

things is but a shadow, it is plain that the highest, most real life must lie in the former region and not in the latter. We thus reach the paradox that Plato enforced in more than one of his most impressive dialogues, that the true art of living is really an "art of dying" as far as possible to mere sense, in order more fully to exist in intimate union with absolute goodness and beauty. On the other hand, in so far as this philosophic abstraction from ordinary human interests can never be complete, since the philosopher must still live and act in the concrete sensible world, the Socratic identification of wisdom and virtue is fully maintained by Plato. Only he who apprehends good in the abstract can imitate it in such transient and imperfect good as admits of being realized in human life, and it is impossible, having this knowledge, that he should not act on it, whether in private or public affairs. Thus, in the true philosopher, we shall necessarily find the practically good man, he who being "likest of men to the gods is best loved by them;" and also the perfect statesman, if only the conditions of his society allow him a sphere for exercising his statesmanship.

When we come to examine the characteristics of this practical goodness, we find that they correspond to the fundamental conceptions in Plato's view of the universe. We have seen that he conceives the world of being as—(1) essentially ideal and knowable; (2) organized and fitted for realization of good. Accordingly the soul of man, in its good or normal condition, must be (1) wise or knowing, (2) ordered, regulated, and harmonized. The question then arises, "Wherein does this order or harmony precisely consist?" In explaining how Plato was led to answer this question, it will be well to notice that, while faithfully maintaining the Socratic doctrine that the highest virtue was inseparable from knowledge of the good, he had come, as his conception of this knowledge deepened and expanded, to recognize an inferior kind of virtue, possessed by men who were not philosophers. It is plain that if the good that is to be known is the ultimate ground of the whole of things, so that the knowledge of it includes all other knowledge, it is only attainable by a select and carefully trained few, and we can hardly restrict all virtue to these alone. What account, then, was to be given of ordinary "civic" bravery, temperance, and justice? It seemed clear that men who did their duty, resisting the seductions of fear and desire, must have right opinions, if not knowledge, as to the good and evil in human life; but whence comes this right "opinion?" Partly, Plato said, it comes by nature and "divine allotment," but for its adequate development "custom and practice" are required. Hence the paramount importance of education and discipline for civic virtue; and even for future philosophers such moral culture, in which physical and æsthetic training must co-operate, is an indispensable prerequisite; no merely intellectual preparation will suffice. What, then, is the precise effect of this culture if it does not merely develop the intellect? A distinct step in psychological analysis was taken when Plato recognized that its effect was to produce the "harmony" above mentioned among different parts of the soul, by subordinating the impulsive elements to reason. These impulsive elements he further distinguished as appetitive and combative, founding on this triple division of the soul a systematic view of the four kinds of goodness chiefly recognized by the common moral consciousness of Greece, and in later times known as the cardinal¹ virtues. Of these the two most fundamental were (as has been already indicated) wisdom—in its highest form philosophy—and that harmonious regulation of psychical impulses and

¹ The term "cardinalis" is Christian; it is first found in Ambrose in *Luc.* § 62).

activities which Plato gives as the essence of *δικαιοσύνη*. This term in ordinary use had a wider meaning than our "justice," and might without much straining denote uprightness in social relations generally. Still its import is essentially social; and we can only explain Plato's use of it by reference to the analogy which his analysis of the soul led him to draw between the individual man and the community. For in this latter also he regarded the regulative and combative elements as naturally distinct from the common herd, who are concerned with merely material interests; so that social and individual wellbeing would depend on the same harmonious action of diverse elements, which in its social application is more naturally termed *δικαιοσύνη*. We see that these two fundamental virtues are mutually involved. Wisdom will necessarily maintain orderly activity, and this latter consists in regulation by wisdom, while the two more special virtues of courage and temperance (*σωφροσύνη*) are only different sides or aspects of this wisely regulated action of the complex soul. We may observe that this fourfold division of virtue was generally accepted in ethical discussion after Plato; though the notions were somewhat differently defined by different thinkers, and the peculiar Platonic interpretation of justice for the most part abandoned.

