, like Socrates, philosophers, like Plato, prophets, like Isaiah, each in their own field and from their peculiar point of view, have seen portions of truth with unwonted clearness, and have framed ideals of such marvelous beauty, such dignity and excellence, that they have commanded the admiration of the world.

Then Jesus of Nazareth gave us an ideal, revealing to us, by his sweetly reasonable words and by his stainless life, the glorious excellence of a perfect humanity.

236. We are not here concerned with the questions of his nature,—whether he was divine, or in what his person differed from the personality of other men; we are concerned only with the fact that he gave us by far the most dignified and beautiful life that has even been lived in the world. In the words of Mr. Lecky, "It remained for Jesus of Nazareth to show to the world an ideal character, the influence of whose life and teaching has done more to elevate humanity and sweeten life than all the disquisitions of philosophers and the exhortations of moralists since the world began."

237. It is the teaching of Jesus,—the ideal life which he commended to us by his gracious words and beautiful example, that we call Christian morals. It supplies the content for the formal phrase, self-realization. It defines the self that is to be realized. It gives the actual qualities which characterize the perfect manhood that we seek. It gives concrete form to the general teaching of philosophy.

There is no rivalry or opposition between philosophic ethics and Christian ethics. There cannot be any conflict between different revelations of truth; and philosophy and Christianity are but different forms of revelation, neither of them creates, but both discover and make known that which is and has been from

the beginning. The mystery of the atonement and the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit are facts that belong to another realm. They are gracious means to the *restoration* of a fallen race. They are *remedies* for a diseased condition. They belong to the department of moral pathology; but the ethics of Jesus Christ rest on the same foundation that philosophy finds for its teaching, which is the constitution of the human soul. The principles of all morality, like the principles of physics or chemistry or psychology, date from creation. They are what they are because man is what he is; and, if we inquire further why man is what he is, we can only say God made him so; and perhaps may add God made him what he is because God is what he is; which is to say that the ultimate ground of all morality is the *nature of God,* for we can only suppose that God's will is the consistent expression of his character or being.

238. And we conclude that self-realization is the realization of that ideal which God formed for man in the beginning. Man's apprehension of that ideal is a long and tedious process. Through unnumbered centuries he has struggled with the forces of his nature and environment, reaching first the instinct of morality in the form of a protesting emotion against evil, so vividly represented in the story of the Garden of Eden; where Eve, before she reached the stage of moral perception,—knowledge of good and evil,—was conscious of this instinctive protest, and answered the tempter with the significant assertion, "*God has said* thou shalt not."

All through the dolorous ages, with their misery and sin, defeats and victories, man has come with painful steps to clearer light and sweeter hopes, never satisfied with present attainment, never content to rest in what he feels to be an incomplete development, but, reaching forth to that which is before, he presses on to that vague goal of realizing his highest self.

The great contribution of Jesus Christ to the philosophy of life was the definition of that self. He brought life and immor-

tality to light, and made the dim instinctive yearning of the soul a definite aim and a blessed hope.

239. It must be remembered that the essential purpose of the mission of Jesus, as it has been interpreted by his followers was *redemptive*, not merely instructive. He came to *seek and to save* the lost, to *provide,*—not merely to point out, a way by which the souls of men may be restored from hopeless disorder and disease to spiritual health. The very essence of Christianity is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." This matter belongs to Theology, and is too far from our present purpose to be considered here.

We are here concerned only with his ethical instruction, including his redemptive work only so far as that may throw light on his conception of virtue and duty.

It is not surprising therefore that many of those who deny his divine nature, and refuse to accept the church's doctrine of his atonement, his resurrection, or his present work by the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless profoundly impressed by the clarity and truth of his ethical teaching. Indeed some of the very best appreciations of his moral excellence, and the eternal verity of his ethics have been written by Jews and Unitarians who utterly deny his divinity, or the supernatural quality of his work.

240. It is a matter of frequent remark, and the occasion of some surprise, that the conception of the virtues and duties taught by Jesus differs so little from that of Confucius, or Socrates, or any of the great moralists whom we call, rather disrespectfully, heathen But it is really not at all strange that this should be so, but on the contrary just what we should expect when we consider that the principles of ethics are eternal, and have their permanent basis in an order that is revealed by our instincts and in harmony with our reason. Indeed the teaching of the apostles of Jesus is explicit on this point. "They that have not the law—revelation—are a law unto themselves, their conscionce bearing them witness and their thoughts also

accusing or excusing them."

The moral precepts of Jesus may nearly all be matched by the teachings of Socrates or Confucius or the Stoics, exhorting us to the cultivation of the same virtues and the performance of the same duties.

241. Nevertheless, there are certain features of the ethics of Jesus that put it in a different class entirely from that of the ethics of any other teacher.

First; his teaching is much more comprehensive and complete than that of any other teacher. While most of his precepts of duty may be paralleled by a quotation from one or another of the great moralists, there is nowhere a *system* of morality that can for a moment be compared with his.

Second; the teaching of Jesus is pure, it does not have to be sifted and expurgated, as the teaching of all others must be. It finds response in our instincts and judgment, and the experience of nineteen centuries has confirmed its truth and wisdom.

Third; but by far the most important distinction of Christian ethics is the basis on which it rests. The conception of man's relation to God and to his fellow men which Jesus taught as the basis of his system is very different from that of Confucius or the Greeks. So far as we know, Confucius had no definite theolgy; his ethics is based entirely on the moral instincts and judgment, and does not seem to have embraced any theory or doctrine as to the origin or authority of these indications of duty. The Greeks began their teaching of morals while they still believed in a lot of gods to whom tradition ascribed the grossest immoralities; cruelty and falsehood and lust were freely practised by them, yet they were the rulers of heaven and earth. No moral order could be conceived of under such conditions; and, in fact, it was the more perfect insight in the principles of ethics that led the philosophers first to doubt and then deny the polytheism of the ancients, and to substitute in its place a system of poetic concepts in which the names of the gods came to signify

certain personified forces of nature, or principles of moral law. Only when they had advanced to such a stage that they were able to construct any consistent *system* of ethics. And, in fact, they never did get beyond the stage of vague and partial speculation on the subject.

242. Jesus, was himself, the culmination of a remarkable line of ethical teachers, the Hebrew prophets, who had for some twenty centuries constantly and consistently preached the unity and omnipotence and holiness of God.

He came therefore to a people whose conception of the order of the world was clear and confident. His teaching of ethics was based on the assumption that all things are under the absolute dominion of a divine creator, who rules the world with justice and with love, "whose thoughts are higher than our thoughts and his ways higher than our ways even as the heavens are higher than the earth," and yet so *immanent* in his creation that "in him we live and move and have our being."

This conception of the relation of all things to the creator is the basis and the norm of all his teaching of ethics. To him the order of the universe is not a mechanical arrangement dependent on impersonal law, but a free and understanding providence; uniform, because God is immutable; benevolent, because God is kind, and harmonious, because God is supreme.

243. This conception of the origin and nature of the world order is the basis for the fundamental law of virtue. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind." That is, not only the cordial acceptance of the order of things thus established, but also the willing subjection of our affections to the divine ruler, who is to all his creatures as a father to his children. All duty is determined by this relation. All men are brethren, for one is our father, even God. All our talents and opportunities are the assignments of a wise and loving father for the discipline and development of his children.

It is this conception of our relation to God that distinguishes Christian ethics from all other ethical teaching.

As the astronomy of the ancients found much that was true concerning the stars and their courses, much that stands unchanged down to the present day, yet they could have *no consistent system* of astronomy so long as they regarded the earth as the center of the universe, because it is not the center. So there is no possibility of a right conception of virtue and duty till we find the center of the moral order.

Christianity has no new scheme of morals to be imposed upon the world, as a new constitution may be devised for a state; but it has a *revelation*, an *illumination* of the eternal verities on which the world is framed.

244. The ethical teaching of Jesus is so far in advance of all other teaching that there is really no comparison between them. The enthusiastic words of Dr. A. B. Bruce are not too strong to express its *scientific* value. "It satisfied alike the heart, conscience, and reason. It satisfied the heart by offering to faith a God whose nature is paternal, and whose providential action has for its supreme characteristic benignancy. It satisfied the conscience by ignoring no dark facts in the world's history; by looking moral evil straight in the face; and by recognizing frankly the punitive action of the moral order.

It satisfied reason by avoiding abstract antithesis between providential action and natural law, by viewing that action as immanent and constant rather than transcendent and occasional —pervading the course of nature and working through it, rather than interrupting it by supernatural incursions. Its rationality is further revealed by its unreserved acceptance of growth, progress, as the law of the spiritual, not less than of the natural world.

In this respect the modern evolutionary philosophy, far from superceding the teaching of Christ, only tends to illustrate its wisdom, and helps us to a better understanding of its meaning."

CHAPTER III

MORAL PATHOLOGY

245. We have defined virtue as the possession of right affections. To love the right things in the right degree and right proportion is to be virtuous. It is conceivable that man might have been so constituted that such virtue would have been his natural state. If he had been so constituted he would have been innocent, for he would have no motive to do wrong.

246. But it may be doubted whether he could be positively good without the liability to choose the evil instead of the good. It is certain that we do not pay the tribute of admiration to the man who does right because he has no desire to do the wrong, that we pay to the man who does right in spite of intense passions urging him to do the wrong. The discipline of self-denial, of struggle and contest with opposing forces is the chief means of achieving moral excellence. "What sort of man," asks Epictetus—"would Hercules have been had there not been unrighteous savage men to fight with, living hydras, or wild boars to drive out of the world?"

This may be the explanation of the fact that in the constitution of the world we find virtue to be not our natural endowment, but a prize to be won, a state to be acquired by slow degrees and painful effort.

247. At all events such is the fact. Virtue is not a gift but an achievement, and the cultivation of virtue is the great concern of every man on earth.

248. "Goodness is virtue in the making," says D'Arcy. "Goodness is the effort to be better, continually exerted in the struggle of life. It involves the looking up to a good that is overhead and a constant striving to attain it." Whether we accept

this distinction between virtue and goodness or not, there is a difference, and a most important difference, between the possession of right affections and the striving after right conduct in the midst of conflicting and bewildering desires.

249. The psychology of self-denial is perplexing. On the one hand we must admit the force of motives. We cannot deny that we choose one course of conduct rather than another *because* of something. Some motive moves our will or it would never move—no act would be performed, no choice made. How, then, are these motives made effective? How are the values of incentives measured? Can the soul, somehow, by an effort of its own, choose to admit the motive force of one desire and shut out another? These are questions old as philosophy, never clearly answered but never giving any practical difficulty or embarrassing our actions. In the presence of conflicting desires we do choose, and feel that we could have chosen otherwise. We choose to gratify a desire which we know is neither wise nor good, and suffer remorse because we doubt not that we could and should have chosen otherwise.

Whatever psychology may make of the problem of the freedom of the will, ethics must accept the fact that man can choose his course of action, and that he can and should so choose that each choice shall make the next choice easier and more perfectly conformed to virtue.

250. If we began life morally sound and healthy, ethical culture would be comparatively simple. It would consist in the recognition and appreciation of the moral qualities of conduct, and the spontaneous choice of such courses as we judged to be the most conformable to the standard of right.

But, unhappily, we do not begin life with an unbiased mind, but with a soul corrupted by hereditary taints of evil. The mistakes and faults and evil choices of innumerable ancestors formed habits, defects and disordered states which have become constitutional in our race. As physical defects and taints of

blood handicap and pervert our bodily life, so the moral depravity of the race is the sad inheritance of every child born into the world. The doctrine of *imputation* may be debated, and "original sin" may be defined in various ways, but the fact of moral imperfection is obvious and undeniable. Whether we attribute it to the "guilt of Adam's first sin" or to some other cause is of no consequence here, the existing condition must be recognized and reckoned with if we are to deal intelligently with the question of moral culture.

251. Of course, it is possible to exaggerate and over-state the case. The phrase "total depravity" is often misunderstood as though it meant that man is as bad as possible. It never meant that in the mouth of intelligent speakers, but rather that the whole race was morally unsound and this unsoundness affected every faculty and function of the soul. And this indictment is certainly proved by history and observation and experience.

252. Now since this is so, ethical culture is first of all a matter of pathology,—a work of healing a disordered condition of the soul. The regimen suitable for the soul in health, may be unwise and useless for the soul diseased, and all our prescriptions must be determined by the conditions actually found.

253. It is at this point that the Christian doctrine of Redemption applies to the moral restoration of the soul.

That doctrine is essentially just this, that man is of himself unable to change his affections, and without divine help he cannot recover from the state of disorder and corruption into which the whole race has fallen; not because he cannot *do* the right, but because he cannot *choose* it, cannot love the right things. The affections being the springs of action,—the motive powers of the soul, when they are perverted and misdirected, there is no remedy; because the very source of right direction is destroyed.

But God, in his love and mercy, sent his son to take our nature, and by his death atone for our sins; and by the influence

of his Spirit He enlightens our minds, turns our affections to their proper objects and renews our will, so that we can love righteousness and grow more and more into moral health,—which is holiness. Such is the teaching of the Christian Church. Its bearing on ethics is apparent; it gives a point of view that is radically different from any that philosophy alone can furnish; and it is based not on philosophy or theology, but on facts. It makes its appeal to history, and stakes its faith on the evidence of things done in the sight and hearing of men competent to testify to what they saw and heard, and on the concurrent testimony of innumerable multitudes who have experienced the transforming power of His Spirit in their lives.

254. But the doctrine of redemption is logically subordinate to the work of cultivating virtue. Redemption and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit are the means by which the ends of moral culture are accomplished.

After all, each man must work out his own salvation,—must so use and develop his own moral powers that he shall come to love the right things; and rightly loving, he will rightly live. However he may receive the power, and however the opportunity of return to holiness may come, he must choose his own path and guide his own feet.

255. As in the restoration of bodily health, we may not wait till full strength is recovered before we begin to develop what we have, but rather use each increment of strength to the acquisition of more by proper exercise. Indeed the most fundamental law of growth is exercise; and every talent may be increased by proper use, or extirpated by neglect. So in moral culture, our conduct rightly guided is the most effective means of developing right affections. As in walking, we advance by putting one foot forward and then resting on that one while the other is advanced; so by the practice of virtue we increase our devotion to virtue, and our increased devotion enables us to improve our practice.

256. It is not possible for us to change our affections by mere effort of the will. We cannot by simple resolution change our love of evil to the love of good. No matter how fully persuaded we may be that we should love our neighbor and find joy in promoting his welfare, we do not love him, and we do not rejoice in his prosperity when it clashes with our own. Yet by patient exercise of kindly sympathy we come to find real joy in his prosperity even at the cost of our own.

257. It is not uncommon to have the soul so powerfully influenced by some new view of truth, or some extraordinary stimulation of the emotions that the affections are suddenly revolutionized, and the soul "converted." This effect is mostly due to the awaking of our religious affections and is, no doubt, due in part to the direct influence of the divine spirit. But the more common experience is the gradual correction, or reform of the affections by enlightening our understanding, and cultivating our moral sensibility and taste. In this more gradual process the change is no less radical, and is likely to be more permanent; and the influence of God's spirit no less real, though it seems to be exercised by the more ordinary means and channels. And however dependent we may be upon the divine influence to initiate a radical revolution of our affections, and to begin a new process of development of moral power and health, the continuation of this process, the cultivation of right affections, is a work accomplished by the use of means suitable to the end to be accomplished.

CHAPTER IV

REMORSE

258. Remorse has been defined as "the power conscience has to make itself a nuisance."

That is a rather flippant definition of so serious a matter,—for remorse is the most serious matter in the world—but it serves to put the emphasis on the important feature. Remorse is the mental distress that follows as the consequence of disobedience to our sense of duty, or what we commonly call the dictates of conscience.

We have already noticed it as one of the functions of the soul which we group under the term conscience; but it is so important as to call for somewhat fuller consideration.

259. There is nothing in ethical phenomena—nothing indeed in human experience, that is more remarkable or more important than remorse. It is literally the "after-bite"—*re mordeo*—of conscience. It is the punishment, executed by the mind itself, for every offense against its own commands.

There is something peculiarly terrible in the fact that the mind is, by its very nature, its own judge and executioner. Remorse is the true Nemesis, pursuing every rational offender with unrelenting vengeance so long as memory endures.

260. The psychology of remorse is simple enough, though very remarkable. It is one of the constitutional functions of the mind to experience painful emotions whenever memory presents to consciousness the facts of violated moral law.

261. It is *entirely personal,* and differs radically from the feeling of indignation that we experience in view of another's wrongdoing; though it implies some of the same feeling of contempt for the wrongdoer.

262. It is grounded entirely on the *offence of the will*—the badness of the purpose. The consequences of the act are not considered, except so far as they indicate the purpose of the mind, or serve to remind us of the responsibility we bear for our conduct. It is not placated by the fact that our evil purpose failed of its accomplishment. If I attempt to injure my neighbor by slander, I am not saved from remorse by the fact that I was not believed, and therefore no actual damage was done. Remorse illustrates the principle that he that *hateth* his brother is a *murderer*.

263. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of remorse is its *implacable* character. No matter how intense or prolonged my suffering may be it does not seem to atone for my guilt; the lash of the offended conscience is still laid on with undiminished force, so long as memory presents the offense to consciousness. The only relief seems to come through the fading of memory, and this relief is slight and uncertain, for the distressing emotion deepens the impression, and aids the memory.

The only expiation that is of any use is restitution, and this secures nothing more than a certain mitigation of the distress. If I have stolen, I may restore four fold and thus ease my conscience, but I do not wholly relieve it. I still have the humiliating sense of being a thief. Moreover in the great majority of cases no restitution is possible: that which is done is done. It has started a series of events which no power can stop, which can rarely be counteracted or controlled.

264. Another remarkable feature of remorse is the fact that the more sensitive our conscience is the more keenly we suffer. This however seems right and proper when we consider that the more senstive our conscience the greater is our offense in disobeying it. We do not judge the ignorant and brutish man by the same standard as we apply to the intelligent and cultivated. Remorse seems to recognize this principle. "He that knew his master's will and did it not is beaten with many stripes, and he

that knew it not and did it not is beaten with few stripes."

265. It should be noticed also that the dull discomfort produced by the sluggish conscience may be more dreadful than the keen anguish of the sensitive soul; for, while its distress may not be so poignant, it may deprave the soul more deeply by its sullen fire.

266. The teleological purpose of remorse seems evident. It is the strongest possible influence to promote right conduct. It is the supreme sanction of morality. It destroys happiness, causes shame and quenches hope. It is the very fire of hell. It is the sharp admonition to repentance and reform. As physical pain warns of danger and impels to means of safety or relief, so remorse is the rod of correction to turn us back from wickedness.

