

"origin of our moral ideas to a particular power of perception, to which he gave the name of the moral sense."¹ But this was to use the word "sense" in a different meaning from what it had ever borne before; inasmuch as the objects of this so-called sense, being the qualities of moral actions, must be of necessity incorporeal, intangible, and imperceptible, and, as such, totally unlike the objects of the faculties commonly called senses, viz., sights, sounds, smells, tastes, &c. Nor was anything gained for the independence and immutability of morality; for it was argued by commentators on Hutcheson that, if the moral faculty were a "sense," then the qualities perceived by it, like the secondary qualities of material objects perceived by sensation and reflection, must be understood as subjective not objective, as existing in and for the perceiving mind alone, and not inherent in the actions themselves, which would thus become colourless and neutral. *i.e.*, destitute of moral character.

A return upon scepticism was a frequent incident in the history of the Greek schools of thought, especially when the principles of opposing systems had been put forth with unusual warmth, and their supporters had found reconciliation and the explanation of differences out of the question. An example of this, in the history of English thought, is furnished by the case of Hume. Provoked by the extravagant paradoxes of Berkeley, who had ecclesiastical and professional reasons for trying to convince men that material objects had no reality,—mind was everything,—since the mystical and unnatural state of mind so engendered would favour the reception of any theology the philosopher might afterwards desire to implant,—Hume undertook to prove that mind had no real existence any more than matter, or that, if it had, such existence could not be proved. When I talk of "my mind," he said, how do I know that there is anything really existent which corresponds to the words? By the impressions and sensations of which I am conscious? But these only prove themselves; no one of course denies them; I only deny, at least I say you cannot prove, the existence of an entity in which these impressions inhere, and to which you give the name of "mind." If there was no flaw in such reasoning, philosophy was brought to a stand, and no certainty of any kind was attainable by the human faculties.

Before the Scotch school and the great Immanuel Kant appeared to challenge these conclusions, David Hartley, in his *Observations on Man* (1749), espoused the tenets of Locke, and applied all his ingenuity to explaining the origin of as much of our knowledge as he could with any plausibility so treat, by referring it to the physical principle of the "association of ideas."

In the treatise already referred to, Hume declares that he does not wish to undermine or even to combat any man's belief; his aim was only to demolish bad logic, to expose the emptiness of alleged proofs of the divine government which were no proofs at all, and to make men see that "belief is more properly an act of the sensitive than of the cogitative part of our nature." The line of thought suggested by this and similar expressions appears to have been taken up and eagerly pursued by Reid, who, in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind upon the Principles of Common Sense* (1764), maintains that a large, and not the least important part of our knowledge is acquired, not, as Locke asserted, through sensation and reflection, but by means of immediate and instinctive judgments, in forming which the *common sense* of all mankind is at one. The moral faculty, according to Reid, judges of right and wrong in this instinctive way; it is a branch of common sense. Beattie, who was a better poet than he was a philosopher,

¹ Dugald Stewart.