Such, then, are the forms in which essential good seemed to manifest itself in human life; it remains to ask whether the statement of these gives a complete account of human wellbeing, or whether pleasure is also to be included. On this point Plato's view seems to have gone through several oscillations. After apparently maintaining (*Protagoras*) that pleasure is the good, he passes first to the opposite extreme, and denies it (*Phædo*, *Gorgias*) to be a good at all. Not only is it, as concrete and transient, obviously not the real essential good that the philosopher seeks; it is found further that the feelings most prominently recognized as pleasures are bound up with pain, as good can never be with evil; since they are the mere satisfaction of painful wants and cease with the removal of these; in so far, then, as common sense rightly recognizes some pleasures as good, it can only be from their tendency to produce some further good. This view, however, was too violent a divergence from Socraticism for Plato to remain in it. That pleasure is not the real absolute good, was no ground for not including it in the good of concrete human life; and after all it was only coarse and vulgar pleasures that were indissolubly linked to the pains of want. Accordingly, in the *Republic* he has no objection to try the question of the intrinsic superiority of philosophic or virtuous² life by the standard of pleasure; arguing that the philosophic (or good) man alone enjoys real pleasure, while the sensualist spends his life in oscillating between painful want and the merely neutral state of painlessness, which he mistakes for positive pleasure. In the *Philebus*, however, though a more careful psychological analysis leads him to soften down the exaggerations of this attack on sensual pleasure, the antithesis of knowledge and pleasure is again sharpened, and a desire to depreciate even good pleasures is more strongly shown; still even here pleasure is recognized as a constituent of that philosophic life which is the highest human good, while in the *Lysis*, where the subject is more popularly treated, it is admitted that we cannot convince man that the just life is the best unless we can also prove it to be the pleasantest.

When a student passes from Plato to Aristotle, he is so forcibly impressed by the contrast between the habits of mind of the two authors and their manners of literary ex-

² It is highly characteristic of Platonism that the issue in this dialogue, as originally stated, is between virtue and vice, whereas, without any avowed change of ground, the issue ultimately discussed is between the philosophic life and the life of vulgar ambition or sensual enjoyment.

pression, that it is easy to understand how their systems have come to be popularly conceived as diametrically opposed to each other; and the uncompromising polemic which Aristotle, both in his ethical and his metaphysical treatises, directs against Plato and the Platonists, has tended strongly to confirm this view. Yet a closer inspection shows us that when a later president of the Academy (Antiochus of Ascalon) repudiated the scepticism which for two hundred years had been accepted as the traditional Platonic doctrine, he had good grounds for claiming Plato and Aristotle as coincident authorities for the ethical position which he took up. The truth is that, though Aristotle's divergence from Plato is very conspicuous when we consider either his general conception of the subject of ethics, or the scientific working out of his system of virtues, still his agreement with his master is almost complete as regards the main outline of his theory of human good; the difference between the two practically vanishes when we view them in relation to the later controversy between Stoics and Epicureans. Even on the cardinal point on which Aristotle entered into direct controversy with Plato, the definite disagreement between the two is less than at first appears; the objections of the disciple hit that part of the master's system that was rather imagined than thought; the positive result of Platonic speculation only gains in distinctness by the application of Aristotelian analysis.

Plato, we saw, held that there is one supreme science or wisdom, of which the ultimate object is absolute good; in the knowledge of this, the knowledge of all particular goods,—that is, of all that we rationally desire to know,—is implicitly contained; and also all practical virtue, as no one who truly knows what is good can fail to realize it. But in spite of the intense conviction with which he thus identified metaphysical speculation and practical wisdom, we find in his writings no serious attempt to deduce the particulars of human wellbeing from his knowledge of absolute good, still less to unfold from it the particular cognitions of the special arts and sciences. Indeed, we may say that the distinction which Aristotle explicitly draws between speculative science or wisdom, which is concerned with the eternal and immutable truths of being, and practical wisdom (on its political side statesmanship), which has for its object "human" or "practicable" good, is really indicated in Plato's actual treatment of the subjects, although the express recognition of it is contrary to his principles. The discussion of good (*e.g.*) in his *Philebus* relates entirely to human good, and the respective claims of Thought and Pleasure to constitute this; he only refers in passing to the Divine Thought that is the good of the ordered world, as something clearly beyond the limits of the present discussion. So again, in his last great ethico-political treatise (the *Lysis*) there is hardly a trace of his peculiar metaphysics; it is from the union of practical wisdom (*τὸ φρονεῖν*)—not philosophy—with power that the realization of the ideal state is now expected. On the other hand, the relation between human and divine good, as presented by Aristotle, is so close that we can hardly conceive Plato as having definitely thought it closer. The substantial good of the universe, in Aristotle's view, is the pure activity of universal abstract thought, at once subject and object, which, itself changeless and eternal, is the final cause and first source of the whole process of change in the concrete world. And he holds, with Plato, that a similar activity of pure speculative intellect is the highest and best mode of human existence, and that in which the philosopher will seek to exist as far as possible; though he must, being a man, concern himself with the affairs of ordinary human life, in which region his highest good will be attained by realizing perfect moral excellence. No doubt Aristotle's demonstration of the inappropriateness of attributing moral