267. No other phase of moral law seems to testify so clearly to the presence of an intelligent purpose in the constitution of the soul; for on no other supposition are we able to account for these phenomena save on the assumption of a beneficent purpose in the mind of the creator.

268. Our attempts to account for man's present state on the principles of evolution have here their greatest difficulty, and the strongest grounds for the conviction that, not only behind all the laws of evolution, but in and through all nature there is an *immanent intelligence* constantly at work directing all activity to definite and worthy ends.

269. The proper fruit of remorse is repentance; but repentance does not follow remorse as an immediate effect. Repentance is the act of the soul admonished by remorse, disciplined by suffering and thus led to reconsider its course. Repentance involves a change of attitude toward our own conduct, and impels to reformation.

One may suffer intensely from the memory of evil done, and yet harden his heart to go on in evil ways. He may see the folly of his course and yet have no purpose to change it; this is remorse. But when this distress leads to a sense of shame and

a desire to undo the evil,—a purpose to cease to do evil and learn to do well; this is repentance. It is the first step toward virtue. It will manifest itself in "works meet for repentance," and lead to newness of life.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTENTS OF VIRTUE

270. Language is at best a very imperfect means of expression. With all its enormous host of words, and all its elaborate system of grammar to express the various relations of number and degree and time, etc., we still find it necessary to use the same word in several different senses, and are never quite sure that the term used will mean to the hearer just what we intend to express.

We have already been embarrassed by the ambiguity of the words conscience, motive, purpose, intention, and others.

Now we have no good terms to denote the qualities of soul which taken all together are called virtue.

The best we can do is to denote these qualities as virtues; bearing in mind that virtues is not the plural of virtue, but the specific qualities of the soul which is virtuous. Virtue has been defined as that *state of the soul* in which the moral sense, the judgment and the will act freely and with due force in harmony with the standard of right.

271. We must now consider what are the *features* of such a state,—and inquire what are the specific virtues which constitute such a condition.

The forming of such a concept is the work of the imagination directed by the moral sense and judgment. The result is called an *ideal.*

272. Such ideals must conform to the eternal principles or laws of the universe; that is to say, that they must be true, reasonable and capable of being realized. No mason can lay two bricks in the same place at the same time, nor build a wall upon the empty air, and the architect who calls for such performance

would be called a fool. No less foolish is the man who frames ideals that ignore or contradict the laws of our moral nature. "Grapes do not grow on thorns nor figs on thistles."

273. Moreover, ideals must conform to the individual power and capacity of him who seeks to realize them; therefore no ideal is good in general: it is good only for the individual for whom it is proposed.

Nevertheless, there are some features—some virtues—which must be present in every right ideal, and the proper appreciation of these features is the first step in the planning of true ideals. In every work of art there are certain qualities that must be present, such as harmony, proportion and grace. So in virtue there must be in every case certain specific virtues, and the excellence of our ideals will depend chiefly on the due proportions and relations of these several virtues to meet the demands of our particular place and circumstances.

274. The consideration of these virtues and the appreciation of their value and relations has occupied the attention of philosophers and moralists in all ages. The different estimates that have been placed on different virtues are due, in part, to the different points of view from which they are regarded, but, in larger degree, to the different meanings attached to the various terms used to denote them. In judging the views of any writer on the subject of virtues, we should be very careful to ascertain just what he means by the words he uses.

275. In all ages there are a few virtues which are recognized as being of such special importance, so fundamental to all virtue, that they are regarded as a class by themselves.

The ancient Greeks generally agree in putting wisdom, courage, temperance and justice as the chief features of virtue. These are sometimes called cardinal virtues—*cardo,* a hinge,—as those on which all other virtues hinge or depend.

276. In order to judge of this classification, we must, first, make sure of the meaning intended by each term. This may

be fairly secured by study of synonyms.

By Justice they meant righteousness,—fairness in all relations. It included equity, and even benevolence, since good-will is due to every man from every other.

Courage included fortitude, and perhaps patience. Temperance meant self-control, moderation of feeling as well as restraint of action. Wisdom signified prudence, practical adjustment of conduct to circumstances, and the just appreciation of conflicting desires.

It is evidently possible to extend this list as Plato gives it so as to embrace in a general way all, or nearly all, of the qualities of virtue,—they may be attached to these great hinges and shown to depend on them.

It is possible to go even further, and include them all under one head, such as wisdom or temperance. This only demonstrates the truth that the whole of *virtue is a unit*, and each separate quality is a manifestation of the same essential state of the soul.

277. The difference between the various attempts to classify the virtues will be found to consist, not so much in the list of virtues included as in their *relative* importance. It is not so much a problem of analysis as of appreciation. All men would include justice as an essential feature of virtue, but would not all agree as to the relative claims of rights and mercy.

Shylock's claim was strictly within his rights of contract—clearly "nominated in the bond," but mercy also pleads her claim as part of justice,—a part of what was due in the circumstances.

278. It is in this distribution of emphasis, this appreciation of the force and value of the different virtues that modern ethics differs most from the ancient. We recognize the general correctness of the Greek classification, but the Hebrew, and especially the Christian concept of virtue puts some virtues in the foreground which the Greeks regarded lightly, and modifies the

conception of others almost beyond recognition. This difference is most marked in those virtues which we call passive, or forbearing.

279. It would be difficult to find a place in the Greek scheme of virtue for such a precept as that of Jesus when he bids us turn the other cheek to the smiter, or go the second mile to accommodate the man who has already unjustly compelled us to go one. And yet there is no inconsistency in this teaching; wisdom—prudence—dictates the conduct that *in the long run* makes for the best adjustment of self to environment; and the declaration that the meek shall inherit the earth is fulfilled every day, to the wonder of the world.

280. In order to have a fair evaluation of the contents of virtue, it is necessary to consider carefully the real character of the various virtues, to get behind mere names, and form clear concepts of them and their relations to one another.

281. We shall probably get these in their truest perspective by considering, first; that which the Greeks called temperance, but which we are rather accustomed to call *self-control.* This is to be conceived of as the ability to direct our conduct according to reason or good judgment. All conduct springs from desire; everything that we do as rational beings is for the satisfaction of some desire. Because of the impulse exerted by desire, we form purposes, by selecting that desire which we will gratify; and these purposes become the end or object to which our efforts are exerted.

282. All desires that are natural are innocent. They are without moral quality of any kind. Hunger, or curiosity, or emulation, spring from the very constitution of the body or the mind, and, not being due to our will, cannot be regarded as conduct, or viewed as subjects of moral judgment. But our present state of mind is very largely the product of our past conduct; every act of the will has its reflex influence on our character so that the *choice* of the objects of desire is largely determined by the

affections we have developed for ourselves, and the moral quality of my conduct will depend on my love for the right things.

If I steal my neighbor's chickens to satisfy my hunger, my offense lies, not in my desire for food, but in my preference of my own bodily comfort to my moral integrity and the rights of my neighbor.

283. Every rational act is the result of a choice among desires. It involves a preference of one course of conduct rather than another, and the virtue of self-control consists in the ability and willingness to act according to the dictates of reason, rather than from the impulse of present desire. The choice between right and wrong is apt to involve a struggle between the various desires presented to consciousness by the different wants of the body and soul, and the ability to resist the pressure of passion and appetite and all undue demands of our instincts, and to bring all their claims impartially before the bar of reason, and to decide what shall be done is certainly the most fundamental of all the qualities that go to make up the content of the concept of virtue.

284. The conflict which occurs in almost every case of volition between the clashing desires of the mind, and the importance of that self-control which can wisely judge and strongly execute its decisions can hardly be overestimated. No other virtue can be substituted for it. Keenness of moral perception, strong instincts of righteousness, and clear moral judgment—all that we call conscience, makes the work of self-control somewhat more easy, but they cannot take its place. Men with good conscience, but with what we call *weak will,* are only too common; and are objects of our pity, because they suffer such remorse yet seem unable to reform.

285. But the difficulty of attaining to this virtue is not confined to any class or group of men. It is the universal conflict waged in every soul, and that incessantly. Paul confessed it in the words, "When I would do good evil is present with me so that

the good I would do I do not and the evil that I would not that I do." And every man suffers from remorse, because at times he "knew the right and approved it, and yet followed the wrong."

It is here that we see the beneficent office of remorse; in that it urges us by its terrible lash to the exercise of self-control.

JUSTICE, MERCY AND REVERENCE

286. We have discussed the virtue of self-control apart from the other virtues, because it seems to be of a somewhat different order from the rest, and to stand more closely related to the very essence of virtue.

287. There are three other virtues that may well be called cardinal, for on them depend most if not all the others. We have chosen the terms Justice, Mercy and Reverence as expressing them in their most general aspects.

288. There is, in the book of the Prophet Micah, a little poetic drama, in which he represents a controversy between God and man on the subject of man's duty. The drama represents the controversy as argued out before the mountains which sit as judges in the matter.

The case is briefly stated, and the mountains deliver their decision in the words, "He hath showed thee O Man what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"

This is one of the magnificent things in ancient literature. It is artistic in the highest degree. The majestic mountains, in their spotless ermine of eternal snow, most fitly represent the fixed and everlasting principles of moral law. Their judgment is delivered, not as the arbitrary will of the sovereign, not as a demand he chose to make, but as the laws incorporated in the very constitution of the world. In other words this is the prophet's conception of philosophic ethics, the judgment he found

expressed by "the mountains and the strong foundations of the earth." It consists of two Philosophic propositions; first, man is able to know his duty.—"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." Second, all duty is based in these three virtues, justice, mercy and reverence.

289. This testimony of a Hebrew prophet is not only interesting and impressive in itself, but is especially interesting in comparison with the teaching of Plato and the other Greeks, as showing how the great thinkers of different civilizations, and widely separated ages, arrived at much the same conclusions with regard to matters which are not only profound and complicated, but concerning which we are often told, even to this day, that they are grounded on nothing more stable than the dictates of convenience, or the manners and customs which men have chosen to adopt.

290. The exorbitant demagoguery that would have all things determined by popular votes, and the narrow conservatism that would apply the specific rules of an obsolete social condition to present times, are both rebuked by history, which gives us such clear definitions of principles that change not, but find their application in the ever changing circumstances of mankind.

291. It may not be possible for us to reach such a state of wisdom and right affections that our tastes and judgment shall be so perfectly attuned to our environment, that we shall choose the right without an effort, and judge all moral problems with infallible accuracy; but we may at least enlighten our understanding, clarify our vision, and widen our horizon, so that our appreciation of moral excellence shall be finer and more just. By the aid of experience and reflection, by the instruction of prophets and poets and philosophers, we may gain deeper insight into the principles which underlie all ethical phenomena.

By careful study of the elements of virtue,—the specific virtues, we shall advance in wisdom, and increase our capacity for the enjoyment of moral beauty. We shall also find abundant com-

pensation for such study in the interest aroused, and the stimulus given to the mind in the pursuit of virtue.

292. *Justice*, as a virtue, may be defined as the proper attitude of mind toward the rights of ourselves and others.

293. Rights is a term of great significance, since it denotes the very foundation on which all the claims of justice rest, and by which those claims must be defined and measured. Rights may be conceived of as the *properties, privileges* and *liberties* assigned to each being in the constitution of the universe. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are examples of what we call personal rights. They are part of the domain which belongs to each person in the established order of the world—part of the heritage that falls to us in the scheme of things which we call nature. The virtue of justice is the proper respect for this order or scheme of things, and has relation to our own rights as well as the rights of others.

294. This attitude of mind will manifest itself in a variety of ways. Proper respect for our neighbor's rights will influence our attitude of mind toward him; first, negatively, in forestalling all covetous desire to encroach upon his rights for our own advantage, and all emotion of jealousy because his inheritance seems more abundant than ours; this is the basis of honesty. Second, positively, in affording us satisfaction and joy in his welfare, and in prompting us to active effort for the maintenance of his rights. This is the virtue of benevolence.

295. The active *duties corresponding* to this virtue will be considered in their proper place, but as a virtue justice is most perfectly defined in the precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

296. *Mercy* is the attitude of forbearance toward an offender. It is the voluntary surrender of some portion of one's rights out of compassion for another.

It finds its occasion in the pathological condition of man's moral nature. If all men were just, there would be no occa-

sion for mercy. If each soul was independent of all others, so that each suffered only the immediate effects of his own action, the function of mercy would be much less extensive than it is. The whole race is so bound up together, the sins and mistakes of the fathers so largely visited upon the children, and the mistakes of today so embarrassing tomorrow, that the demands of justice strictly enforced would work unspeakable misery. Every man is morally bankrupt; if forced to judgment he could not answer—satisfy the demands—for one of a thousand of his transgressions.

Mercy is the absolution of penalty, the renunciation of the claims of one against another.

297. Virtue, as a state of soul perfection, demands the quality of mercy just as positively as it demands the quality of justice; but, since the acts of mercy are of the nature of a gift, a gratuitous surrender of some portion of one's rights, it seems more meritorious than justice. It is somehow more attractive. We speak of it as a *grace,* a quality that calls not only for approval but for admiration and praise.

298. It manifests itself in various forms, such as generosity, charity and magnanimity, all of which are peculiarly attractive qualities of soul. Magnanimity especially is the grace of noble minds. It is the cordial forgiveness of injuries done to oneself, the dignified forbearance which declines to resent, but ignores and forgets its claims, so far as they are only personal. It is that phase of charity which "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

299. The whole group of minor graces which spring from the virtue of mercy are the very flower and fragrance of virtue. They are such as kindness, clemency, gentleness, consideration, tenderness, tolerance, graciousness and others, all denoting some aspect of the virtue of mercy, and all manifesting a cordial surrender of some claim which might be pressed on the ground of justice.

"The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the

gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes. It is mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes the throned monarch better than his crown."

300. *Reverence* seems, on the whole, to be the best term to signify the proper attitude of the soul toward things divine, including the settled constitution of the universe. Whether we regard the universe as the expression of the will of one eternal person, who, for his own good purpose, created all things, endowed them with their powers, and fixed their laws; or whether we leave the question of its origin aside, and consider only facts of observation and experience; in either case, we must agree that *there is* an orderly and all embracing scheme of things that commands respect and calls for admiration.

301. The Hebrew prophets, whose profound appreciation of the unity and harmony of all things was far superior to that of even the greatest of the Greeks, regarded reverence as the very corner-stone of virtue; and in the phrase "the fear of God" expressed the very essence of what we here call virtue—right attitude of soul. All other virtues seemed to them but corollaries of this one. As the sun must be regarded as the centre of our planetary system, and all the complicated motions of the earth referred to it as the chief factor; so reverence is the centre of all virtue, and all its contents are regulated by this grace; and the fear of God is evidently "the beginning of wisdom."

302. Reverence may be defined as profound respect, suffused with awe and admiration. Now it is evident, not only from the very nature of the case, that such respect—such veneration, for the established order of the universe is the chief of virtues; but to this our moral taste and judgment also consent; for nothing is more offensive to our sense of fitness, or propriety, than the flippant, frivolous and silly attitude of light-headed ignorance toward the great realties and mysteries of life before which wise men of every age and every creed have stood with bowed heads

and sense of awe, as in the presence chamber of the King of Kings. "The undevout astronomer is mad," said Herschel. Whether mad or not, he is certainly an ass.

A great, deep, awful reverence for the things that be; loyalty to that which seems to us eternal truth, and love for Him whose goodness is not excelled even by his majesty and might; this is what is meant by reverence, or, in the profounder phrase of the prophets, the *fear of God.*

303. The other virtues most closely related to reverence are piety, humility and veneration; than which there are none nobler possible to man.

304. In the unsettled state of the terminology of ethics, it is impossible to frame a satisfactory scheme of the virtues; for the terms are so ill defined that they are all ambiguous or vague, and are not even consistently used by the best writers.

305. A general notion of the order and relation of the chief virtues may be framed, however; and we offer the following as an example,—not a model—of such a scheme; and would suggest that each student of this subject exercise his mind in the construction of such schemes.

Reverence.

Veneration, Piety, Adoration, Humility.

Justice.

Equity, Honesty, Fairness, Veracity, Sincerity, Integrity, Benevolence.

Mercy.

Compassion, Charity, Clemency, Kindness, Graciousness, Considerateness, Forgiveness, Gentleness, Magnanimity.

Self-Control.

Temperance, Moderation, Equanimity, Courage, Fortitude, Patience.

By adding synonyms this list may be greatly extended.

Some of these terms denote duties rather than virtues, but, as we shall remark below, all terms that denote virtues also express the corresponding duties.

CHAPTER VI

THE CULTURE OF VIRTUE

306. The familiar phrase, "the means of grace" is so apt a term for those exercises by which moral excellence is promoted, that we may use it, not only for those special offices of our religion, such as the holy sacraments and prayer, which it usually signifies, but also for all the exercises by which the soul is advanced in excellence and virtue.

307. All the experiences of life furnish means of grace; its joys and sorrows, its successes and its failures give opportunity for the exercise and development of the moral powers.

308. It is, of course, impossible to formulate a system of rules that would be applicable to the infinite variety of circumstances in which we may have to act; but it is profitable to consider, so far as possible, the general principles which may serve as guides and stimuli to moral excellence.

309. Of such general rules the first place may be assigned to attention.

Attention is the direction of the mind to a particular object. It is the selection out of the field of consciousness such parts as we choose, and bringing those parts into the focus of our mental activity. As we turn our eyes to bring the image of some visible object into the fovea, so we may direct the mind to one or other object of perception.

310. This power of voluntary attention is perhaps the most remarkable faculty of the mind. It seems to be the very heart of mental independence, the distinct characteristic of free agency.

The discussion of this relation between attention and volition belongs to the field of psychology; but the fact that the soul has the power to choose and give attention to one part of the

field of consciousness rather than another, and that it seems to make this choice by an effort of the will, is a fact of supreme importance in ethics. Here if anywhere we hope to find the solution of the vexed problem, how man can be responsible, and yet subject to the law of causation—how he can guide his life, if his will must act according to the motives acting upon it. Leaving this problem again to the psychologist, we are quite free to go on with such considerations of the facts as may belong to ethics, and reach such conclusions as the facts may seem to warrant.

311. It is certainly possible for us to direct our attention to any particular object, and, for the time at least, to ignore all others. However the objects of sense and memory may present themselves to consciousness without our invitation, it is still our prerogative to shut the door against some and welcome others to the hospitality of our souls.

It is true that this welcome will be accorded most readily to those thoughts or percepts which have strongest affinity with the present state of the soul; but it is also true that the will can prefer the remote to the immediate desire. We can give attention to a dull lesson, if not because it interests us, yet because the desire to learn it for some remoter purpose does interest; and we choose to attend or not to attend to it, and never doubt but that we could have made the other choice.