pushed Reid's theory to an extreme which bordered on the ridiculous, including among the "irresistible" and "necessary" beliefs of the human mind a number of notions which are really of a historic and derivative character. Dr Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen, adopting the system of Locke as a basis, wrote on *Matter and Spirit*, criticised the philosophy of Reid, and discussed the tenet of philosophical necessity; a strong materialistic bias pervades his writings. A greater thinker than any that Europe had witnessed since Descartes, now arose in Germany. This was Kant, whose ambition it was to put a period to the desolating prevalence of scepticism, and deliver philosophy from the instability and uncertainty by which it had been long beset. His *Critique of the Pure Reason* appeared about 1781. Against Locke, he showed that the mind can form neither conceptions nor judgments without the pre-existence in the thought of the absolute and universal ideas of time, space, unity, cause, being, &c.,—which ideas proceed from the intelligence itself, without any action being exerted on the organs of sensation. They are *a priori*, that is, prior to sensible experience; they belong to the pure reason, and may be regarded as the forms of our knowledge,—forms which the understanding applies to the material furnished by perceptions. He does not, however, allow that these ideas, though *a priori*, have any objective character; and for this metaphysical subjectivism he has been strenuously assailed by the Platonizing and orthodox schools of the present day. Against the materialists he maintains, in the *Critique of the Practical Reason*, that the "moral motive," or principle, which the intelligence (called in this aspect the practical reason) furnishes us with for the direction of our will, is immutable,—absolute,—necessary,—given *a priori* by the reason, and presenting to us the supreme and universal good as the final end of our existence, our desires, and our efforts. This motive is *duty*, or the moral obligation imposed on the human will by a power above it, which, consequently, is not man himself. To the knowledge, therefore, derived from the practical reason, Kant ascribes an *objective* character, which, as we saw, he denied to the forms of the pure reason. This law of duty supposes liberty in man as the very condition of the obligation which it imposes on him. Here of course Kant is at variance with the necessitarians and materialists. There being a necessary connection between virtue, *i.e.*, the obedience to duty, and the supreme good which it seeks, yet this connection being only partially realizable in this life, Kant infers the reality of a future life and the immortality of the soul. And, in view of our powerlessness to bring about this harmony between happiness and virtue, he infers the existence of a First Cause, infinitely powerful, just, and wise, which will establish it hereafter. The colossal system of Kant was known to Dugald Stewart (whose first work, *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, appeared in 1793), but only through the medium of an imperfect Latin translation; from this cause, probably, he is thought to have failed to do full justice to it. Dugald Stewart, who was appointed to the chair of moral philosophy at Edinburgh in 1785, was the master of a clear and charming style, which made his lectures the delight of a large circle of pupils. Among these were numbered not a few, in the spheres both of thought and action, who have left their mark on the age and the society to which they belonged,—Brougham, Lord Palmerston, Lord Russell, Francis Horner, Lord Lansdowne, Jeffrey, Sir Walter Scott, Sydney Smith, James Mill, Alison the historian, and Dr Chalmers,—a varied and brilliant auditory for one professor to have lectured to and influenced in his day. One of the most interesting of Stewart's numerous works is his *Dissertation concerning the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy since the Revival of Letters in Europe*. In his *Outlines*

(the work above mentioned), he argued, keeping generally to the lines of Butler and Hutcheson, that there is a moral faculty in man, that it is guided by duty not by interest, and that these two are not in the present state of the world identical, nor are the feelings that are inspired by actions prompted by the one the same as those which are suggested by actions prompted by the other. Right and wrong, he thinks, must be held to be intrinsic qualities of actions, and not merely modes of the mind observing those actions. Everywhere he is firm and explicit on the immutability of moral distinctions. In fact, in its general outcome his ethical philosophy resembles pretty closely that of Kant; but it is not thought out with the same rigour of logic, nor founded on as searching a psychological analysis, nor expressed in as exact a terminology, as belong to the writings of the philosopher of Königsberg.

X. *The French Revolution, 1789-1832.*—Probably there was not a single gifted mind in any country of Europe upon which the tempest of the French Revolution did not come with a stimulating or disturbing influence. Young men—hasty counsellors ever, from the days of Rehoboam,—thrilled with hope and flushed with excitement, announced and believed that a golden age had opened for mankind. Wordsworth hastened from Cambridge in 1792 to France, where he lived more than a year, and formed some Girondist acquaintances; Coleridge invented a scheme for an ideal community which was to form a model settlement, to be conducted on principles of pantisocracy, on the banks of the Susquehanna; Southey nearly got himself into trouble by publishing *Wat Tyler*, a dramatic sketch of an inflammatory and seditious character. On the other hand, the young Walter Scott looked with shrewd, clear eyes on the tumultuous scene, and was not tempted to throw himself into the vortex; for him the treasures of Europe's mighty past were real and precious, and not to be bartered for any quantity of visionary hopes and fairy gold. Soon the proceedings of the Revolutionists made it clear enough that human nature and human motives were not changed; and the ranks of reaction were rapidly filled. In England an immense effect was produced by the appearance of Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* in 1791. The sympathizers with the French republicans dwindled in number so fast, that at the end of the century, as it was sportively said, the whole of the opposition to Pitt's Government in the House of Lords went home from the debate in a single hack cab. Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge changed round to the Conservative side. The appearance in France of the *Génie du Christianisme* (1802) by Chateaubriand marked the commencement of the great continental reaction. The public policy of England became essentially conservative; she endeavoured to prop up all the old monarchies on the Continent, whether they deserved to live or not; she harboured thousands of French priests; she supported the temporal power of the pope. A remarkable dissonance hence arose between the policy of the country and some of the finest notes in its literature. While the English aristocracy was putting forth its full strength to combat Jacobinism by land and sea, the spirit of revolution breathed from the pages of Shelley and Byron. The war with Napoleon was waged with the approval of the great majority of the nation; but the able critics and publicists who conducted the *Edinburgh Review* (started in 1802) were vehemently opposed to it, and would, if their influence had prevailed, have withdrawn the sword of England from the contest at least ten years before Waterloo.