excellence to the Deity seems to contradict Plato's doctrine that the just man as such is "likest the gods;" but here again the discrepancy is reduced when we remember that the essence of Plato's justice (*δικαιοσύνη*) is harmonious activity. Nor, again, is Aristotle's divergence from the Socratic principle that all "virtue is knowledge" substantially greater than Plato's. Both accept the paradox in the qualified sense that no one can deliberately act contrary to what appears to him good, and that perfect virtue is inseparably bound up with perfect wisdom or moral insight. Both, however, see that this moral insight is not to be imparted by mere teaching, but depends rather on careful training in good habits applied to minds of good natural dispositions; though the doctrine has no doubt a more definite and prominent place in Aristotle's system. In the same way the latter draws more clearly, and develops more fully, the distinction between impulsive offences and the deliberate choice of evil for good which belongs to confirmed vice; which is, however, implied in Plato's later recognition (in the *Sophista*) of "disorder" of the soul as a kind of badness essentially different from ignorance. The disciple, no doubt, takes a step in advance by stating definitely, as an essential characteristic of virtuous action, that it is chosen for its own sake, for the beauty of virtue alone; but herein he merely formulates the conviction that his master more persuasively inspires. Nor, finally, does Aristotle's account of the relation of pleasure to human wellbeing differ materially from the outcome of Plato's thought on this point, as the later dialogues present it to us; although he has to combat the extreme anti-hedonism to which the Platonic school under Speusippus had been led. Pleasure, in Aristotle's view, is not the essence of wellbeing, but rather an inseparable accident of it; human wellbeing is essentially well doing, excellent activity of some kind, whether its aim and end be abstract truth or noble conduct; but all activities are attended and in a manner perfected by pleasure, which is better and more desirable in proportion to the excellence of the activity. He no doubt criticises Plato's account of the nature of pleasure, arguing that we cannot properly conceive pleasure either as a "process" or as "replenishment"—the last term, he truly says, denotes a material rather than a psychical fact; but this does not interfere with the general ethical agreement between the two; and the doctrine that vicious pleasures are not true or real pleasures is so characteristically Platonic that we are almost surprised to find it in Aristotle.

In so far as there is any important difference between the Platonic and the Aristotelian views of human good, we may observe that the latter is substantially the more faithful development of the ethical teaching of Socrates, although it is presented in a far more technical and scholastic form, and involves a more distinct rejection of the fundamental Socratic paradox. The same result appears when we compare the methods of the three philosophers. Although the Socratic induction forms a striking feature of Plato's dialogues, his ideal method of ethics is purely deductive; he only admits common sense as supplying provisional steps and starting points from which the mind is to ascend to knowledge of absolute good; by deduction from which, as he conceives, the lower notions of particular goods are to be truly apprehended. Aristotle, discarding the transcendentalism of Plato, naturally receded towards the original Socratic method of induction from and verification by common opinion. Indeed, the turns and windings of his exposition are best understood if we consider his literary manner as a kind of Socratic dialogue formalized and reduced to a monologue—transferred, we may say, from the marketplace to the lecture-room. He first leads us by an induc-

tion to the fundamental notion of ultimate end or good for man. All men, in acting, aim at some result, either for its own sake or as a means to some further end; but obviously everything cannot be sought merely as a means; there must therefore be some ultimate end. In fact men commonly recognize such an end, and agree to call it well-being¹ (*eudaimonia*); but they take very different views of its nature. How, then, shall we find the true view? Another genuinely Socratic induction leads us to this. We observe that men are classified and named according to their functions; all kinds of man, and indeed all organs of man, have their special functions, and are judged as functionaries and organs to be in good or bad condition according as they perform their functions well or ill. May we not then infer that man, as man, has his proper function, and that the wellbeing or "doing well" that all seek really lies in fulfilling well the proper function of man,—that is, in living well that life of the rational soul which we recognize as man's distinctive attribute?

Again, this Socratic deference to common opinion is not merely shown in the way by which Aristotle reaches his fundamental conception; it equally appears in his treatment of the conception itself. In the first place, though in Aristotle's view the most perfect wellbeing consists in the exercise of man's "divinest part," pure speculative reason, he keeps far from the paradox of putting forward this and nothing else as human good; so far, indeed, that the greater part of his treatise is occupied with an exposition of the inferior good which is realized in practical life when the appetitive or impulsive (semi-rational) element of the soul operates under the due regulation of reason. Even when the notion of "good performance of function" was thus widened, and when it had further taken in the pleasure that is inseparably connected with such functioning, it did not yet correspond to the whole of what a Greek commonly understood as "human wellbeing;" though, in order to make it fit better, Aristotle emphasizes more than we should have expected the necessity of worldly goods for the realization of such virtues as liberality, justice, &c. There still remain other goods, such as beauty, good birth, welfare of posterity, &c., the presence or absence of which influenced the common view of a man's wellbeing, though they could not be shown to be even indirectly important to his "well-acting." These Aristotle neither attempts to exclude from the philosophic conception of wellbeing nor to include in his formal definition of it. The deliberate looseness which is thus given to his fundamental doctrine characterizes more or less his whole discussion of ethics. He plainly says that the subject does not admit of completely scientific treatment; his aim is to give not a perfectly definite theory of human good, but a practically adequate account of its most important constituents.