312. This power to direct our thoughts seems to be the first and most important factor in the problem of self culture; for we are largely formed by associations and habit. "Our nature is subdued to what it works in like the dyer's hand." The imagination works upon the matter furnished by perception and memory, and will occupy itself on what we choose to give attention to, and the resultant images will be determined chiefly by the matter thus admitted, and our affections will develop in harmony with our imagination.

313. Of course the opposite is also true; imagination will always tend to deal with such things as our affections already

crave, but this does not mitigate at all against the influence of the imagination to form and strengthen the affections.

314. The practical exhortation of St. Paul is based on sound psychology, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsover things are venerable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsover things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, *think on* these things."

The implication here is that by attention to such things—dwelling on them in our thoughts, our interest and affections will be enlisted and corresponding choice and action follow.

315. The obverse truth is even more clearly evident; familiarity with vice, the secret brooding over evil thoughts, is the sure provocative of evil purposes and evil deeds,—

> "Vice is a monster of such hideous mien
> That to be loathed needs but to be seen;
> But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

The principle thus recognized by the apostle and the poet is also pointed out by all psychologists. These words of Dr. James may serve as the experts' testimony on the matter.

"The whole drama of voluntary life hinges on the amount of attention, slightly more or slightly less, which rival motor ideas may receive. But the whole feeling of reality, the whole sting and excitement of our voluntary life, depends on our sense that in it things are really being decided from one moment to another, and that it is not the dull rattling off of a chain that was forged innumerable ages ago."

316. The practical application of this principle gives a useful hint as to the proper attitude of mind in the culture of virtue. It should be directed toward the ideals to be reached, and not to present attainments. It is better to escape from our defects by thinking of their opposite excellencies—to overcome our meanness by the contemplation of heroes,—expel our selfishness by thinking of generous deeds. In the happy phrase of Dr. Chal-

mers, "Apply the expulsive power of a new affection."

317. It is, of course, necessary to give attention to our own inward state, to take account of our moral development and to measure our progress by such standards as may be available; as the sailor takes his observation of the sun from time to time to correct his reckoning and find his place. But the healthy mind will not give much attention to its pulse and temperature, nor occupy itself with morbid introspection; but rather give attention to the ideal self which it seeks to realize, and "forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth to those that are before, press toward the mark."

318. *Environment* is the next means of grace to be considered. This is a great word with many social reformers. They would create virtue by putting men in such outward circumstances as are conducive to the growth of right views, right tastes, and expect nature to do the rest.

319. It is easy to exaggerate the influence of good environment; for the forces which act on character are chiefly from within and not from without—they are chiefly subjective, not objective, and therefore not dependent on external conditions.

On the other hand, the influence of external conditions is no small factor in our problems of life, and must be considered carefully, if we would realize high ideals.

320. The most important consideration in the matter is the fact that our environment is very largely under our own control. The circumstances of today are, for the most part, due to the choices of yesterday. I wasted my substance yesterday, and find myself obliged to feed swine today; or I chose evil companions in youth, and they have enveloped me with bad associations which I cannot escape now. So the freedom of the present becomes the fate of the future; and we cannot evade the responsibility for the consequences of our own free choice. Nor is this arrangement an unfavorable one. It is indeed the chief advantage of our freedom that we can plan our lives—can look before

as well as after, and act with reference to the future, and not merely according to the expediency of the present moment.

321. Moreover the stress of present circumstances is not nearly so strong as we are apt to imagine at the time. History testifies that the great majority of those who have attained great excellence did so in spite of what seemed, at the time, unfavorable circumstances, such as poverty or oppression or lack of friendly aid. In fact the only definition of favorable environment that we can frame is, *such circumstances as one is able to use to advantage.* One man may find great wealth, with its opportunities of service, a most potent means of moral development, while another may find in the same circumstance temptations to sloth and selfishness which he is unable to resist. It is impossible to appraise the items of environment at any fixed value, for their influence must depend upon the use we choose to make of them, or as the proverb puts it, "one man's meat is another man's poison."

322. But, while we recognize the fact that environment is but a means which the will must use—a tool by which its purposes are executed, we must not forget that it is a most important tool and, like all tools in that its efficiency depends on its condition; and as the wise workman does not grudge the time and labor required to keep his tools in good condition, so the wise man will seek the most favorable environment and will not regret the sacrifice of much present advantage, if by such sacrifice he may secure a better condition under which to act in the future.

Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, because the plain of Sodom was well suited to his purpose; but, by so doing, he moved to an environment that proved disastrous. So, many a man chooses the line of present advantage, or of least resistance, only to find that the choice involved him in circumstances that were ruinous.

There is good philosophy in Browning's exhortation,—

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns life's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids not sit nor stand but go."

And there is also wisdom in the conclusion of the Hebrew "Preacher" when he says, "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God."

The "rebuffs" of life, and the "good of one's labor" are each in their time and place the means of grace which the wise man may use to his growth in virtue.

323. A third chief means of moral culture is the *practise* of virtue. Growth by exercise seems to be the universal law of nature.

Virtue is an art, as well as a state of mind, and the exercise of the art is a means of developing the state. As musical taste is developed by the cultivation of the art of music, so the moral taste,—the ability to appreciate the beauty of moral excellence —is formed by proper exercise of our moral powers.

324. The influence of conduct on the affections is perhaps most clearly seen in the cultivation of the minor morals, such as the social graces. It is a matter of common observation that good taste in manners and dress cannot be acquired from rules or direction in the usuages of good society. They require the drill of long continued exercise, so that they are inwrought and habitual. The graces of manner, the courtesies that are so easy to the gentleman or lady are the despair of the educated boor, in spite of all his knowledge and learning. They are attained to by the practice that forms habits, and sharpens the perception of that harmony and fitness of things which we call taste.

325. The influence of right conduct to mature and refine the affections is not less powerful in the more substantial virtues—rather more so. As our Lord said, "He that doeth the will of my father shall know the doctrine." So in all the varied activi-

ties of life the perception of goodness, the ability to appreciate moral excellence, and the discriminating taste are developed by patient and persistent practise of the virtues,—by the drill of daily exercise, the habit-making process of repeated action.

326. These three laws,—the law of *attention,* of *environment,* and of *exercise*, are the chief means of moral culture. By these we cultivate that love for the right things, which is essentially the virtuous state of mind.

327. There are other means which for the most part are subordinate to these, or merely different applications of these principles, but they are worthy of consideration especially because of the use that has been made of them, and the value often attached to them in the various disciplines that men have invented for their own self-culture, or the training of the young.

328. *Asceticism* is perhaps the most important of these invented means of moral culture. We say invented, for it seems unnatural to deliberately reverse the dictates of our senses, and choose that which they reject and reject the things they crave. Asceticism, not content with the "rebuffs that turn life's currents rough," deliberately roughens the currents of life—seeks gratuitous pain and hardship, in the hope of thereby gaining more complete mastery over all external circumstances. This moral purpose is very often supplemented by the religious aim of pleasing God, or the gods of their respective faiths.

329. It cannot be denied that asceticism has done good. It has done something worth while in convincing the world that there is in man a spirit that can rise superior to the dictates of his senses, and even hold them in contempt. There is something heroic—admirable, in the fortitude that not only endures the ills of life which fall to man by nature, but goes out of his way to suffer what he might escape.

To a degree, asceticism is justified also by its educative influence. It is well to be prepared for the trials that will surely come, and often such a preparation may best be made by under-

going similar experience voluntarily assumed, as the training of the athlete is preparatory for the race or game.

But the principle of asceticism is a mistake in morals, as it is erroneous in religion. As an exhibition of self-mastery it has rather the spirit of bravado than of heroism. The real hero conserves his resources, and exhibits his powers only in the accomplishment of some worthy purpose—never for the sake of showing off.

As a means of discipline it tends rather to distort one's views of excellence by putting fortitude in the foreground of ideal character and obscuring other graces of as great, or greater worth. Preparation for the trials that fall to one in the path of duty forms no part of the ascetic theory. For him suffering and privation are a good end in themselves, and not a means to something else.

330. Closely related to the spirit of asceticism, but manifesting itself in a different form, is the *spirit of monasticism.* I say the *spirit* of monasticism, for the *uses* of monasticism have been various and many of them are of great excellence and value. It would indeed be hard to overestimate what the world owes to the organized monasticism of the middle ages of Europe.

331. Nevertheless the spirit of monasticism is a perversion of good morals. The essential feature of the monastic life is separation from the world,—segregation from the community. This is a contradiction of the fundamental law of society that no man liveth to himself.

Man is a social being, not merely in the sense that he loves the company of his fellow men, but in the profounder sense of finding his normal development only as a member of society—part of a community with its various relations and obligations. Only under such conditions does he find exercise for his highest faculties, and develops a well rounded character. In so far as monasticism removes the individual from this normal relation to society, it tends to narrow and distort his development.

332. Much the same objection may be made to any other scheme of life which aims at the development of one's own character, without regard to his obligations to the community of which he is a part.

333. The intimate relation between morals and religion must not be overlooked. The cultivation of virtue is the supreme purpose of all religious exercises. To make men good,—to bring them into harmony with God,—to cultivate the right affections is the aim and object of all the ordinary services of religion. Prayer, the sacraments and the study of God's word are preeminently means of Grace; for they are directed to the enlightenment of the mind on moral principles, to the cultivation of reverence and purity of heart and to the promotion of fidelity to the truth and true ideals. Aside from all the supernatural influence that may be hoped for through these means, the natural effect of the habitual contemplation of the great truths of our spiritual life, the conscious opening of our inmost souls to the inspection of a holy but sympathetic friend, and the solemn communion with the divine Lord of all spiritual life are intensely effective to the development and purifying of our moral affections.

CHAPTER VII

DUTY AND DUTIES

334. Duty is a general term denoting all that we are obliged to do or to be. It is literally that which is due; and thus it corresponds to the term ought, which is literally that which we owe.

Both these terms imply an obligation or demand made upon us by someone, or some law of the universe of which we are a part.

335. The relation between virtue and duty has already been indicated in a general way. Virtue is a state of the soul—a subjective condition; duty is a scheme of conduct,—an objective program to be performed.

336. Duty is best conceived of as conformity to the fixed order of the universe; or, if this seems too general, let us say, conformity to the will of the Creator. The latter is the simpler concept; and it makes no difference here whether the order of things is thought of as the intelligent arrangement of a personal God, or merely an order which we find existing; and which comprehends us, whether we comprehend it or not. The important matter to observe is that this order of things which determines duty is fixed and invariable. There is no referendum or recall applicable to the laws of nature.

337. The force of gravity pulls or pushes in a certain established manner and degree; the laws of numbers are also absolute and eternal; therefore we can calculate with certainty and announce our conclusions with confidence. We say five times four pounds *ought* to be twenty pounds, and do not think it necessary to verify our conclusion by weighing the lot. It is quite intelligible to say it is their *duty* to weigh twenty pounds. That is what is due according to the laws of numbers, and things must

conform to the order of nature.

So conduct ought to conform to the order of nature; this obligation is duty. It is constitutional and absolute. But the particular conduct demanded of each soul depends on his particular place and relation. The specific content of duty—the programs for the individual may vary infinitely, but in each case it is fixed and settled by the laws of the universe. The habits and customs of men may bring certain actions into one's program. make them a part of the individual duty, but they have otherwise no power or influence whatever. To take from another what he has labored to produce, without giving an equivalent, is wrong, no matter what the custom of the tribe may be. To violate any law of morality brings inevitable consequences just as surely as the violation of physical laws will do. In this respect, as in all respects, *moral laws are natural laws.*

338. The question what is our specific duty, what is due from us, at any particular time and place, can only be answered after consideration of all the relations, conditions and circumstances involved, and must therefore be answered hour by hour. It can only be decided when we know our powers and opportunities. All forecast of duty must therefore be conditional—must be made on the supposition of certain conditions being then present. Such suppositions can of course be made, and certain rules of conduct framed for our direction, and thus an art of ethics may be developed.

339. The discussion of the specific content of duty forms the science of casuistry, which we will discuss later; but just now we are concerned with the permanent principles of duty.

340. There are two points of view from which the whole field of ethics may be regarded, and the whole aspect of the subject depends largely on the point of view we take.

If we conceive of ethics as a branch of pure philosophy, having for its object the interpretation of moral phenomena, the definition of goodness and the quality of virtue, we properly think in

such concepts as goodness and virtue and character. But if we regard ethics as a science having for its aim the determination of right action, then we think rather of right and duty and conduct as the proper subjects of study.

341. The history of ethics shows a curious tendency on the part of both ancient and modern moralists to take one or the other of these points of view and ignore the other. The result has been unfortunate, in that the great works on the philosophic side of ethics are so obstruse and metaphysical that they reached only an audience "fit but few—" very few indeed. The writings of such as Aristotle, Kant, and T. H. Green, are among the very great books of the world, but are hard reading even for the learned and are "caviar to the general."

On the other hand the more popular treatises on the practical side are for the most part either pitifully superficial, or dull preachments of platitudes or commonplace exhortations.

342. There does not seem to be any good reason why the philosophical and practical should be thus separated. Indeed they are not always separated. The Hebrew prophets were splendidly successful in presenting duty on a profound basis of metaphysics, and defining righteous conduct from a sublime conception of the universe.

Their writings have been tremendously influential, chiefly because they gave a clear and positive scheme of the universe as the foundation of their exhortations to righteousness. Their whole theory of duty was obedience to a sovereign God. "Hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

This concept rested on the conviction that God was the creator of the world and ruled in righteousness. This rule of duty may be paraphrased in some such form as this: Maintain right relations to the established order of the universe—respect the eternal constitution of the world. It is nearly the equivalent of Kant's idea that duty is a "categorical imperative" or the more

modern phrase "adaptation to environment."

343. Corresponding to this is the concept of duty implied in the fine definition of sin, *"Peccatum est disconvenientia, actus, status aut habitus, cum divina lege,—"* Sin is want of conformity to the divine will, in act or state or habit.

344. The relation between virtue and duty is very intimate. Virtue is the state of the soul that is in harmony with duty; so that the demands of the moral order,—the categorical imperative of objective and eternal relations—coincide with the spontaneous impulse and judgment of the subjective self.

345. It follows from this that virtue cannot be attained by mere obedience to law. Doing right does not constitute virtue. One may be honest from policy, may be truthful from convenience or chaste from fear of evil consequences, and yet have none of these virtues.

346. The more difficult question as to the conflict of moral judgment and the principles of duty belongs here, and is rather complicated. Stated in a concrete case, it is this. Paul persecuted the early Christians; this was certainly not his duty, but the contrary. But Paul thought he did God service. Did he do right or wrong in following his sincere conviction? Did duty consist in obeying his conscience or in something else? This question, for the most part, belongs to the science of casuistry, but the principle to be noted here is that Paul's conviction did not, could not, make persecution right,—could not put it in the category of duty, nor in any degree affect the consequences of his action. Nevertheless, *Paul's* duty was to follow his convictions—"to do right as God gave him to see the right." The only solution possible seems to be that, in the imperfect and disordered condition of our moral sense and judgments, we may be entangled in our mistakes so that personal obligation clashes with absolute duty,—an abnormal condition, but an actual one to all mankind. However perplexing such questions may be, we must not doubt that the demands of moral law are just as

absolute as those of physical law, and we are sure that physical laws are utterly indifferent to our opinions. Poison taken by mistake acts exactly as poison taken with deadly purpose.

347. It is worth remarking that our modern habit of conceiving of all science in terms of biology, regarding all things as dynamic, evolutional and, in a sense, creative, instead of mechanical and static, has greatly changed the aspect of ethical phenomena. Man is no longer regarded as a mechanism of interacting faculties, completely fashioned and geared to certain definite action, but rather as a tissue of growing and incomplete and much diseased spiritual substance, developing and acting under laws as absolute as God himself, but analogous with the laws of physical life rather than the statutes of legislation.

348. In other words, ethics is surely taking its place among the *natural* sciences, and duty more distinctly seen to be the demand of an eternal and immutable order of the universe, which must be regarded as the will of a Creator.

DUTIES

349. The terms justice, mercy, reverence, and indeed all terms used to denote virtues are used also to denote the corresponding duties, as you will find very fully illustrated by the definitions given in your dictionaries.

This ambiguity is somewhat confusing, but it has at least this compensating advantage, it serves to emphasize the close relation between virtues and duties; virtues being qualities or states of the soul, duties are courses of conduct appropriate to those qualities or states. Justice, for example, may mean either the proper attitude of the soul toward the rights of others, or the actions demanded by those rights. As already remarked, virtues are subjective states, duties are objective programs of action. Virtues are elements of character, duties are lines of conduct.

350. It is evident that duties are much harder to determine

than virtues; for virtues are absolute, duties are conditional. The attitude of mind that is proper toward my neighbor's rights is fixed by the constitution of the world, by my place and his place in the scheme of things which we call nature, and is therefore permanent; but the specific actions called for by these relations will depend on the powers at my disposal, the opportunities afforded me to act and the entire combination of circumstances in each particular case; and these circumstances are capable of infinite variation. The virtue of benevolence, for example, is always the proper attitude of the soul of every man to every other; it may not be relinquished for a moment, even under the greatest provocation; but any particular course of conduct may or may not be duty. I may have the best of right affections toward my neighbors, yet find my duty requires me to give alms to one and withhold it from another, to forgive the debt of one and exact payment from another.

351. Duties are so largely determined by circumstances—by relations, that it is impossible to construct any complete directory or manual of conduct; all such attempts have failed, and all such manuals have been so obviously injurious that even the legitimate science of casuistry has fallen into disrepute.

352. This impossibility of framing a complete formula for conduct does not forbid the most careful study of the elements of duty. As the impossibility of describing the symptoms of each case does not forbid, but rather obliges the physician to study the principles of medicine, so the difficulty of formulating rules of conduct to apply to all cases demands the more careful consideration of the principles which underlie all duties.

353. It is interesting to notice in this connection that the great codes of moral law are essentially definitions of *virtues* rather than of duty. The Ten Commandments are revelations of proper attitudes of mind rather than directions of conduct. Thou shalt not kill is a definition of the proper respect to be shown to my neighbor's *right to live* rather than a specific direction of

conduct. It is rightly interpreted as requiring "all lawful endeavor to preserve our own life and the lives of others." The negative form in which most laws are framed is also due to the fact that they are intended to define the scope or field of action within which virtue may be freely manifested. All such definitions are like hedges by the roadside, not so much to indicate where I must go, but to protect the fields of my neighbor from trespass.

The great majority of legislation is for this purpose, to define rights, to forbid wrongs, and thus to furnish data from which duties may be inferred.