The romantic poems of Scott (*Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *Lady of the Lake*, &c.) were popular because they were in sympathy with the return (now strongly pronounced) of the European mind towards chivalry, feudalism,

and the mediæval spirit. The works of the Renaissance were no longer praised; its art was held to be imitative or debased, its refinement to be superficial, its enthusiasm factitious. Taking its cue from Rousseau, all the world was thirsting, or pretending to thirst, after nature and simplicity; the *naïveté* and spontaneity, real or imagined, of the "ages of faith" seemed incalculably better than the *finesse* and self-consciousness of modern times. Working this vein somewhat too long, Scott was at last outshone in it by Byron, whose romantic tales (*Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *The Giaour*, &c.) were still more remote from the dulness and conventionality of ordinary life than those of Scott. In *Childe Harold*, a poem finely but unequally versified in the Spenserian stanza, the noble poet described himself,—for no one ever doubted that he was himself "the great sublime he drew,"—travelling through Spain, Italy, and Greece, a prey to melancholy discontent, brooding over the perishing relics of departed greatness, but unable to utter any formula potent for its re-creation other than vague cries for the bursting of all fetters which oppress the spirit or the limbs of men. The increasing moral disorder of Byron's mind is marked by the appearance of *Don Juan*, a long rambling poem, written after his wife had left him, and he had gone to the Continent in 1816, never to return. In 1823 he joined the Greek insurgents who had taken arms to throw off the Turkish yoke. He landed at Missolonghi, spent large sums of money, but effected nothing of importance; and in April 1824 he was cut off by a fever.

Shelley is a striking illustration of the influence which Shelley the revolutionary literature of that age possessed in moulding or modifying human character. His own earliest recollections dated to a time when all ranks of English society were animated by feelings of horror and detestation at the French "Terror," and in no mood to embrace any revolutionary sentiment, or even give a hearing to any novel opinion. Yet the mind of Shelley—nursed upon the sceptical suggestions of Hume, the utopian speculations of Godwin, and the antinomian dreams of Rousseau, and pushing to extremes, from the fervour of a nature in which prudence and diffidence found no place, all that he read—was in a state of high revolt, even in his college days, against all that was held sacred by other men. Sent away from Oxford, he fell in with the bright high-spirited Harriet Westbrook, and induced her to marry him. But all bonds, including those of matrimony, which fettered the free inclinations of the mind, Shelley had taught himself to regard as a tyranny to be withstood. He grew tired of Harriet, formed a connexion of free love with Mary Godwin, and deserted his hapless wife, who, two years afterwards, committed suicide. Whether Shelley would ever have brought his wild actions and wilder thoughts under any discipline it is impossible to tell, for he was cut off by a sudden and early death. His poems display the most perfect and wonderful mastery of the resources of the English language for the purposes of imaginative expression that has ever been attained to among our poets. As Pope and Dryden gave us logic in metre, so Byron and Shelley gave us rhetoric in metre. Splendid pieces of declamation may be found in the *Childe Harold* and "Isles of Greece" of the one poet, and in the *Hellas* and *Revolt of Islam* of the other. The "Sky-lark," and some other poems, considered as creations of the pure imagination, have surely never been surpassed.