354. All duties have for their ultimate foundation, *rights*—properties and relations, which are assigned to each person or thing in the order of the universe. These properties and relations are inalienable, they cannot rightly be taken from me, nor may I rightly neglect them, abuse them or allow them to be diminished or destroyed.

355. This conception of duty gives us a good point of approach to the study of the great field of duties. All duties are the activities demanded to protect and develop and exercise the properties belonging to us by nature in the relations established by natural law. These properties are considered under the category of virtues, the relations are the object of study in our attempts to define duties.

356. These relations may be classified in any way convenience may require. It is customary to consider them under the heads, personal, social and religious. Such duties as spring from our relations to ourself are called personal, those which have to do with our relations to our fellow men are social, and those that rise from our relation to God, religious.

357. In following this order it is important to observe that duties *cannot be separated* according to these lines of classification. Every duty must be determined by *all* our relations,—every act has its bearing on everything included in the system of

which we are a part. The line between my neighbor's field and mine may be defined, for where his rights begin and mine end, and though the line be ever so crooked it is fixed and absolute; but in most things our rights are blended, fused and complicated and to separate them is as difficult as to "unscramble eggs."

358. All that we can do is to consider some cases of frequent occurrence and analyze them in the hope of finding some rules of conduct that can be readily applied in actual life. We can often discern, where we cannot separate.

CHAPTER VIII

PERSONAL DUTIES

359. Our personal duties are those that have least to do with our neighbors' rights. They are grounded and measured by the place assigned to us by nature, by the powers given us and the conditions under which we can use them. I find myself endowed with certain faculties, impelled by certain instincts, capable of certain self-control. I find my reason and emotions satisfied by certain conduct, and dissatisfied with any other. I conclude therefore that my office is determined by nature and its demands are imperative. I am somehow *obliged* to perform the offices assigned to me so as to promote the general welfare of the universe,—to realize the purpose of the scheme of things, so far as that purpose depends on me. My "talent" is given me for use, and I may neither misuse it nor neglect it, for no one else can do my work, nor assume my responsibility.

Old Antonio Stradivari, the famous maker of violins, worked at his trade when very old, for he said, "I must do my work which no one else can do. God himself cannot make a genuine Stradivari violin without Antonio."

That is the right conception of personal duty. Each life and all its possibilities are parts of the whole scheme of things. The world's need is each man's opportunity. The only means by which any man can attain to honor or glory is by doing something that the world needs to have done, being something that the world needs to possess.

360. The most obvious and fundamental of all personal duties is the preservation of one's own life. The most radical of all failures in personal duty is suicide. It is desertion from the army in "that great fight by truth and freedom ever waged with

wrong." It is the act of the shirk and the coward—albeit some men have committed suicide in their despondency and blindness of mind. That suicide is never right seems abundantly proven by the following considerations. First, no man knows certainly when his work is done. The darkest skies may brighten and the most forlorn hope may yet succeed, and even when our hopes are utterly crushed and our plans absolutely hopeless, the very consequences of our defeat may often bring up new possibilities which we should be ready to realize. Suicide from despair is never justifiable.

Second, Suicide from shame is always cowardice. It is nobler to endure the just contempt of men and all the punishment they can inflict than to fly from these by destroying our life. But nobler than mere endurance is the attempt at restitution by redeeming lost honor, by reclaiming ruined reputation. The atonement for the past by a noble future is the only course that commands the respect of our moral judgment.

Third, physical suffering is limited by nature. Whatever is really unendurable does not have to be endured. Nature itself comes to our relief and sets us free. It is great presumption for us at any time to suppose we are wiser than nature or to set our judgment against her known decrees.

361. The familiar passage from Rousseau is worth quoting,—

"Listen to me, thou foolish youth; thou art dear to me, I pity thy errors. If thou has left in the bottom of thy heart the least feeling of virtue left, come to me, let me teach thee to love life. Every time thou shalt be tempted to put an end to it, say to thyself: 'Let me do one more good deed before I die.' Then go and seek some poverty to relieve, some misfortune to console, some oppressed wretch to protect. If this contemplation does not stop thee today, it will stop thee tomorrow, or the day after, or perhaps for the rest of thy life. If it does not stop thee, go then and die, for thou art not worthy to live."

The last part of this quotation is, of course, rhetorical rather

than moral. To bid one go and die because he is not worthy to live would condemn too many. Morality says rather, "thou art not worthy to live, therefore not ready to die; make thyself worthy, correct thy course, square thine account before you are called away."

362. It is a significant fact that the great majority of suicides are due to the most trivial and contemptible causes, pique or petty disappointment, the loss of money, or chagrin of failure are the most common causes. Only rarely do we hear of a case that affords the slightest room for doubt or ground for debate as to its being justifiable. It is also worth remarking that the strongest instincts of our nature protest against self destruction and in all ages the suicide has been regarded with peculiar horror and aversion. The alleged "virtue" of the ancient Romans was never the "virtue" of the masses, but rather the *excuse* of the haughty.

363. Suicide must not be confounded with self-sacrifice. To risk death, and even to seek it in a worthy cause is the highest form of heroism, and the very antithesis of suicide. One is the casting away as worthless that which is committed to our keeping. The other is laying that same precious thing upon the altar as the supreme gift to a worthy cause.

Even here, however, it is well to remember that the careless sacrifice of life even in a good cause is not heroic. We respect even the grim virtue of old John Brown when on trial for treason compelled the sheriff to carry him bodily from the jail to the court room on the grotesque ground that he "would not assist in his own murder."

TEMPERANCE

364. The duty of preserving life implies the duty of preserving and promoting health. This is true not only because health tends to prolong life, but also because it makes life more com-

plete and more efficient. If suicide is wrong, then any wilful diminution of health or strength is wrong, for it is partial suicide,—a partial desertion from the post of duty.

365. Deliberate and unprovoked damage to health is, for the most part, prevented by the natural correlation between health and comfort. Pain is the great preventive agent to warn and protect us against wilful or careless injury to physical welfare. What remorse is to the soul, pain is to the body, at once the penalty for violation of the laws of nature, and the incentive to obedience to those laws.

But the sense of obligation to respect the claims of nature by promoting all our powers, and the warning protest of pain are not always strong enough to resist the impelling force of appetite and desire. Appetites and instincts are necessary to move us to the activities by which the life of the individual and the procreation of the race are effected. But these impulses are intense, and to be conducive to our physical welfare must be rightly balanced and subordinated to the higher claims of right purposes. This balancing of impulses, this restraining and governing the appetites and instincts is what we mean by moderation or temperance.

366. In attempting to define the ethical principles involved in temperance we may begin by the assumption that all natural appetites are good and useful. None of them could be extirpated without damage.

But it is not so easy to decide just what are natural appetites. Our present condition is so largely the result of our previous conduct, perpetuated in the habits of body and mind, and transmitted from generation to generation by heredity, that it is certain that they are largely artificial, the product of our own free action and of the conduct of our ancestors. It is also certain that, in man especially, the appetites and passions and instincts are seriously perverted, and are not nearly as trustworthy as those of irrational beings. The power of imagination to present

the objects of our natural desires in attractive forms, and the inventive genius that has so greatly enhanced the pleasures of the senses tend to intensify the appeal of appetite and make it harder to resist. Man's inventive genius has also devised many ways and means of avoiding, or at least postponing, the pains and penalties imposed by nature on offenses against her laws. He has also intensified the appeal of the senses by associating sensuous pleasure with emotional joy and rational satisfaction. The pleasure of the banquet, for example, is based on the natural appetite for food and drink; but the satisfaction of the desire for food is little more than the occasion around which the arts gather a host of attractions. The arts of cookery and vintage, the arts of decoration exhibited in dishes and linen and flowers and lights, the arts of conversation and the instinct of companionship, the emotional appeal of exhilaration due to wine and pleasant fellowship, all combine to so intensify the natural appetite as to tempt us to excess.

367. Other natural instincts are the occasion around which gather a host of associations and customs and habits that permeate every relation in life, and influence conduct in a thousand ways. The duty of temperance is evidently one of the greatest that we have. It is the duty which chiefly demands the virtue of self-control, and the practical exercise of that virtue requires the nicest balance of judgment and appreciation of values.

368. It is extremely difficult to frame rules for temperance, for in its very nature it must be regulated by balance of one desire against another, giving to each its proper weight and due consideration.

369. In some things, the rule of total abstinence is wise. When any desire is apt to lead to excess, it is dangerous, and if it may be entirely denied without that denial doing harm, it is the obvious dictate of prudence to abstain. This is the rational basis for the rule of total abstinence from all use of alcoholic drinks. Such abstinence does not impair our usefulness, does not

greatly restrict our pleasure, while on the other hand the rapidity with which an appetite for alcohol grows in strength, and the appalling ruin it produces when it grows beyond control makes the duty of abstinence most obvious.

370. The same principle of prudence dictates abstinence from other pleasures of the senses as a duty, though those pleasures under some conditions may be quite permissible. Some forms of amusement that are proper under certain circumstances may be wrong in others.

Dancing, for example, is an attractive and innocent exercise; but, when it involves loss of health by late hours, loss of dignity or modesty by reason of dress or attitude, it is obviously an evil.

Even the playing of such games as chess or billiards may be the occasion of such neglect of duties that they become an evil.

371. The principle involved in all these cases is the same. Abstinence is a duty when the desire is either evil in itself, or is likely to become an evil by excess, and when by abstaining we do not sacrifice any power or opportunity for doing the duties belonging to us in our several places and relations.

372. But the rule of abstinence is much more easily applied than rules of proper moderation, where abstinence is not our duty, and not even permissible.

The pleasures of the senses are so evidently part of the scheme of nature, and so obviously necessary to impel us to action, that their proper gratification is not only a privilege but a duty.

While voluntary abstinence from such pleasures may, under certain circumstances, be the necessary means to higher ends—as fasting for the discipline of our moral or religious life, or celibacy that we may the better perform some special offices, yet, under normal circumstances, all pleasures that are included in the scheme of nature are an aid to virtue, and their proper enjoyment elevating and ennobling.

373. The pleasures of music and fine art are generally allowed to be conducive to moral excellence, yet they are essentially sens-

uous pleasures, though their intimate association with emotions gives them an added dignity, and perhaps justifies the common judgment that they are of a higher quality than the pleasures of appetite or of the sense of touch. But it seems rather that the fact that music and fine art are not so often indulged in to excess, and their excess not so degrading as excess in the pleasures of some other senses, explains the fact that they are held in higher honor. It would be hard to show why the epicure, who has cultivated an artistic taste for dainty meats, should rank lower than the musician whose ear is trained to the appreciation of sweet sounds, or why the skilled confectioner should not be honored as well as the artist, in so far at least as both their efforts are directed to increasing sensuous pleasure.

374. There is another field of pleasure that has at least its basis in the senses, that is the field of physical grace and dignity of manner,—all that we mean by decorum, propriety and seemliness of conduct. It is true that these graces are esteemed chiefly because of the moral qualities that they are supposed to indicate; but this is not the whole reason for our approval of them; we admire dignity of manner, even when we know that it is not accompanied by moral worth, and gracious bearing is pleasing in itself.

375. We seem justified in the conclusion that all the pleasures of the senses are not only respectable and permissible, but are a part of our inheritance, which we are to cherish and develop and enjoy in due degree and moderation, and that moderation here is *right proportion and relation.*

376. Duty in regard to these things consists in rightly judging what is due proportion and relation, and in the avoidance of excess.

377. The duty of moderation in relation to our instinctive desires is regulated according to the same principles that we have applied to the impulses of sensuous pleasure.

Our instincts are of a great variety of forms and quality,

impelling us to many different kinds of conduct; but in their relation to ethical principles they are all nearly alike. Like the bodily appetites they urge us blindly—that is without reflection or the consent of our will—to certain courses of conduct. They are simply impulsive forces springing from our constitution—they impel as gravity or magnetism impels, and have in themselves no moral quality, except so far as their present strength may be due to our previous conduct.

The rule of total abstinence under all circumstances does not apply to any one of them, but they must all be governed, or moderated, by reason.

378. Some of the more important in their influence on conduct are the instincts of emulation, imitation and curiosity. Of these emulation is perhaps the strongest and most constant in its influence and may be taken as typical of all. It has been remarked by good authority that "nine-tenths of the world's work is done by emulation." This is no doubt somewhat exaggerated, but we need only open our eyes and observe the world around us to be impressed and astonished by the tremendous influence of this instinct.

379. The whole world toils and groans under its tasks which are in large part self-imposed. We labor for clothing, not for comfort nor for beauty, but to keep up with the fashion. We do not even pretend that our hats are useful or our dress coats beautiful, but we will sacrifice all but life and honor, and sometimes both of these, rather than seem out of the fashion. We heap up great fortunes, or try to, at the cost of health and ease and comfort, and we do so, for the most part, not with the purpose or hope of using the fortune for some pleasant end, but for joy of the game, for the satisfaction of doing more or better in our business than our rivals. Of course no student ever studies for the sake of standing high in his class—that is bad form nowadays—but on the athletic field what is the incentive? to win the game, to beat England, to break a record. In social

life it is if possible even more intense. "Keeping up with Lizzie," drives the whole town at a pace that kills. The duty in these things is temperance, moderation, sanity, measured by the relative values of possible objects of our desire. The practical rule of duty in regard to these impulses of instinct is to use our reason, to stop, look and listen, to "walk circumspectly," and in the picturesque language of the English navy, "keep your hair on."

COMMON SENSE

380. The duty of temperance,—as indeed may be said of all duties, is first of all right thinking. Conduct cannot be kept permanently good by mere conformity to good rules. Commandments, precepts, rules of conduct are very useful, first, as revelations of principles, as for example the Ten Commandments; second, as convenient "ready-to-wear" formula of actions which, like good habits, economize time and effort; but the only ultimate basis of good conduct is good thinking. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

381. One of the chief requisites of good thinking is that poise and balance of mind which is called common sense. It is not called common sense because it is common in the sense of abundance; for it is by no means common in that sense; but it is that sense which is the result of seeing things from all sides, the *consensus* of all points of view. It is the opposite of prejudice, of partial consideration and of extreme specialization. It is, in a word, *temperance of thought.*

382. Common sense is not genius, nor an attainment of scholarship, but a habit of mind which, like all habits, is formed in the mind by our activities. It is therefore especially a duty, a thing which we are under obligation to develop and to practice. It *is due* that we look on all sides of every matter we would judge, that we "think to the thirty-two points of the compass," and bear

in mind the truth that we have not heard the case till all the evidence is in, and both sides fairly stated; then that we decide, not on this point or that, but on a fair and open-minded view of the whole matter.

CHAPTER IX

PERSONAL DUTIES—*Continued*

INDUSTRY

383. This world is the scene of marvelous activity; it is full of the hum and rustle and roar of its ceaseless movement. Every creature is busy with its tasks; each one is driven by its nature, its instincts or its necessities to the work that forms its duty and secures its happiness. The forces of nature never cease. If the forces of gravity should take a holiday, the world would fall to chaos.

Man, as a part of the scheme of nature, has his tasks. Each day has its own program for us to perform, and in its performance we find our happiness and excellence.

384. The demand which nature makes upon our time and energy is not such an obligation as some harsh taskmaster makes upon a slave, but rather such a kindly disposition of honorable offices as a benevolent king might make. It is only when the scheme of nature is disordered by the greed and selfishness of men, so that the burdens of some are unjustly laid upon the shoulders of others, or when our tasks are multiplied by our own foolish or vicious desires, that our work becomes an irksome and oppressive weight. But even in this disordered world, where work is so unfairly distributed, the duty of industry is not only an obligation but a means of happiness. Some have to carry burdens of toil that are unjustly great, and others shirk their share; yet the danger and damage done by idleness is greater than the damage done by over-work. It is by diligent application of our powers that they are developed; only as we labor, do we grow in skill and fitness for our offices.

385. Work is honorable, for it is the exercise of the powers

which alone give us our dignity and place in the order of creation.

It is most unfortunate, and much to be regretted, that work of any useful kind should be regarded as beneath the dignity of any man. The only measure of the dignity of any task is its necessity and its difficulty. The thing that needs to be done is the great thing; and the harder it is, the more honor is due to him who does it.

386. It is much to the discredit of our wisdom that our efforts are so largely directed to escape from work, rather than to make work more agreeable and more efficient.

The incessant clamor for shorter hours, lighter tasks and higher pay is sometimes a just demand; but, for the most part, it is misdirected, and based on a false conception of the place of work in the scheme of nature. If some of this agitation and effort were directed to improving the conditions under which labor is done, to promoting interest and pride in good work, to a fair consideration of the interests common to all the people, much more progress would be made.

387. Nothing else can do so much to solve the problems of labor, to increase the happiness of workers, as can be done by increasing the pride and interest of workers in their work. So long as work is regarded as a hateful task, or at best as a dull drudgery, the price paid for wages, so long will men be discontented. In so far as we take interest in the work itself, joy in the things created, and pride in the skill exhibited in the results of our effort, just so far shall we attain to the right view of labor, and find in industry the use and beauty which it undoubtedly is able to afford.

388. The relations between labor and capital is a vast and complex subject, which we must consider under social duties, but it is well to notice here that the basis of all right relations to our fellowmen is a right conception of our own personal duty, and the diligent application of our own powers to the tasks assigned

to us is the first duty in this matter; and this duty will be made attractive by the thought that our tasks are not a hardship but the only means to excellence and joy. Diligence in our work is a duty, but it is also a privilege and an honor.

THRIFT

389. Closely related to the duty of diligence is thrift; for if we are to labor for good results, it is evident that these results should be conserved, and wisely used. Waste is stupid, it is the vice of the foolish and the ignorant. Sometimes the folly which shows itself in prodigality has its source in vanity; we waste our substance to be seen of men; sometimes it springs from lack of self-control,—we yield to the clamor of appetite, or other desires, against the protest of our judgment; and sometimes it is simply carelessness; we fail to guard the results of our labor from destruction and decay. Whatever may be the source of our prodigality, it is a vice that is not only stupid but degrading; for it destroys the defenses against manifold temptations. Aristotle pointed out this danger. "Most prodigals," he says, "become greedy and grasping, because they wish to spend at their will. Their own resources are soon exhausted, they must needs procure others: and as they scarcely take thought about dignity and honor, they appropriate without scruple, and as they can."

390. Franklin was the great apostle of thrift. "Be economical, and independence shall be thy shield and buckler, thy helmet and crown; then shall thy soul walk upright, nor stoop to the silken wretch because he hath riches; nor pocket an abuse because the hand that offers it wears a ring set with diamonds."

The Proverbs of Poor Richard are well worthy of consideration, and should be more familiar than they are.

> "A fat kitchen makes a lean will."
> "Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them."
> "It is foolish to lay out money to purchase repentance."
> "When the well is dry, we know the worth of water."

The moral value of thrift is well illustrated in his discourse on the danger of debt.

"He that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing. Alas! think well what you do when you run in debt: you give another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor: you will be in fear when you speak to him: you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking exuses, and by degrees come to lose your veracity, and sink into base downright lying. For lying rides on debt's back. A freeborn man ought not to be afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright."

AVARICE

391. But the vice of prodigality is not so bad as avarice. Prodigality is bad rather in its consequences than in itself, but avarice is essentially a vice. To quote again from Aristotle:

"Avarice is more natural to man than prodigality; for most of us prefer keeping what we have than giving it away. . . . Avarice consists of two principal elements: defect of giving, excess of receiving. Some show more excess of receiving, some more defect of giving. Thus do all those who are branded by the name of stingy, shabby, mean, sin through a defect of giving; yet they do not covet, nor would they take what belongs to others. Other misers, on the contrary, may be known by their grasping propensities, taking all they can get: for example, all those who engage in ignoble speculations, usurers and all those who lend small sums at large interest,—all people who take where they should not take, and more than they ought to take. Lust for the most shameful lucre seems to be the common vice of all degraded hearts: there is no infamy they are not willing to endure if they can make a profit."

392. To the same effect is the injunction of Jesus, "Take

heed and beware of covetousness," and the statement of the apostle, "The love of money is a root of all evil."

393. Thrift is the happy mean between the extremes of waste or prodigality, on the one side, and avarice on the other; and its importance is impressed by consideration of the evils that attend either of these extremes.

SINCERITY

394. The duties we have thus far considered, Temperance, Industry and Thrift, have chiefly to do with our relation to external things. There are other duties still more strictly personal, more distinctly due to our own development of character.

Among the most important of these is *Sincerity*. This is perhaps most properly conceived of as a virtue—a state of mind, rather than a duty—a definition of conduct; but, as we have seen, all virtues have their corresponding duties, and sincerity is a duty of no small importance. As a duty, sincerity may be defined as the constant intention to be just what we seem to be, or more accurately to seem to be just what we are. It is the opposite of false pretense, hypocrisy and deceit. Some of its synonyms are candor, frankness, straight-forwardness,—all of them peculiarly attractive graces.

395. It is to be regarded as especially a personal duty because it has its basis in our confidence in our own integrity. It is not possible to be sincere when we mistrust the honesty of our own intentions. When we allow our vanity or selfishness to blind our minds, we are rarely so self-deceived that we do not know that we are deceived, rarely so blinded but what we are conscious of more insight than we accept. Insincerity is chiefly the act of our will in accepting the biased picture of things presented dimly by our imagination as the truth, when we have reason to suspect that it is not the whole truth. We rarely attempt to deceive others without first partially deceiving ourselves; then having

accepted a distorted view in ourselves we easily consent to a still more distorted view being given out to others.

Thus we trace outright falsehood to the lack of sincerity in our own mind. Sincerity is the only permanent basis of veracity. Only the man who "speaketh the truth in his heart" can be trusted to speak it also with his lips.

COURAGE

396. The connection between sincerity and courage is not obvious on the surface, but it is none the less a very real and close connection. It is notorious that a liar is always a coward, and the reason is not hard to discover. The liar has no confidence in himself, no faith in his own statements, even his statements to himself. He has no good ground of assurance that he is on the side of truth and right, and therefore lacks the incentive to stand firm in the maintenance of his position. But the man who is sincere, whose conviction is genuine, whose purposes are founded on clear eyed and honest view of truth, cannot give them up, cannot consent to compromise. No matter what the consequences, he must hold fast to his integrity. This is *courage.*

397. We sometimes distinguish between physical and moral courage, but the distinction is misleading. There is but one kind of courage, that is the maintenance of our purpose against opposition. If that opposition be physical, such as the fear of pain or death the courage necessary to oppose it is called physical courage—courage against physical opposition. If the opposing forces be fear of disgrace, loss, or the allurements of pleasure, the courage is called moral courage.

398. Moral courage is of the higher rank only because the fear of pain or physical injury is stronger in those whose physical welfare is dearer to them than their sense of honor or their devotion to virtue; while the loss of their good name, the tarnishing of their honor, is to men of higher excellence the much more

serious object of fear.

399. The Greeks gave courage a place among the four cardinal virtues though Plato qualified his judgment of it by the phrase "of a citizen," showing that he had in mind especially the qualities of good citizens, rather than of good men generally.

He defines courage however very much as we have conceived of it in its relation to sincerity.

"I mean," said he, "that Courage is a kind of Salvation.

Salvation of what?

Of the opinion of things to be feared, of what they are, and of what nature which the law implants through education; and I mean by the words, 'under all circumstances' to intimate that in pleasure and in pain, or under the influence of desire or fear, a man preserves and does not lose this opinion."

He then gives an illustration from the work of the dyer, dying woolen goods so that the color cannot be washed out, and concludes thus.—"Our object in selecting and educating our soldiers is to prepare them to take the dye of the laws in perfection; and the color of their opinion about danger and every other opinion was to be indelibly fixed by their nurture and training, and not to be washed away by such potent lyes as pleasure—mightier agent by far in washing the soul than any soda or lye,—or by sorrow, fear, and desire which are mightiest of all other solvents. And this sort of universal saving power of true opinion in conformity with law about real and false dangers, I call and maintain to be courage, unless you disagree."

We certainly do not disagree, but say 'amen' to this definition.

400. The particular phases of courage denoted by such terms as fortitude, bravery, boldness, daring, intrepidity, valor, hardihood, mettle and pluck should be carefully discriminated in order to gain a just appreciation of courage as a virtue and as a duty.

401. We need not enumerate in detail all the duties which might be classed as personal. Such an enumeration would indeed be of no great value unless made by each one for himself. That

would be a most profitable exercise.

The purpose of our present study is rather to get correct conceptions of the leading qualities of soul which are essential to the highest possible self-realization, and the duties by which those qualities find expression and development. These special duties which we have considered may be taken as sufficient to indicate in outline the whole field of obligation to ourselves. Their consideration leads to the question of *means* and *methods* by which we may fit ourselves for these and all other duties. That is *education.*

EDUCATION

402. The duty of right thinking implies the duty of developing and training our thinker—our mind. If it be our duty to preserve bodily health and to cultivate physical strength and beauty, still more is it our duty to give the same care and cultivation to our soul.

403. This development and training of the soul—the intellect and feelings and will, is the only proper notion of education. The cultivation of any particular faculty—the training of the soul to any particular function may be a part of education, but is not in itself education.

The specialist who can design a good bridge or discuss metaphysics or criticise poetry may be useful, but is not necessarily educated, except in a partial and lop-sided way. The scholarly boor, the learned ass, are caricatures of education.

They may be good workmen; so may a good hostler be a good workman, but education means more than any such skill of using a currycomb or a book, and there is no posible advantage to be gained by destroying a well established definition of the term by extending it over fields so diverse that they cannot be expressed by the same word.

404. Education as we use the word in ethics means—as it is

defined in Webster—"the systematic development and cultivation of the natural powers, and the direction of the feelings, tastes and manners." This is surely enough to include in one term.

405. The duty of such "cultivation of the natural powers" rests on the principle that these powers are a part—a most important part, of the endowment, the talents, committed to our care and use, the means and instruments by which we perform our work and attain to excellence and happiness.

If there be any such thing as duty, any obligation, any responsibility resting upon us, then the care of our instruments, the sharpening of our tools by which our work must be done would seem to be a most fundamental duty.

406. We must of course avoid the misconception of education which regards it as a certain process of schooling. Books and teachers are very useful aids to education, but they are nothing more, and the real cultivation of our powers is accomplished by our own wise use of those powers,—accomplished as all cultivation is accomplished—by proper exercise.

407. The special direction of our education may be determined by our circumstances, our purposes, our chosen vocation, or our individual taste, but the duty of mental culture, of the development of the powers and capacities of the soul is universal. It rests on every rational and responsible being in the very nature of his reason and responsibility.

408. It is well to set distinctly before the mind some of the essential features of such education, to form an ideal of what constitutes a well developed soul.

409. The constituent elements of education are information and discretion. Information includes knowledge of facts and principles, or the relations of things. Discretion is the ability to apprehend the relations, consequences and implications of things.

410. Information is gained by investigation, by observation,

and by the testimony of other investigators and observers. Information may be acquired rapidly, for all the discoveries and experiences of other men may be taken over into our minds by memory and become our own stock of knowledge, which is the material of information, and this material somewhat systematized and adjusted to the "apperceptive mass" already in our mind *forms* our minds,—gives direction and character to our thinking and this is what we mean by information. Discretion cannot be borrowed as knowledge may be. It is a quality of mind, a power to appreciate, to judge, to reason correctly and analyze completely. It is by far the most important part of education, and the chief object of all mental culture.

411. Wisdom is a broad term, denoting many things but its most essential meaning is the *direction* of *conduct* according to discretion. Education should, therefore, lead to wisdom; but alas! too often misses the road.

CHAPTER X

SOCIAL DUTIES

412. The statement that man is a social being may express only the platitude that he is gregarious, naturally seeking the companionship of his kind. But properly understood it means much more than this. It means that man is so constituted that he reaches his full development only through fellowship with his fellow men. No man liveth to himself, for, whether he will or not, his life affects the life of others and is conditioned by the community of which he is a part. The fact that every man is a constituent part of a larger unit, and finds his completeness only in proper relations to the other parts of that unit, is the fundamental fact in determining his social duties, and is also a most influential factor in determining all his duties.

As we have already noticed, man is a part of the whole scheme of things; and, as such, has relations to every thing in the whole universe, and his duties are dependent on all these relations.

413. It is convenient to consider the duties that have regard chiefly to our relations to the community as a group by themselves, because we can thus get more definite notions of their form, and a more impressive view of their obligation than can be gotten by the effort to look at all our relations to the universe at once. Even when we thus limit our field, we must be on our guard against such generalities as "social consciousness," "tribal self," "national conscience," and such other terms as may serve convenience as collective terms, but have no concrete reality behind them. It is obvious that there is no self but the personal self, no conscience nor consciousness but that of the individual soul. The duty of the community or state is in reality the duties of all the individual members of that community taken collectively, or regarded as acting in an organized capacity. The

influence exerted, consciously or unconsciously, by one mind upon another tends to produce a certain degree of similarity of views, and especially of feelings, in the whole group, so that they come to have certain features in common and thus conform to certain type which may be called the national type, or the tribal character; but such terms are convenient rather than scientific, and if taken literally lead to false and confusing conceptions.

414. The terms society, community, state, etc., need also to be carefully defined. They are by their very nature somewhat elastic, meaning now more and now less according to their context or connection of thought, but, on the whole, they are fairly definite in their meaning.

415. Society may be defined as a collective group of persons forming a community having certain mutual relations and correlative duties to each other. A community is any such group of persons or families having certain common interests, possessions or duties. It is rather more definite than society, and emphasizes the partnership or common possession of the group.

416. The state is a community *organized* under a definite *constitution,* defining, either in writing or by tradition, the rights and duties and offices of the various members of the community so organized.

The state is a more formal and more artificial institution than a community, and the obligations which it imposes on its members are largely determined by the consent of those members.

Whether the origin of the state is to be thought of as a "social contract" or as the result of natural evolution due to man's nature—especially his social instincts, in either case its functions are very similar to those of a partnership or corporation voluntarily formed for certain purposes.

417. The objects of the institution of the state may be generally stated in the familiar terms of the preamble to our national constitution, "To establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity,

provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

418. Almost all of these are distinctly ethical purposes. They have to do, not with our wealth and outward estate directly, but rather with the conditions under which the individual may realize his own highest self.

419. The duties in relation to the state are of two kinds; first, the duties belonging to each citizen because of his membership in the body politic, and second, the duties of the whole community acting in their organized capacity,—as a state.

420. In all such partnerships, where a group of persons unite for the prosecution of any common purpose, there must be the surrender of some part of each person's rights and freedom of action. In lieu of these surrendered rights, he receives the assurance of protection in the rights he has retained; he surrenders part of his property for the greater security of what he has left, on the understanding that the other citizens shall surrender also a fair amount of theirs, both to be used for the general welfare of all.

421. The most obvious duty of the citizen is loyalty to the state; which is essentially faithfulness to his contract. To pay one's taxes, to keep the laws and to respect constituted authority are, in all normal conditions, the most obvious of duties. To perform such public duties as may fall to one in the maintenance of the order thus constituted, to select the best men to office, to consider the best interests of the state. To take such offices as may be assigned, and execute "public office as a public trust" is a duty no less obvious, but more often neglected. In a government such as ours, where the authority and responsibility of public affairs is vested in the whole people and exercised by representatives chosen by them, it is especially important that each citizen give his best attention to political questions as they rise in the changing conditions of his time, and that he use his best efforts to form right opinions and to propagate them, and to see that

they are enforced by good laws well executed.

422. It is greatly to be regretted that the affairs of state have been left so largely to men who put themselves forward for their own selfish purpose. The evil consequence of this is that the function of government is not respected as it should be, and the very name of politician almost a term of contempt.

The earnest words of Job Hedges on this subject are wise and timely:—

423. "There is no problem before the American people today, whether it be that of monopoly, grinding the face of the poor by the rich, the robbing of the public treasury, or whatever form the complications of life may assume, that equals, for a moment, the far-reaching and final importance of protecting the method of establishing the public will by an honest ballot. That ballot represents the strife of centuries. It stands for the struggles of the human race for freedom. It is the personification, or should be, of American life. Not only should the casting of the ballot be protected by law, but there should be a recognized standard of moral conduct in the community which will not tolerate the violation of the right of another by the casting of an unlawful ballot. That standard should be so high on the part of men of all classes that to violate it would bring about immediate condemnation. . . . The man who does not vote should be disfranchised."

424. To die for one's state is *sometimes* one's duty; to live for it is a *constant* obligation. To achieve liberty is heroic, to preserve it, wisdom.

425. But while the general obligation of loyalty and obedience to the laws of the land are, in all normal conditions, most obvious duties, the specific demands included in such obligation are not always clear.

It seems simple enough to agree that we surrender certain of our rights as individuals, in our contract with our neighbors, in order to form the state; but personal rights are very complex

affairs. They are interwoven with the rights of others, entangled in social customs, incorporated in blood relationships, and otherwise so blended with the various institutions of society that they are extremely difficult to define, and harder still to separate. The notion that we surrender part of our rights as we may contribute part of our money, is a very misleading conception, as we have found in all practical attempts at framing constitutions of states.

426. In the very best schemes of government, there must be left a large element of compromise, a tacit agreement to each endure a reasonable amount of injustice at times in the faith that, on the whole, we shall get what is due to us.

427. The most obvious danger in all free government—that is, government which is practically the "government of the people by the people," is the danger of the majority—for the majority is "the people" when it comes to an issue,—shall impose on the minority, and unjustly constrain them. Such danger becomes very serious when the state is composed of different races, or different religions, or in any way of classes widely separated in their sympathies.

428. The usual means employed for the protection of the minority is a written statement specifying the rights and privileges that are guaranteed to every citizen. Such a "bill of rights" was the "Magna Charta," which is a great landmark in the history of the government. "The Rights of Man" framed by the revolutionist of France, and the bill of rights prefixed to many of our state constitutions are examples of this means of protection for the unsurrendered rights of the citizen. For the most part such guarantees have been respected, but there always remains the fact that, in the ultimate appeal to physical force, the advantage is greatly on the side of the majority. The only absolute and permanent guarantee of justice is in the moral sentiment—the consciences—of the majority.

And for this reason the duty of judicious reflection on the

ethical principles involved in legislation is of the first importance —more important than all considerations of expedience, or the letter of the laws.

429. The instinct of fair play, of sympathy, and the spirit of magnanimity are our chief defence against the tyranny of the majority; in fact, in the last analysis, they are the only defense we have.

430. The most serious ethical problem for the individual in relation to the state is the question how far can he properly obey the law of the state when it conflicts with his moral judgment and his conscience? For example, what is a Quaker's duty in regard to war? His own conviction is that war is always wrong; but his state is at war; to refuse to aid his state is in some measure to aid the enemy; to refuse to bear arms but pay tax that someone else may be hired in his place seems a poor evasion. What then shall he do? The only general answer to such questions seems to be that in the pathological condition of society it is impossible to follow the laws that are suitable to normal conditions, and we must compromise,—must take one or other horn of the dilemma, neither of which is free from its embarrassment. We must do as physicians do in puzzling cases, *treat the symptoms* and wait for developments to reveal principles. But this does not imply that such questions can be *settled* by mere considerations of expedience, they must be answered ultimately by ethical principles which are eternal and absolute.

431. Another question of ethics, which has to be answered on rare occasions, is that of the duty of rebellion against the existing government. How much injustice may one rightly endure? and when does it become his duty to refuse submission, and when his duty to strive to overthrow the government? The term "moral compromise" has an evil sound, especially when we have so strongly held that the demands of moral law are absolute; but it is evident that, so long as the moral order of the world is unsettled, it will not be possible to follow *rules* of conduct that

are inflexible. Therein lies the distinction between a rule and a principle: the rule is a program of action, a principle is a statement of relations. To do justice, to seek to promote the right, are principles of universal application, but to support and obey the existing authority is a rule, applicable only under certain conditions and within fixed limits.

432. The obligation to promote the cause of justice makes it our duty to refuse submission, and even to rebel, when by so doing we may reasonably hope to promote the cause of justice and enhance the general welfare.

433. When we look further into the functions of the state we find some important ethical questions involved in its very constitution. The most fundamental of such questions is that of the limits of its moral obligation. Its obligation to establish justice, to protect life and property, to secure to each man the free exercise of his powers, and the free use of all that he earns seems plain and obvious.

434. But to promote the general welfare is a very broad purpose, not easy to define. It is practically settled in most states by expediency; and most of the discussion as to what the state may do and what it may not do is rarely grounded on anything deeper than considerations of convenience. State ownership of public utilities, for example, is advocated or opposed according to the supposed advantage to be derived from that arrangement. Where the proposed function does not involve anything more than commercial advantage, it may very well be considered only on that basis; but most questions as to the scope and offices of government are more complex, and involve, by implication at least, some ethical principles that are important.

For example; compulsory education, prohibition of liquor traffic, compulsory vaccination and all efforts of the state to *prevent* crime, or sickness or poverty. What are the limits beyond which the individual's rights and liberties should not be encroached upon?

435. However well we may be satisfied with these laws, there is evidently a limit to the application of the principles involved in them, and possible extremes to which no one would be willing to see them carried. No one would seriously propose to kill all the degenerates who are undesirable citizens, nor to exterminate contageous disease by destroying all those who have the disease. If we may vaccinate for the protection of the community, why not go farther and kill for the same good purpose? If we may prohibit the sale of alcohol, why not tobacco? And if tobacco, why not pie? It is a question of degree, and must be settled by that general judgment on the whole situation which we call common sense.