An accidental circumstance,—the finding of an old unfinished MS. in a forgotten nook of a cabinet,—turned Sir Walter Scott into the path of prose fiction, in which his strong memory and inexhaustible imagination, joined with a gift for picturesque description, and the faculty, within certain limits, of creating and presenting living types of character eminently qualified him to excel. These

was given to the world the long and splendid series of novels, commencing with *Waverley* and ending (when his mind had partially given way) with *Castle Dangerous*. We do not forget that a living French critic, whose admirable style makes even his paradoxes attractive, treats the *Waverley* Novels with little ceremony; they were taken, he says, for faithful copies of the antique world in Europe at a time when people knew no better; now we go to the original sources of information, and find that he distorts everything. But, in the first place, so far as the *Waverley* Novels consist of the skilful evolution of plots invented by the author, and of the contrasted play of characters created by him,—and not of historical pictures,—this criticism does not touch them at all. In *Peveril of the Peak*, for instance, where a peculiar zest attaches itself to the love of Julian Peveril for Alice Bridgenorth on account of the political and religious differences which divide their fathers, though Scott might be proved to have omitted some important features in his historic sketch of the Restoration, still the deep attraction of the story would not lose its charm. So again, in *Ivanhoe*, although the repulsion between Saxon and Norman—the concrete picture of which, presented in this novel, so deeply impressed the historian Thierry—be to some extent an exaggeration of the feelings which actually prevailed between the two races under Richard I., yet neither does this inaccuracy affect the substantial truthfulness and instructiveness of the historic *tableau*, nor, if it did, would the tragic passages which describe the siege of the castle of Front-de-Bœuf exercise an inferior fascination. But, secondly, the real meaning of M. Taine's charge is, not that Scott has mis-read history, but that he has not read it from the special philosophical standpoint of M. Taine. He did not read it in the conviction of the relativity of all events, nor regard it simply as the evolution of the Welt-Geist, nor believe that human society, through the stages of theology and metaphysics, advances inevitably to the bourn of positive science. But it remains to be proved whether these views of history will not prove more ephemeral than the simpler conceptions which possessed the mind of Sir Walter Scott.

Reference was made above to the commencement of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802. The tendencies of thought which distinguished its founders were of so remarkable a character,—exercised so marked an effect on the philosophy, the legislation, and even the literature of their times,—and are still so influential, that some attempt to analyse and describe them must be made. There were varieties of opinion among the writers for this celebrated review from the first; amongst them were mere Whigs and mere literary critics, but that which gave it a backbone was its being partially the organ of a party, known some years later by the name of "Philosophical Radicals." This school took its philosophy from Locke, Bentham, and Adam Smith. It held that the old systems which admitted the principle of authority were for ever ruined and discredited, that, as government was an affair of contract, so religion was an affair of evidence, and that, since the same evidence was estimated differently by different minds, the right course was, to confine religion within the domain of the individual conscience, tolerating all forms of it not anti-social, but giving political prominence to none. Coleridge, in an eloquent work published in 1829,¹ supported the theory of a national church, not as the channel for teaching religious truth, but as providing a machinery for diffusing culture and enlightenment, as well as teaching morality by example, through the length and breadth of the land. This view was too Platonic for the school we are now considering—which, however, did not attack the already

¹ *Constitution of Church and State.*

existing established church, but contented itself with insisting that its clergy should be vigilantly controlled by the state, lest they should teach principles or practices inconsistent with the general good. Churches they regarded as decrepit and perishing institutions; it was the state which, in their eyes, flourished in immortal youth; and their hopes of future good were involved in the development of civilization under its auspices. They believed in the gradual advance and perfectibility of the race through the operation of wise institutions, furthering the free play of all the human faculties, while guaranteeing the order and stability of society. The happiness that would thence arise, consisting in the realization of "the greatest good of the greatest number," they regarded as the satisfaction of enthusiasm and the goal of effort. To political economy, that eminently *lay* study, and to the development of physical science, they looked for the measures and the means requisite for the attainment of this happiness. Moreover, since, from their point of view, there was nothing absolute in moral sanctions, it was ridiculous for a nation to hamper itself by adherence to engagements contracted by a former generation, on the plea of national honour, if such adherence was prejudicial to the interests of the living. Views of this kind, beginning even then to be propounded, drew from Burke the exclamation that the "age of chivalry was past," and that "that of sophists, economists, and calculators had succeeded." The study of social grievances, and of the means of removing them, assumed a prominent place among their objects, and gave rise to much laudable and beneficial activity. On humanitarian grounds they supported the agitation against slavery which Christian philanthropists like Clarkson and Wilberforce had commenced from a religious motive. Senior occupied himself with the evils of the old poor-law; Francis Horner became a great authority on finance; Sir Samuel Romilly took up the reform of our criminal jurisprudence; Ricardo, J. S. Mill, and McCulloch studied the laws of the creation and distribution of wealth, and demonstrated the impolicy of restrictions on trade. The benefits of national education began to be seen and enforced; and Lancaster and Bell entered upon useful labours connected with the organization of schools and the supply of teachers. Harriet Martineau wrote popular tales, and Elliott "Corn-law Rhymes," in order to indoctrinate the multitude with sound views on economical questions. In short, all the good was done or attempted which men starting from the basis of empirical philosophy could do or attempt; whatever was outside the range of that philosophy was neglected.