436. As a matter of fact, this is the only practical basis on which the limits and methods of government have ever been settled, or can be. Theories as to the divine right of the state, whether such right is vested in the king, or in all the people or elsewhere, are interesting questions, but chiefly academic. They have never had much influence on the institutions of the state. The practical politician is justified in some of his contempt for the "literary fellows" who frame ideal laws for very unideal conditions.

437. The fact is that the art of government is much older than the science; and men still deal with public affairs as they have always done, according to their instincts and impulses; they seek safety and their own interests by the instinct of self-preservation, and, for the most part, deal fairly with their neighbors from the instinct of justice. These impulses, and others involved in government, became fixed by habit and custom, long before men began to reason about them. This indicates that the most important data of social science are the actual institutions men have set up; and also that the security for justice to the individual, proper restraint of authority and respect for law and order, lies in the *moral health* or virtue of the people, rather than in any rules that can be framed and confirmed by oath or bonds.

WAR

438. The relations between different states are the occasion of some perplexing ethical problems. The whole great science of international law is devoted to the definition of these relations and the rights and duties which spring from them.

It is of course too wide a field for any considerable attention in this place, but we may gain some general notion of the ethics of international relations by the consideration of one question—the greatest question of all political ethics,—the question of war, or rather the questions of war, for they are many. The principal ones are, Is war ever right? What are the occasions in which war is justifiable? What is the duty of the individual in regard to a war which he does not deem right?

439. In considering the first of these questions, we observe that there are some very intelligent and reasonable men—not fanatics—who hold that war is always wrong, that no provocation can be great enough to justify the deliberate killing of our fellow men. This view is mostly, if not always, based on the literal interpretation of the precepts of Jesus, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Whether the teaching of Jesus, taken as a whole, justifies the literal interpretation of such passages may be doubted; at all events, very few will deny that there may be occasions when it is the duty of the state to take up arms, and the duty of each citizen to support the war.

440. If self defense is ever a duty for the individual, there is no apparent reason why the same necessity should not make it the duty of the state to defend the common rights of the community. If it is right for the state to punish individual offenders against the common welfare, it would seem to be right for it to punish and drive off offenders who come as an organized body, with arms in their hands. Moreover, if the state has any right to exist it would seem to imply the right to maintain

its existence by self defense. And if it has any functions, such as the maintenance of justice, it must be granted the right to use the means necessary for the performance of those duties. Such considerations have satisfied almost all men that there are occasions on which it is the duty of the state to go to war; and, as a corollary to this, the duty of maintaining and training soldiers for such occasions is established.

441. But when may a state make war? What is just provocation to an appeal to arms? This is a much more difficult question. It must be conceded that so serious an act as the deliberate and voluntary destruction of men's lives cannot be undertaken lightly nor unadvisedly—cannot be justified by any slight occasion or other than the most imperative necessity.

442. The interests at stake must be essential to the nation's very existence, or to the maintenance of its most sacred obligations. This rule alone would condemn many, perhaps most, of the wars of history. When those wars are remote enough for us to see their causes undimmed by the smoke of passion, prejudice and ignorance, they appear to have been caused chiefly by the greed and vanity and lust of glory or revenge, especially of kings and other rulers.

443. Moreover the incitements to war are very largely artificial,—the pomp and spectacular display of armed hosts with glittering arms, and splendid banners, brilliant uniforms and stirring music, the emotional appeal of song and story setting forth the glory of the military hero and the valor of the regiments; the traditions of the nation's history and all the glamor of romance and chivalry, and the social eminence so long accorded to the profession of arms, all these combine to give tremendous stimulus to the fighting instincts already greatly intensified in man by his necessary conflicts with his environment.

444. It is not surprising that where all these exciting influences are constantly at work, and are ever available for the rousing of the spirit of war, that war may easily break out on slight

occasion, and be entered into with such zeal and fierceness as calm reason would not for one moment justify.

445. For thousands of years these circumstances have occasioned and attended war, and it may be admitted that they have incidentally brought some advantages.

The training of an army has taught the virtues of obedience, of mutual dependence and loyalty to definite duty; it has taught the arts of organization and cooperation for a common purpose, it has developed the sense of community and an *esprit de corps* which binds society together.

446. These and some other good results have sprung from the military habits of the world; but these advantages are more than counterbalanced by the demoralizing influence of the abnormal conditions of the soldier's life,—his separation from his home and family, the depressing monotony of his life in camp or garrison, the lack of training in useful industry and the degrading character of his only function, the killing of his fellow man.

447. This diminution of the industrial efficiency of a community, and the retarding of the moral development of men in their most important years, may be regarded as the first, and perhaps the greatest of the evils of war, and the machinery of war. Next to this may be placed the enormous burden of expense which war imposes on the people; a burden that is for the most part borne by those least able to endure it. In its last analysis war means the scarcity of food, scant clothing, uncomfortable and unsanitary homes, poor schooling for the children, and a generation handicapped in the struggle of life.

448. The expense of modern warfare is beyond the power of imagination. It is estimated that the last great European war cost $25,000,000 a day. This represents the earnings of a thousand men in Europe for fifty years. It represents the cost of a thousand good school houses. It represents five thousand good homes. All this poured out each day, making an aggregate of such enormous magnitude that we can hardly form a vague conception of

it. And the implications of this vast expenditure are distress, and poverty, hunger and cold, and degradation suffered most by helpless age and innocent childhood, by the sick and friendless.

449. But beyond these disadvantages and all this countless waste, far beyond these evils is the horrible slaughter of men by other men. The very thought of these hosts of men going forth to their day's work of butchery: bearing with them ingenious machines devised for murder, planning shrewdly how they can destroy most of their fellow men, makes one sick at heart. The fierce passions of hellish hate aroused by such a conflict, and the longlived evil spirit of revenge that is left in the hearts of men, the physical and mental agony of the field of battle, and the more pitiful distress of the widow and the orphan at home; altogether the simple facts of war are hideous beyond all words to tell. "War is hell" said Sherman, but even that term does not convey the dreadful horrors of the real war.

450. If such war is capable of being justified at all, it can only be by some such plea as that it is the only means of saving the most precious possessions of mankind. Certainly no commercial advantage can justify it. Certainly not any purpose of reprisal or revenge, certainly not any ambition for glory or renown. Yet these have been chief causes of war.

Only the protection of the most sacred rights, such as life or liberty or moral freedom would seem to warrant the enormity of war.

451. But the ethical interest in war is not so much in the exact definition of just causes for war, as in the obligation resting on all nations to seek means of preventing war.

It does not follow that, because at this particular date and circumstances we feel obliged to go to war, that therefore we are blameless. We certainly are not blameless if we have neglected or refused to use all reasonable means and efforts to avoid such circumstances.

452. If a community allows its courts and machinery of justice

to become so utterly corrupt that the only means of defending their individual rights is by fighting for them, it may well be that the immediate occasion warrants the killing of one's neighbor to protect one's property or the honor of his family, but no civilized community is justified in allowing such a condition to exist.

We long ago discovered how to prevent the necessity of such appeals to brute force on the part of individuals or of tribes, or of federated states. Centuries ago the machinery of law and courts and police were sufficiently developed to make appeals to violence unnecessary. No state of the union has any occasion to support an army of defense against another state; for the federal courts and the police power of the whole United States are charged with the duty of deciding on their respective rights and, if need be, compelling obedience to the mandates of the law.

453. There is no sufficient reason why all the civilized nations of the world should not agree to form a court where all disputes between the states would be adjudicated, and an army whose function would be like that of police, simply to enforce the orders of the constituted authority.

It is no new scheme,—no untried experiment. The United States have tried it out and found it practical and satisfactory. But whatever scheme or method may be best adapted to the existing circumstances, this much is certainly obligatory on the nations, that they use all reasonable efforts to devise some plan by which the rights of nations may be settled, as the rights of individuals and of tribes have so long been, by reason and law and the peaceable machinery of courts, and not by brutish force and inhuman slaughter.

454. From this point of view war is always absolutely wrong, for there has been no war in Europe for a thousand years that settled any question as fairly as it could have been settled by such courts as they were quite able to create. And from this point

of view, the iniquity of war grows greater year by year, because the plans for such a court are more intelligently formed and their feasibility more fully recognized.

CHAPTER XI

SOCIAL DUTIES—*Continued*

THE COMMUNITY

455. The ideal community is modeled on the family. No doubt the first conception of a community was literally a family, —a tribe, all the members of which were united by the ties of blood relationship. The tribal relation survived long after the actual kinship had ceased to be close enough to be a conscious bond. Mutual dependence and the obvious advantages of sharing some things in common served as a sufficient reason for maintaining certain definite relations between the individuals and families dwelling near together. But the social instincts form a stronger bond of union than considerations of convenience: and, as society becomes more complex, and the advantages of mutual sympathy and help become less obvious, the need to cherish and cultivate the social instincts is increased. It is a serious loss to the ethical welfare of society when the formal regulations of the state or city diminish the sense of personal obligation for our neighbor's comfort and happiness.

456. The minute regulations of a paternal government that provides for the nursing of the sick, the care of the poor, the housing of the homeless, the education and moral training of the young, are no doubt a blessing on the whole, but they inevitably tend to restrict and diminish the sense of neighborliness, the personal sympathy and interest in each other's welfare which are necessary to the best development of our own nature.

To dwell for years in a community where one does not know his nearest neighbors seems an unnatural condition, and though it is sometimes forced upon us by the conditions of city life, it is

to be regretted and so far as possible obviated by all means in our power. To love one's neighbor is not to be confined to our own street or city, it is a universal obligation, but to be practically kept must be exercised chiefly in regard to those who are physically near to us.

457. The more obvious duties to our neighbor are fairly well defined and secured by the laws of the state. The ethical principles which underlie the laws against "whatsover doeth or may unjustly hinder my neighbor's wealth or *outward* estate" are general and well recognized; but the obligation to promote the welfare of his *inward* estate is not less binding and of greater importance. His good name and his peace of mind cannot be fully protected by statutes, they must be cherished and promoted by the free and generous sympathy that springs spontaneously in a well regulated mind.

458. It is in this relation that the minor virtues, or graces, such as courtesy, consideration and good nature, find their most frequent occasion. Such graces exert an influence like the genial warmth of the sunshine, not spectacular, nor demonstrative, but grateful, comforting and powerful. The true source of all courtesy is kindness. The rhyme of our infant school instruction is well worthy of a place in philosophic ethics:—

> "Politeness is to do or say
> The kindest thing in the kindest way."

The forms of courtesy are largely conventional, but the essence is ethical. "There is in civility a principle which is essential, and a form which is arbitrary." To learn the conventionalities of polite usage is necessary that we may express the sentiments of respect and good will, as it is necessary to learn language to express our thoughts; and, while the supple grace of the dancing-master or the profuse mannerliness of the fop are bad form, because they are exaggerated, the graceful art of true politeness is a noble accomplishment of the highest ethical value.

459. The highest form of neighborliness is *friendship*. It is the realization of the best advantages afforded by our social nature and our fellowship with our kind. It comprehends the duties and responsibilities which we owe to all our neighbors and other more notable obligations which spring only from the more intimate relations that subsist only between those who are closely bound together by the bonds of congenial tastes and mutual affection.

No virtues have been more widely recognized or more highly valued than those of friendship, no duties more commended than these.

Aristotle, Cicero and Emerson are eminent examples of a host of writers who have devoted special attention to this subject, and their wise words should be familiar to all intelligent men. Aristotle, as we might expect, is the most philosophical in his treatment of the matter, Cicero more rhetorical and Emerson more colloquial and genial; together they present the various phases of the subject most completely.

Aristotle's view presents the aspect of the subject most germane to our present purpose. The following quotation may serve to give a hint of his conception of the matter.

460. "The perfect friendship is that of virtuous people, and who resemble each other in their virtue; for these wish each other well, insomuch as they are good; and I add that they are good in themselves. Those who wish their friends well from such a noble motive are the friends *par excellence*. Hence it is that the friendship of such generous hearts lasts as long as they remain good and virtuous themselves; now virtue is a substantial and durable thing. Each of the two friends is in the first place good in himself, and he is, moreover good to all his friends, for good people are useful to each other, and also mutually agreeable to each other. Such a friendship unites, then, all the conditions. There is nothing more lovely.

It is quite natural, however, that such friendships are very

rare, because there are few people who have such a disposition.

It requires, moreover, time and habit. The proverb is true which says that people can hardly know each other well, 'before they have eaten together bushels of salt.' In the same way persons cannot be friends before they have shown themselves worthy of affection, before reciprocal confidence is established. . . . Friendship, besides, consists much rather in loving than in being loved. To love, then, is the great virtue of friends: it is thus that the most unequal of people may be friends; their mutual esteem renders them equals."

461. No other duties are more agreeable, on the whole, than those of friendship, but there are some obligations due to friendship that are extremely difficult.

For example, it is often the duty of a friend to oppose the unworthy purposes of his friend, to refuse to consent to what the other, in a moment of weakness, or of unwonted stress, may consent to do or to be. The friend who will not let us rest in the low level of our discouragement or indifference is sometimes the same kind of a nuisance that a faithful conscience is: but no office of friendship is more gratefully remembered than the patient severity which goaded us up and out of our sloth and weakness and folly; that had faith in us when we had lost faith in ourselves, and cherished for us the high ideals which, for the moment, we were ready to cast away.

It is worth remarking that friendship is the finest test of that group of qualities which we include in the concept of the *gentleman*. It is not so much the behavior of men toward women that is indicative of character, for that is so prescribed by an artificial code of chivalry, and so definitely fixed by the conventionalities of social life that it is only on extraordinary occasions that any considerable liberty of action is permitted; but in the relations between equals, man to man, we have a fair field and no favors.

PROFESSIONAL DUTIES

462. There are many relations of great practical importance in the life of a community that spring from our various employments, and a large portion of our social duties are determined by these relations.

These relations and their duties are sometimes fixed by agreement and defined by contracts, as, for example, most of our commercial transactions and industrial engagements. But in most cases they are fixed chiefly by custom, and sanctioned by the approval of the community, acting informally, but no less efficiently, through influence of public opinion.

463. The vocations which are dignified by the name of professions have each its own code, which is a very positive definition of the duties required of each member of that profession. Such codes are rarely reduced to writing, or even expressed in set terms defining specific duties, but are rather regarded as conceptions of the relation in which the member of that profession stands to the rest of the community. This relation being defined, the program of duty is derived from it by inference, but, for the most part, the definition of these duties is left to the individual, though the established customs of the time and place limit his freedom to rather narrow bounds.

464. The traditions of professional honor and professional dignity are very strong, and are second only to our religious convictions in their influence on our conduct. They are among the most powerful incentives to promote the welfare of our neighbors. It is often asserted that these traditions are dying out, and that professional service is being reduced, more and more, to a purely business basis,—and are determined by the ordinary law of *quid pro quo*. If this is so, it is greatly to be regretted. There is something very fine and admirable in the conception of professional service as something too dignified to be put upon the market, too personal to be bought and sold, too sacred to be

given or withheld for any consideration of price. Fees are, according to this tradition, not pay, but an *honorarium*,—a gift which the client offers as a token of his gratitude for a favor received—an expression of his appreciation, not so much of the service itself, as of the good will and kindness of the person rendering the service.

The physician of the old school would scorn to send a bill for professional service, as a gentleman would disdain to ask his guest to pay for the hospitality of his house; and the lawyer of the same traditional type was scrupulous to speak of such fees as he received as the "courtesy" or "kind remembrance" of his client.

It may be doubted whether this traditional dignity was ever very generally maintained, but it is no small honor to the professions that they formed such high ideals, and, to a good degree, conformed their conduct to their ideals.

465. The tendency of our own time is so strong toward the complete organization of society on a purely impersonal basis, toward the subdivision of all labor, and toward expressing all things in terms of money value, that the old traditions are harder to maintain; personal relations count for less, and professional codes are more mechanical, more like the rules of a corporation. The physician sends his bill, just like the plumber's, with its items duly specified in time and labor and use of tools; the lawyer commends his efficiency on your behalf by the promptness with which he attends to the collection of his fees from you. All this is called "good business," and perhaps it is, but there are other interests in life that are of greater value than "business," and it is greatly to the honor of the professions that, in spite of the increasing difficulties in the way, they have held fast to their high ideal, and have not become wholly commercial but,—especially the physicians,—have put their services so largely at the disposal of the community, and give so freely of their time and skill and energy for the good of their neighbors, with

no demand or expectation of remuneration.

466. The gospel ministry, or priesthood, is, by its very nature, much protected from the temptation to become commercial. It is not only undignified to put religious functions on a business basis, but it is utterly incongruous. To sell the sacred offices of religion for money is repulsive to the dullest conscience, and to hire the services of a spiritual adviser seems a travesty on religion. The meanness of human nature in the pulpit and in the pew has often smirched the dignity of the sacred profession, but on the whole the ministry has maintained its integrity, and kept its offices free from commercialism so far as to command for that profession as a whole a degree of confidence and veneration not accorded to any other in the world.

467. The term profession is no longer applied exclusively to the three vocations formerly so designated—the ministry, medicine and law—but is still restricted to those employments which require a liberal education, such as teaching, engineering, pharmacy and many others, each of which has its own peculiar code prescribing, more or less minutely, what is and what is not "good form." The traditions of these younger professions are not so fully developed as those of the older, but are important factors in the moral development of every community. All the good traditions of professional conduct should be carefully conserved, and not lightly set aside, for their influence extends to the very foundations of society and permeates its entire structure. Their special value lies in the fact that they give place and honor to the *personal* relations, which are so important to our welfare, but extremely difficult to define by law or to duly recognize in the more formal organization of community life.

468. The obligations which are based on contracts are not so difficult to define, but they are always in danger of being misconceived, through the confusion of legal and moral obligation, or mistaking of custom for righteousness. Laws are at best only the very general expression of the moral judgment of the people.

It is impossible to frame them so as to express even this minutely enough to cover every case that may arise: and they are fixed—static—while life is active,—dynamic. It often happens, therefore, that while a law may be good in general, it is unfair in particular cases, or a law that was wise when formulated, is no longer suitable to changed conditions, and therefore no system of laws can ever take the place of the principles of ethics.

469. As society becomes more completely organized, more complex in its relations and therefore more difficult for the individual to discover and apply the principles of ethics to his own conduct, the stronger is the tendency to substitute what is legal for our notion of what is right, and to do many things that are essentially unfair but not forbidden by "the rules of the game."

470. Such cases arise most frequently in connection with business transactions, and are often extremely perplexing. The decision of such cases belongs chiefly to the sciences of casuistry, but there is always the great fundamental principle to be observed, that is that moral obligation must always take precedence over any statutes whatsoever,—no plea that it is "nominated in the bond" can ever justify an act or claim that it is essentially unfair or unkind.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them," is a precept more obligatory than all the laws of the statute books. The much vexed questions of the regulation of "big business," the limitations of corporations, and the multiform disputes of labor and capital must be settled, if settled at all, by the cordial acceptance of the golden rule as the ultimate standard of all social duty.

BENEVOLENCE

471. There is a large group of social duties that cannot be determined by the standard of justice, unless we stretch the term justice to include benevolence,—which, indeed, we may properly do, for my neighbor has a real *claim* on my good will

as well as on my honesty. But the "quality of mercy is not strained," i. e., it is not forced or compulsory; it is free, spontaneous, and springs from sympathy and love of *persons,* not of abstractions like justice or honesty.

To "do good as we have opportunity unto all men," is as high a duty as to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." The appeal to benevolence is made on the ground of my *neighbor's need,* not of his rights; it is an appeal, not a demand; its measure is my affection, not his desert.

472. The obligation of charity is just as positive as the obligation of justice, but it is measured by a different standard. These social duties are sometimes presented as having three degrees of obligation. 1st, one may not do evil to one who has done good to him. 2d, He may not do evil to one who has done no evil to him. 3d, he should do good even to those who have done evil to him. This last is the teaching of Jesus, a duty little recognized before his time, never fully performed in any community, yet, beyond all doubt, it is the only rule that satisfied the judgment of an enlightened conscience.

It should be noted that benenvolence—as the word itself implies—is a matter of right state of mind: it is *good will* not merely good deeds. It has its foundation, not in conduct, but in the affections, and its ultimate demand is to "love thy neighbor as thyself."

THE FAMILY

473. The family is the oldest institution in the world, and the most important. We call it an institution because it is the product of voluntary agreement between two or more persons.

It is founded on marriage which is a voluntary union of man and woman so that "they are no longer twain but one flesh."

It has its basis in nature, yet not as an obligation which one may not escape, but which he may or may not assume.

474. Marriage is a contract, and, like all other contracts, it

imposes certain obligations on the contracting parties which they may not violate. No other contract is so important, for on it depends, not only a large share of the happiness and welfare of the contracting parties, but the welfare of an endless line of progeny. The marriage contract involves the very springs of being and the destiny of the human race.

475. The effects of marriage on the individual are the most important that we experience. "Whatever else marriage may do or fail to do," says Mr. Lecky, "it never leaves a man unchanged. His intellect, his character, his happiness, his way of looking on the world will all be influenced by it. If it does not raise or strengthen him, it will lower or weaken. If it does not deepen his happiness it will impair it. It brings with it duties, interests, habits, hopes, cares, sorrows and joys, that will penetrate into every fissure of his nature and modify the whole course of his life."

It is highly proper that we should be warned that this relation is "not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but soberly, discreetly and in the fear of God," as the prayer-book puts it.

476. In spite of its obvious solemnity, it is most often entered into with surprising levity and lack of forethought. A sudden impulse, a blinding passion or a mercenary motive are frequently the chief considerations presented to the mind. In most cases, no doubt, these are supplemented by a certain amount of real affection, and some appreciation of the responsibilities assumed; but too often these are much too slight to form a safe foundation for a union so permanent and so momentous.

Our traditions on the subject of courtship and marriage are faulty; much of the romance of the tender affection is false and silly, and the sentiments on the whole subject artificial and hysterical.

It is by no means to be desired that the marriage relations should be considered only in the cold light of prudence and con-

venience. It would be false to our best instincts to suppress the sweet joys of courtship, the amiable sentiments and the poetry of the lover and his lass. To rob life of these would be like robbing the flowers of their perfume or the skies of the stars. We have not too much, but too little, of real sentiment and genuine poetry in life; but we have too much that is artificial, maudlin and merely sensuous.

The ethical basis of a happy marriage must rest on something that will last through life, something that attracts *respect* and *esteem*. Real worth of character is the only loadstone that will keep its power to attract.

477. To "fall in love" is an ominous phrase, for to fall into anything is a dangerous way to enter, and of all relations that should be entered sanely and discreetly, the marriage relation is the most important.

Mr. Punch's famous skit, "Advice to those about to marry, Don't!" may be offered in all seriousness to those about to precipitate themselves into that condition known as being in love.

While the instincts of our social nature are the proper source of the impulse to marriage, they are safely followed only with the sanction of our judgment after fair consideration of the duties and responsibilities involved, and our ability to perform those duties.

Such considerations involve not only our own personal interests, but those of our partner and the community and, especially, those of the children that may be born to us. On this subject we commend the wise words of Mr. Lecky which are appended to this chapter.

478. The duties of each member of a family depend in good degree upon the relations naturally belonging to each member, and also the relations more or less permanently fixed by the customs of the age and society to which we may belong. The offices of the husband and the wife in the management of the home are largely matters of conventionality, and are just now

the subject of much agitation and debate. The position of head of the family has been in all ages assigned to the man: the wife has been regarded as at best the junior partner, and very often not a partner at all, but anything from a slave to a domestic pet. As some compensation for this superior authority assumed by the man, he has been assigned the chief responsibility for the maintenance and welfare of the household. He is expected to support the family, as well as rule it, to protect it as well as govern it.

These conventional distributions of the labors and responsibilities of the family are by no means perfect, and often work injustice to one or other party to the arrangement. They are, however, very largely the result of social conditions that are complex and far reaching, and it is rarely possible to change such arrangements without unsettling more things than seem at first sight to be involved. For example, it seems on the face of it unfair to pay higher salaries to men than to women for the same service equally well done. Yet so long as we expect the man to support the family, and in all things to bear the heavy end of the expense of social life, this fact must be considered in its relation to wages. So long as we regard it as bad form for a woman to support a husband, so long as the young lady is not willing to ask for an increase of salary because she wants to marry and can't afford to keep a husband on her present wages, so long will society feel justified in making a distinction in favor of the young man who has to say just that. In brief the social order is so intricate that it is impossible to adjust some defects without adjusting many other matters at the same time.

479. This, of course, does not imply that we are to accept the present social order with its customs and conventions as inevitable, but it does show that the short and easy methods of reform so confidently advocated by self-appointed reformers are not so simple as they seem. If man is to be dethroned from his state as the king and head of the house, the whole constitution of soci-

ety will have to be revised. Such revision cannot be made by legislation or by the revolt of woman, but may be made by the slower process of evolution gradually adjusting the relations more and more to the demands of justice and convenience.

480. The relations of parent and child are grounded in nature. The long period of dependence of the child on the parent is not terminated by any fixed line of age or development; it shades off from absolute dependence to an indefinite subordination which finds its justification partly in gratitude due to the parent, and partly in the superior wisdom and experience of the parent. The importance of this subordination is attested by the common judgment of men, as shown in the laws and social customs of all ages. In every code of laws known to history the duty of respect for parental authority is emphasized. History also testifies that the decay of parental authority is one of the first indications of moral decline. In modern times we have come to depend less on legislation and more on moral suasion and the force of social custom to enforce this duty, but whatever means may be deemed most effective to its promotion the duty of respect to parental authority is, and ever must be, one of the fundamental pillars that support good social order.

481. The most perplexing problem relating to the family is the question of divorce. The intention of the marriage relation is in its very nature permanent, and the severance of that relation is fraught with most lamentable consequences. Only the most disordered conditions can make divorce even a debatable question. Only when the obligations of the contract have been grossly violated already, can divorce be justified. The practical questions are how great must be the degree of such violation to justify divorce, and how is the divorce to affect the different parties in the case.

482. It is universally admitted that adultery is sufficient ground for divorce, for that crime is, *per se*, a breaking of the contract, and considerations of equity and honor and physical

safety alike demand release of the innocent party from the guilty one. But are there other offenses which though they are not, like adultery, direct violations of the marriage contract, are nevertheless of such a nature as to render the performance of duties of the contract impossible?

483. It is on this point that the question of divorce must rest, and not on general considerations of character. A man may be a liar, a coward, a thief and an all-round villain, and yet be a tolerable husband; but if his villainy be of such a nature as to violate the just claims of his marriage relation the question of divorce may rise. The chief grounds on which divorce may be advocated are willful desertion or other voluntary refusal to perform the duties implied in the marriage relation, abuse or intolerable offensiveness of character. The latter of these grounds is very indefinite, and differently interpreted in different states, some refusing to recognize anything short of actual danger to life, others admitting such trivial grounds as incompatibility of temper.

484. Whatever may be grounds of legislation or expediency, the ethical ground for divorce must be some very serious and irredeemable defect in the conduct of one or both of the contracting parties.

The deplorable injury done to the parties divorced, the still more deplorable injustice to the children, and the general damage done to society by the profanation of the marriage vows make divorce, if justifiable at all, only justifiable as the least of two evils, both of which are very great.

Such partial divorce as permits separation, but not the entire annulling of the marriage contract, is a much less serious evil, but even this means the failure of what should be the most potent means of blessing and success in life.

485. The chief advantage of a careful study of the whole question of divorce is the profound impression thus produced of the supreme importance of discretion, forethought and sincerity in

assuming the bonds of matrimony.

There is no possible excuse for the frivolous and ill-considered levity with which marriage is so often entered, and they are the copious source from which the appalling evils of divorce and domestic tragedies proceed.

The chief means of checking the shameful prevalence of these evils is at this source; for in such close relations as those of the marriages ties it is especially true that "things ill begun make strong themselves by ill."

486. The obligation of parents to provide for the welfare of their children is so obvious a duty, so strongly urged by instinct and affection as well as reason, that little need be said about it on the ground of ethics. But it should be noted that the impulses of parental affection, and even the instincts that impel us to protect and cherish our own offspring must be directed and controlled by reason. It may be doubted whether there are not more children injured by the unrestrained impulses of paternal affection than are hurt by cruelty. The spoiled child of doting parents, the pampered darling, whose will is never subdued to the authority of his superiors, is terribly handicapped for the race of life, a most disagreeable companion and likely to become an undesirable citizen.

487. There is another relation involved in family life, as it is usually constituted, that is the relation of the household servants. It is the fashion now in certain quarters to repudiate this as a part of the special relations of domestic life, and to treat the duties of these workers as matters of contract on a purely commercial basis—so much work and so much wages being the whole of obligation on either side. Such a conception, instead of adding dignity to the servant's position, robs it of its most essential claim to honor and affection.

Relations so intimate as those of household servants with the family can not be made impersonal or put upon a mere commercial basis. In the very nature of our human personality we have

claims and obligations in relation to those associated with us in daily life that can never be expressed in terms of work and wages. Respect and courtesy must rest on some better basis than a contract, and sympathy and kindliness are a debt we owe to all, by virtue of relations established before contracts were invented.

While definite agreement as to service to be rendered and wages to be paid is useful to avoid misunderstanding, and to protect both parties against greed and inefficiency, such agreements can never compass the whole relation nor take the place of ethical obligation. A fuller recognition of these obligations, and a more generous interpretation of them on the part of both masters and servants would do much to solve the much vexed situation known as the servant question.

CHAPTER XII

CASUISTRY

488. Casuistry is a most respectable science unfortunately handicapped by a bad reputation.

It is nothing more or less than an attempt to apply the principles of ethics to the actual problems of daily life. It is, as the name denotes, the science of cases, and has for its object a systematic treatment of concrete cases of conduct according to the well established laws of ethics.

489. The need of such a science is apparent. Our brief consideration of the factors of conduct and the principles of ethical philosophy must have made evident at least the profound and complex character of the varied rational activities which we call by the general name of conduct. It is evident that, however earnestly we may wish to be honest, it is not always easy to determine what honesty demands and what it forbids; or, however loyal one may be in his devotion to duty, it is often extremely difficult to determine just what one's duty is.

Any rules that can be formulated to aid the moral judgment and guide us in right living should be regarded as a boon and blessing. Much better still if some system of rules can be devised that will cover all ordinary cases, and serve as a practical code of conduct.

490. The need of some such science is more fully evidenced by the zealous but unsystematic efforts of innumerable moralists and reformers to frame rules for themselves and others in relation to certain particular lines of conduct. For example, the rule of total abstinence from alcohol, the objection to certain forms of popular amusements or the opposition to war under any and all circumstances. These are but a few of the many ques-

tions on which good men hold different opinions and on which rules are made which, whether wise or unwise, are rarely scientific, but rather are grounded on expediency or temporary interest, or, sometimes, on traditional views, the ground of which has long since disappeared.

Moreover, in the complications of our present social life it is extremely difficult to analyze cases sufficiently to find the principle that should rule the case.

491. It is certainly unfortunate that the science of casuistry has fallen into such disfavor that the very name is quite disreputable and has become the synonym of sophistry and equivocation.

It is hardly worth while to inquire into the history of the word, but one point should be remarked. There is an instinctive protest made by every free soul against the attempt to dictate to it. "Freedom of conscience" is a watchword with a splendid history. "The right of private judgment" has been consecrated by the blood of many martyrs. It is natural therefore that whatever savored of rules to bind the conscience should arouse suspicion and hostility. Such suspicion and such zeal for freedom is a good and wholesome thing, but like other good and wholesome things it may be carried to extremes and become absurd. And it would seem wise now to let the dead past bury its dead controversies and gird ourselves for the present task of guiding the perplexed and anxious conscience to the solution of its present problems.

492. What we need above all else in the philosophy of conduct is just such consideration of cases of moral perplexity as the student of law gives to his cases, or the student of medicine to his. In neither of these fields do we attempt to reduce their principles to a code, or book of prescriptions labeled for each special pain or ailment, but we analyze and diagnose and seek to determine the principles involved and the relations affected in the case. Thus we gather knowledge and acquire skill in maintaining justice and promoting health.

493. There are an innumerable multitude of cases presented every day at the bar of human consciences, no two of them exactly similar, each demanding and receiving such answers as their circumstances seem to warrant, or the normal judgment of the individual is able to give. Yet the great majority at least of all these cases might be reduced to a few groups or classes in each of which groups some one well established principle should govern. Here for example are a hundred cases of business speculation, all lying near the line that separates honesty from gambling. If we can find the *ruling principle*, a definition of ethical law that is reliable and applicable we can easily apply it and relieve the uneasy conscience of the honest man, and convict the gambler of his crime. But so long as such questions are decided by the vague appeals to a bewildered and biased moral judgment, guided only by a perverted moral instinct we cannot hope for anything more definite than the superficial judgment, "I don't see anything wrong in it," or on the other hand, "It somehow doesn't seem right to me."

Each profession and calling has its own peculiar problems—its cases, which each man must decide, and which we are under obligation to decide, not according to our spontaneous judgment or impulse or interest, but according to eternal principles of righteousness. It is to aid the individual in the solution of such problems that the science of casuistry is needed.

494. It is not possible, nor desirable, to relieve the individual conscience of responsibility. Each human soul must choose its own course, and meet in its own person the consequence of its own conduct; for however we may share a common environment, and be influenced by the sympathy of our fellow-men, the ultimate unit of mankind is the individual person. No man can assume the pain that comes from my rheumatic joint, or live by the food I eat; no more can any man take the responsibility of my conduct or have his destiny determined by my judgment.

Nevertheless we may help one another to wise decisions, may

point out the path of wisdom, and enlighten the moral judgment.

495. It is quite impossible to frame a code of morals so complete as to answer the purpose of a manual of conduct in which the proper action is prescribed for every possible case. Such manuals for even so simple a field as social usage are impracticable, and the man who tries to be a gentleman according to a handbook of etiquette is an object of ridicule; nevertheless there are well established rules of conduct which the cultivated gentleman must know. Such rules and customs are the accumulated wisdom of many generations; and, though far from perfect, they are better than the spontaneous judgment of inexperienced individuals.

So casuistry, though the name is not allowed, is, and always has been a most interesting and important field of study. We are in fact all casuists, constantly exercising the office in deciding cases for ourselves, often—perhaps too often—dictating decisions for other people.

496. What we need is not a new science, but a more scientific method of procedure in the study of cases,—a more systematic application of the principles of ethics to the actual problems of life.

497. Such a science must be inductive first of all, for it must consist chiefly of a well considered and thoroughly tested body of rules, not formulated from the theories of ethics, but *discovered* by the careful study of concrete cases. Such rules of conduct stand in the same relation to ethical principles that the decisions of the court stand to the principles of justice.

For example, in such cases as those concerning rights of labor and capital what we need is not a fuller knowledge of the principles of justice, for on these there is substantial agreement, but a more definite perception of the rights and duties belonging to the relations in which the contending parties stand.

498. As we advance in our knowledge of such relations, and in the store of rules derived from this knowledge, casuistry

becomes more and more deductive, that is, the application of established rules to new problems.

499. In the actual practise of casuistry the simplest method of procedure is something like this.

First: what is the office of functions of the agent in the given case.

Second: what are his rights in the exercise of his office.

Third: what are the limits of these rights, where do they touch the rights of others and find their boundaries.

Fourth: what conflicts are there to be settled between apparently inconsistent claims.

Fifth: a clear statement of the *ruling* principle in the case.

The following examples are offered as practical exercises, not as covering any considerable part of the field of conduct, but like the examples in arithmetic to give a suggestion of method.

500. A is a lawyer, B is accused of murder. A knows that he is guilty, but the extenuating circumstances are such as to induce A to labor for his acquittal. He appeals to the passions, prejudices and sympathies of the jury and secures his acquittal. Now our first question is what is the function of the lawyer,—what is the proper function of his office. The answer to this must be that it is to promote justice, to aid in the conviction of the criminal and in the acquittal of the innocent. He may sell to his client his time and labor and legal knowledge and forensic skill, but he may not sell his obligation to promote justice.

The second question is what are his rights in his office. They are the right to be heard before an impartial tribunal, to summon witnesses and compel them to testify, to make the most favorable statement of his client's case that the facts will bear, to claim for him all the protection that the law provides, and such extenuating circumstances as may properly mitigate the severity of the letter of the law. In brief he may and should make the best statement of his client's side of the case that the facts may warrant.

The third question is what are the limits of these rights. They extend only so far as they may reasonably be regarded as on the whole conducive to justice,—on the whole because the other side of the case is supposed to be stated by the opposing counsel.

The fourth question, and the most difficult one in most cases, is what consideration is to have most weight where the interests of justice seem to demand a choice between two or more legitimate principles; for example, should this man be spared the penalty of his crime because he was provoked beyond endurance and has sincerely repented, but by sparing him the majesty of law may be impaired and others encouraged to commit crimes. Which is the more important duty, to exercise mercy, which might well be shown to this man, or to maintain the majesty of the law which is so necessary to the permanent security of justice! The answer must be determined by a full and comprehensive view of the whole case in is relations and consequences. The decision must be rendered on the principle that the lawyer's duty is to promote justice.