There is something rather saddening in the contemplation of the careers of most of the eminent literary men of this epoch. Byron and Shelley were cut off in the flower of their days; Southey's overtaken brain gave way some years before his death, and the same fate befell Ireland's gifted singer, Thomas Moore. Scott, ruined through too much haste to be rich, literally worked himself to death to clear off the mountain of liability which his implication in Ballantyne's failure had thrown upon him. Coleridge, though he lived to old age, had weakened a will originally irresolute, and shattered nerves originally over-sensitive by the fatal practice of opium-eating; in the time of grey hairs he subsided into a dreamy talker about "sum-in-ject" and "om-in-ject."² Wordsworth alone preserved to the last an unimpaired sanity of mind and body, for which he might thank the simplicity and serenity of his life in Westmoreland, where he settled on his return from France. Rapt in profound meditation, he communed among the mountains with the spirit of the universe; and the beauty of the crag, the tarn, the flower, transmitted itself, through

² Carlyle's *Life of Sterling.*

the lips of nature's poet-priest, into verse of wondrous melody. When the period of inspiration was past, he quietly conformed to the religion and politics of his neighbours, and wrote much in support of them; but these later works are pitched in a lower key.

Since the death of Scott, the power of literature, combined with journalism, has been continually on the rise. The novelists, while describing, have modified our social customs; the essayists have been instrumental in bringing about political reforms; the poets have stirred,—generally to thoughts and desires of change,—the impressible hearts of the young. The power of art over the human mind, and its influence in determining the aspects of life, have been

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Etymology.

ENGRAVING. The verb *engrave* is an old French word adopted by the English language, in which it bears at the present day but one signification, that of marking by incision. In old English the word was used in other senses, with which we need not now trouble the reader, and the verb *engravēn* in modern French, used for a boat when she runs her keel into the beach or for a cart when its wheels stick in the mud of a road or the sand of a river, is a different word, being derived from *grève*, the sands of sea or river, which comes from the Provençal *grava*, the bed of a torrent, and is nearly related to the English *gravel*. Our English verb *engrave* belongs to a large family of words in many Western languages, the Anglo-Saxon form *grafan* being remarkable for its similarity to the Greek *γράφειν*. Littré affirms that the Latin words *scribere* and *scrōbs* are also etymologically related to the verb *graver*, and it is evident that there is a close connection between *scrōbs*, a furrow, and the hollow cuttings produced by an engraver with his tools. The *grave* in which the dead are buried is also connected with these words both by its meaning and its etymology. The idea of a furrow or cutting is essential to engraving, much more essential than any artistic idea. The rudest mark which is cut into the substance of anything is really an engraving, whilst the most admirable drawing which does not cut into the surface is not engraving at all. When Old Mortality deepened

the inscriptions on the tombstones of the Covenanters he was strictly doing engraver's work, though of a coarse kind. In like manner the peoples of remote antiquity who chiselled their writing and drawing on slabs of stone, were in the strictest sense engravers, though the connection between their rude performance and the refined workmanship which is bestowed on a modern vignette may not at first sight be very obvious. On the other hand, a lithograph is not an engraving, neither is a photograph, nor a photographic autotype; but the applications of photography which are known as *héliogravure* and *photogravure* are really engraving, because in these processes the surface of the metal plate is eaten into or lowered. For the same reason etching may be correctly included under the generic term engraving, and an etcher is called in French a *graveur à l'eau-forte*, an engraver by means of acid.

Engraving may then be defined as writing or drawing in which the marks are produced by removing a portion of the substance on which the writing or drawing is made, instead of by simply staining or discolouring it as ink and lead pencil do, or covering it with an opaque or transparent pigment as in oil-painting.

The idea of multiplication by printing, or by casting (as in seal engraving), is a mere accidental suggestion and not an essential part of the art. Engraving preceded printing