He may appeal to the sympathy and the prejudice of the jury so far as they really help the jury to properly conceive of the case. He may plead for mercy, so far as it does not injure others, or imperil the future. He may even secure acquittal by taking advantage of the ignorance of the court and opposing counsel because it seems better to let a guilty man escape than to damage the machinery by which on the whole innocence is protected and crime punished.

Such a consideration of this case leaves the ultimate decision as to the lawyer's duty where it belongs, that is to his own conscience—his best judgment as to the course of conduct that will, in the long run, be conducive to the maintenance of justice: but it simplifies his task of conscience by eliminating all irrelevant questions, and putting the case distinctly before his mind. It debars all considerations of personal advantage, such as the joy of victory, pecuniary gain or enhanced reputation. It compels

broad views and fair consideration of all the elements that properly enter into the case.

The examples given at the end of the book are for practise in such analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER XIII

THE METAPHYSICS OF ETHICS

501. Occasionally, a piece of work is so thoroughly well done that it never needs to be done again, some subject so well discussed and the whole truth of it so adequately expressed that it seems an impertinence to attempt another statement of it.

Such a piece of work is Professor James Seth's chapters on "Metaphysical Implications of Morality," in his "Ethical Principles," pages 360-466.

Only the painful conviction that many of you, my "gentle readers," will not take the trouble to read those admirable chapters could justify the brief discussion of this subject in this place.

But some consideration of the ultimate grounds of ethics is necessary to the completeness of any outline of the subject.

502. We have, from the first, assumed that ethics is based on certain permanent principles, which form a part of the scheme of things which we call the universe. We have conceived of right as conformity to this universal order, and wrong as any want of harmony with it.

503. We have also asserted that the only way of discovering these principles is by induction—that is by the careful study of all the phenomena presented by our moral nature, and by such study of facts arrive at the principles by inference.

504. In this way, we have reached many conclusions as to the factors of conduct, the standard by which conduct is to be judged, and some of the more obvious duties arising from the relations in which the individual finds himself placed in the order of the world of which he forms a part.

505. But we find that these principles cannot be regarded as complete in themselves, cannot be erected with a system that is

independent of the rest of the universe. They are but a small part of the realm of truth, and they touch and depend on the general order of the world on every side.

506. Ethics, like all other sciences, takes the small group of phenomena belonging to a certain field of experience and tries to find their relations one to another, and the practical use that can be made of them. But the deeper question of the relations of these principles to the principles discovered in other fields, and the *mutual relations of all* in the whole order of things is the province of philosophy or metaphysics.

507. There is, however, no fixed line of division between science and philosophy; every science borrows certain conceptions from metaphysics and assumes them as the basis of its classification, and its working hypotheses. The terms science and philosophy denote a distinction of degree rather than of kind; both have to do with the *relations of things*, and the chief difference between them is the extent of the field they include in their purview.

The study of ethics raises questions which can only be answered by going beyond the moral phenomena and considering the inter-relations of other principles with those found in ethics. And not only does it raise such questions; but the very foundation of ethics is dependent on their answer.

508. The most fundamental of these questions are three. First; is there a moral order in the universe—a system in which moral phenomena are arranged in certain definite order and relations to one another as the phenomena of the rational and physical world are arranged?

Second; what is the relation of the moral order to the rational and physical order—are they all parts of one all-comprehensive system, working in harmony, or do they follow different laws which sometimes clash?

Third; what is the source and origin of such order as there is found to be in the universe,—is it the result of the automatic

adjustment of moral beings to an environment that happens to exist, or is it the work of an intelligent first cause who created all things, endowed them with their qualities and forces and fixed their relations—which we call their laws?

Of course there are many other questions, but these are cardinal, on them turn all the others.

509. Now an order, or system, is nothing but certain relations so firmly established that they never change. In such an order, certain events follow certain other events in an unvaried sequence, or, in the languages of common sense, every event is due to a cause, or causes, acting so uniformly that the same event will inevitably and invariably follow the same cause; as two and two will invariably amount to four, or as ice will always melt at a certain temperature. The question as to the moral order is simply this, do certain consequents follow certain antecedents in moral phenomena with the same invariable certainty as they do in mathematics or physics.

510. This is purely a question of fact, and must be answered from the evidence presented by observation and experience. The facts relevant to this question are, for the most part, facts of consciousness, not of the external world; the feeling of obligation and the pangs of remorse, the sense of honor and the judgments of merit are examples of the kind of phenomena which furnish evidence on this matter. These facts are not less—but rather more, capable of verification than the facts of the physical world; remorse, for example, is a fact as well certified to our understanding as the sensation of pain, and the instinct of sympathy as well known as the appetite for food. It is impossible here to review the evidence, or to discuss the grounds on which men have reached conclusions on this subject; nor is such review necessary, since our present interest is served by the verdict rendered by the judgment of mankind in all ages, which is unanimous in its assertion that there is such an order,—that there is a permanent and immutable relation between moral conduct and

certain conditions of the soul; that remorse, for example, follows the violation of one's sense of duty, and that the tribute of respect is spontaneously paid to the hero. We must notice here that all we are interested to establish, just now, is that moral phenomena have an order *among themselves*, that they are not fortuitous or lawless but form a system, in which cause and effect are just as inevitable as in the physical world; and this we may regard as certainly established.

511. But the second question is much more difficult to answer. The relations between the moral order and the rational and physical order is a question as old as philosophy, and has attracted the interest of thoughtful minds down to the present day.

512. Stated in terms of modern thought the question is, Is nature moral? Does the scheme of things so far as we can apprehend it, when fairly interpreted, show any favor to moral excellence, or is it entirely indifferent to ethical quality.

513. Of course, the results of our own conduct do show a very close correspondence between good conduct and that personal welfare which we call success or happiness, for the greater part of our duties consist in the voluntary adaptation of our conduct to our environment, for the very purpose of promoting our highest welfare. As we have seen, the best formal definition of the standard of moral excellence is self-realization.

514. But the question before us is a much broader one. It is concerned with the arrangement of the whole universe, the laws of nature, not of our making, but to a good degree making us. Does this eternal order of forces and relations show any regard for ethical principles? Do "the stars in their courses fight against Sisera?" or is the whole case stated in the fact that nature "causeth the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and on the unjust?"

515. We may best approach the subject from the point of view of common sense,—the moral sense common to men. This spontaneous judgment seems to be unanimous that good men are

entitled to reward, that good conduct ought to promote the welfare of him whose deeds are right; or, at the very least, that good conduct should not be the cause of real and permanent evil to him who does it. That the universe should be so ordered that the good should be, on whole, worse off than the bad seems to common sense unthinkable. It is revolting to our instinct of justice. If it is so, it implies a discord in the universe,—a clashing of the moral order with the rational and physical orders, and we have chaos in the universe, and either weakness or malevolence in the creator. Our moral judgment seems to assert that the way of the transgressor should be hard, and the verdict of observation is that on the whole it is so.

516. The testimony of all the sciences is that the books of nature always balance, that harmony is the most prominent feature of the physical order.

517. All these considerations raise a strong presumption that somehow the facts of ethics must be in harmony with the facts of other fields of science, and that the order of the universe, if widely viewed and comprehended, will be found both reasonable and benevolent.

We can hardly doubt that somehow this is so, but we find it is very difficult to fit the facts of observation and experience to this belief.

518. Thoughtful men, in all ages, have observed, with surprise and consternation, that "there be just men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked."

Like the Hebrew Psalmist they were "sore vexed" when they saw how prosperous the wicked were; while "men of whom the world was not worthy" were "destitute, afflicted, tormented." Moreover, it has been noted that this apparent miscarriage of justice in the fortunes of men is but a sample of the defects that appear to abound in nature, which Mr. Huxley calls the "unfathomable injustice of the nature of things," and which leads him to the conclusion that nature's "moral indifference" culmin-

ates in her undoing of that moral creation which had seemed her fairest work.

519. Altogether, we have a problem of the most perplexing character. No other subject in the world has called forth more profound speculation, or has been the theme of so much of the world's great literature. The sages of India and Persia, the prophets of Judea and the great Greek dramatists, as well as the philosophers and moralists of more recent times have pondered over this problem, and have offered many answers to it, or some contribution toward its solution. We can notice but a few of them.

520. The most radical suggestion is that of *Dualism*. This is the doctrine that there are two opposing powers at work in the universe, one good and creative, the other evil and destructive. The purposes of the good spirit are benevolent and just, but they are constantly defeated by the malevolent activity of the evil spirit. The good spirit is the more powerful, and, in the end, may utterly subdue the evil, but hitherto this has not been accomplished. This, in a very general way, is the teaching of Zoroaster, and the faith of ancient Persia; but, with some modifications, it is very nearly that of some modern philosophers, e. g., Mr. Huxley, whose position is summed up in his assertion that "the cosmic process bears no sort of relation to the ethical." That the moral order and the physical order are *separated and inharmonious*, is the answer of dualism, ancient and modern.

521. The sages of ancient India took a different view. Impressed with apparent failure of justice in the lives of men, they concluded that man's life was not restricted to one incarnation—one pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave, but that the immortal soul may be reincarnate many times. It does not carry over any remembrance of one incarnation to another, but does preserve its identity; and its conduct in the various earthly lives are regarded as a whole, and justice is meted out according to the sum of good and evil. This is the doctrine of *Metempsycho-*

sis or the transmigration of souls.

It has had great influence on the Indian people, and still has, but is not held by any recognized school of modern philosophy. Its wide acceptance in the east may be attributed to the deep and excellent system of ethics with which it is associated in the Buddhist faith; but its ethics became corrupt by its associations with gross idolatry, and it has lost the respect of intelligent minds.

522. Somewhat similar to this is the Greek invention of the goddess, *Nemesis*, the avenging deity whose office it was to execute vengeance on the wrongdoer, pursuing him in the underworld, the abode of the "shades" of the departed, till the claims of justice were fully paid. This doctrine, held literally by the earlier Greeks, was gradually sublimated to a more spiritual conception, and in the later Greek philosophy Nemesis stood for nearly that which we call remorse. The great tragedians—especially Aeschylus, made great use of this conception, e. g., in the case of Orestes. The idea of the persistence of avenging justice is still expressed in our language by the term Nemesis, by allusion to this ancient myth.

523. The Hebrew prophets very early became aware of the difficulty presented by this problem. The fundamental article of their faith was the unity and supremacy of God.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein."

His supremacy and his righteousness were to them the guarantee of absolute equity in the affairs of men and nations.

They were therefore profoundly disturbed by the appearance of injustice in his dealings with men. The book of Job is by far the finest discussion of the matter ever written. In that great poem the problem is stated in a concrete case—the case of "a man whose name was Job." He is described as "a perfect and an upright man who feared God and eschewed evil." But upon this upright man, though no fault or mistake of his, but out of

the very order of things over which he had no control, fell a series of crushing misfortunes, so that he was reduced from his prosperity to the pitiful plight of utter misery. Childless, penniless, suffering, friendless and with none so poor to do him reverence; all this is attributed to the divine government of the world. The problem is, how can such facts be harmonized with the doctrine of a powerful and benevolent government?

The matter is discussed at length, and the conclusion reached is that the question cannot be answered, because the universe is so vast and complicated that man has not data enough to judge what is just; nor what is really and on the whole to his advantage, suffering may be a blessing by its results. But the more practical conclusion is chiefly emphasized, that is that since we have abundant evidence of wisdom and power and benevolence in God's government of the world, therefore, trust and obedience are reasonable.

524. The teachings of Jesus are in harmony with this, but much more explicit in the repeated emphasis that he puts on the supreme value of the inner state of the soul rather than the outer circumstances of life. He defines blessedness—welfare, almost entirely in terms of subjective excellence. "Blessed are those who inherit the Kingdom of Heaven" and "the kingdom of heaven is within you."

The external fortunes of men are only incidental, means of blessing or of degradation according to the use we make of them. "Those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell" were not necessarily "sinners." "Neither this man nor his parents sinned that he was born blind." All such events are but small items in a great account—minute arcs of an immense circle which comprehends the universe, and in which all things are ultimately brought to justice, but in which the Father in heaven keeps account of the sparrow's fall and the very hairs on the head of his saints; in which also he "is kind to the unthankful and the evil," but in which each shall ultimately give account of himself.

525. Altogether aside from the authority that may be attributed to this doctrine on account of our belief that Jesus was divine, the philosophy here taught commends itself to our acceptance by its clearness, its sanity, its ethical dignity and its harmony with our moral sense and judgment. It presents a conception of the universe that is not only self consistent, but which meets the demands of ethics without in the least doing violence to the demands of reason or the requirements of physical science.

526. The presence of evil in the world remains a mystery; and we shall probably never have data enough to explain its presence, but we have no reason to suppose that it is not consistent with the highest good of man and of the whole creation.

This much we do observe, that the riddle of Samson is the riddle of all life "Out of the eater came forth meat, out of the strong came sweetness."

From the experiences of life that are most painful we derive the highest virtues; and from the reverses that seem destructive, come the sweetest graces of the human soul. This fact alone would seem to explain much of the mystery of suffering and the presence of the possibility of evil.

527. Taking the broadest purview of the order of the universe that is possible to us, we feel justified in the hope at least, if not the full conviction,

> "That nothing walks with aimless feet,
> That not one life shall be destroyed
> Or cast as rubbish to the void
> When He has made the pile complete."

528. This brings us to the greatest of all ethical problems, that is the question of the ultimate ground of being, the source and author of the universe. How are we to conceive of the ultimate reality, of which all phenomena are but the revelation and expression?

As we are not able to form any complete, or even intelligible, system of ethics without advancing into the field of philosophy,

neither are we able to exclude from our consideration that which Aristotle called "the highest philosophy," and which we call Theology. As Mr. Fiske truly says, "The teleological instinct in man cannot be suppressed or ignored. There is in every learned thinker a craving after a final cause; and this craving can no more be extinguished than our belief in objective reality. Nothing can persuade us that the universe is a farrago of nonsense."

We seek some reasonable answer to the question, who made the world and established the order of things which we find existing? "Who laid the measures thereof? or who stretched the line upon it?"

529. In physical science we trace activity to forces, inherent, essential, permanent, orderly forces; but this is only naming certain qualities of matter, not in the least accounting for them. In ethics we trace activity to motives, instincts, affections—moral forces all; but whence came they and who gave them their laws? Or we may turn our faces to the future, and see certain good purposes accomplished by the order of ethical phenomena; but we are not satisfied with this fact; we still ask who aimed the moral forces so? who adapted means to ends, and guides the complicated energies of men and things to worthy issues?

530. The workman is known by his work; the agent may be inferred, in some degree at least, from the results of his agency, and we may reasonably hope to find some knowledge of the great first cause in the study of that which has been wrought.

531. If we have found such adaptation of means to ends, such correlation of one part to another as cannot be acounted for but by the supposition of some agency outside of both, must we not conclude, with Kant, that our "conception of God involves not merely a blindly operating Nature as the eternal root of things, but a Supreme Being that shall be the author of all things by *free and understanding action.*" It seems impossible to deny the legitimacy of this reasoning from the phenomena presented to

consciousness, either by the senses or by reason, or by our moral sense, back to some cause which shall seem adequate to account for *all these phenomena.* It seems also that it is a task laid on philosophy to form, by such a process, the fullest conception of the author that the facts may justify. We have no right to take refuge in the indolence of agnosticism, to willfully shut our eyes, and then cry, "I cannot see."

532. To undertake such a process of inference, to investigate all the phenomena presented by the universe is, of course, too vast a labor to be undertaken here. All that we are concerned with in this connection is to indicate the methods by which the assumptions we have made have been established, and to justify the use that we have made of them. We have not presented any views of the principles of ethics derived from preconceived notions of what they ought to be, but have attempted to gather from the phenomena of moral consciousness some notion of the laws which govern them, by the same method we would use in the study of geology or physics.

533. No better summary of the results of such inference from the study of Man's moral nature can be framed than the words in which John Fiske sums up his conclusions from the study of a somewhat wider field.

"The infinite and eternal Power that is manifested in every pulsation of the universe is none other than the living God. We may exhaust the resources of metaphysics in debating how far his nature may be fitly expressed in terms applicable to the psychical nature of man; such vain attempts will only serve to show that we are dealing with a theme that must ever transcend our powers of conception. But of some things we may feel sure. Humanity is not a mere local incident in an endless and aimless series of cosmical changes. The events of the universe are not the work of chance, neither are they the outcome of blind necessity. Practically there is a purpose in the world whereof it is our highest duty to learn the lesson, however well or ill we may

fare in rendering a scientific account of it. When from the dawn of life we see all things working together toward the evolution of the highest spiritual attributes of man, we know, however the words may stumble in which we try to express it, that God is in the deepest sense *a moral Being*. The everlasting source of phenomena is none other than the infinite Power that makes for righteousness. Thou canst not by searching find him out; yet put thy trust in Him and against thee the gates of hell shall not prevail; for there is neither wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Eternal."

The conclusions to which these observations lead are briefly these.

534. 1. There is a scheme, a system, an order of things embracing the whole universe, physical, intellectual and moral, so complete and harmonious in all its parts that it is properly called the *Cosmos*—beautiful order.

535. 2. In this all-embracing cosmos, the phenomena of our moral nature have their place. Our moral powers have their functions and their laws, as absolute and as immutable as the courses of the stars or the chemical affinities of atoms.

536. 3. All human virtue consists in that quality of soul, and proper attitude of mind toward the whole contents of the universe, as shall enable it to best perform the functions assigned to it in the cosmic order of the world.

537. 4. All duty is the sum of those particular acts which are demanded of each individual person in the working of this system. Duties are determined not by the pleasure they may win, nor by the custom of the time or place, nor yet by any arbitrary laws imposed from time to time, but by the ability we find within the will's control, and the place and opportunity afforded in the order of our world.

538. 5. While the system of the universe is fixed and all its laws are absolute, yet, in this system and under these laws, the human soul moves just as freely as the body moves amid the

physical contents of the world. Somehow, we choose and will and do within our limited sphere, according to our own good pleasure.

539. 6. The instincts and affections which we find embodied in our constitution are the impelling forces which stir us up to action, yet reason holds the reins, and bears the weight of ultimate responsibility.

540. 7. And, finally that ultimate responsibility is to the sovereign ruler, who is long suffering and slow to wrath, but will by no means clear the guilty.

541. Daniel Webster was not discoursing either ethics or philosophy but speaking from the depths of his human heart in words of reflective wisdom, when he said, "The greatest thought that ever occupies my mind is that of my personal responsibility to a personal God."

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