The most important characteristics, then, of wellbeing or good life for ordinary men are represented by the notions of the different moral excellences. In expounding these, Aristotle gives throughout the pure result of analytical observation of the common moral consciousness of his age. Ethical truth, in his view, is to be attained by induction from particular moral opinions, just as physical truth is to be obtained by induction from particular physical observations. On account of the conflict of opinion in ethics we cannot hope to obtain perfect clearness and certainty upon all questions; still reflection will lead us to discard some of the conflicting views and find a reconciliation for others,

¹ This cardinal term is commonly translated "happiness;" and it must be allowed that it is the most natural term for what we (in English) agree to call "our being's end and aim." But happiness so definitely signifies a state of feeling that it will not admit the interpretation that Aristotle (as well as Plato and the Stoics) expressly gives to *eudaimonia*; hence the rendering *eudaimonia* by happiness has caused serious confusion to the students of Greek philosophy.

and will furnish, on the whole, a practically sufficient residuum of moral truth. In many respects this adhesion to common sense involves a sacrifice of both depth and completeness in Aristotle's system. His virtues are not arranged on any clear philosophic plan; the list shows no serious attempt to consider human life exhaustively, and exhibit the standard of excellence appropriate to its different departments or aspects. He seems to have taken as a starting-point Plato's four cardinal virtues. The two comprehensive notions of Wisdom and Justice (*dikaioσύνη*) he treats separately. As regards both his analysis leads him to diverge considerably from Plato. As we saw, his distinction between practical and speculative Wisdom belongs to the deepest of his disagreements with his master; and in the case of *dikaioσύνη* again he distinguishes the wider use of the term to express Law-observance, which (he says) coincides with the social side of virtue generally, and its narrower use for the virtue that "aims at a kind of equality," whether (1) in the distribution of wealth, honour, &c., or (2) in commercial exchange, or (3) in the reparation of wrong done. Then, in arranging the other special virtues, he begins with courage and temperance, which (after Plato) he considers as the excellences of the "irrational element" of the soul. Next follow two pairs of excellences, concerned respectively with wealth and honour:—(1) liberality and magnificence, of which the latter is exhibited in greater matters of expenditure, and (2) laudable ambition and high-mindedness similarly related to honour. Then comes gentleness—the virtue regulative of anger; and the list is concluded by the excellences of social intercourse, friendliness (as a mean between obsequiousness and surliness), truthfulness, and decorous wit.

The abundant store of just and close analytical observation contained in Aristotle's account of these notions give it a permanent interest, even beyond its historical value as a delineation of the Greek ideal of "fair and good" life.² But its looseness of arrangement and almost grotesque co-ordination of qualities widely differing in importance are obvious; and Aristotle's restriction of the sphere of courage to dangers in war, and of that of temperance to certain bodily pleasures, as well as his non-distinction of selfish and benevolent expenditure in describing liberality, illustrate the fragmentariness and superficiality of treatment to which mere analysis of the common usage of ethical terms is always liable to lead. Nor is his famous general formula for virtue, that it is a mean or middle state, always to be found somewhere between the vices which stand to it in the relation of excess and defect, of much avail in rendering his treatment more systematic. It was important, no doubt, to express the need of limitation and regulation, of observing due measure and proportion, in order to attain good results in human life no less than in artistic products; but the observation of this need was no new thing in Greek literature; indeed, it had already led the Pythagoreans and Plato to find the ultimate essence of the ordered universe in number. But Aristotle's purely quantitative statement of the relation of virtue and vice is misleading, even where it is not obviously inappropriate; and sometimes leads him to such eccentricities as that of making simple veracity a mean between boastfulness and mock-modesty.

² Aristotle follows Plato and Socrates in identifying the notions of *καλός* ("fair," "beautiful") and *ἀγαθός* ("good") in their application to conduct. We may observe, however, that while the latter term is used to denote the virtuous man, and (in the neuter) equivalent to end generally, the former is rather chosen to express the quality of virtuous acts which in any particular case is the end of the virtuous agent. Aristotle no doubt faithfully represents the common sense of Greece in considering that, in so far as virtue is in itself good to the virtuous agent, it belongs to that species of good which we distinguish as beautiful. In later Greek philosophy the term *καλός* ("honestum") became still more technical in the signification of "morally good."

It ought to be said that Aristotle does not present the formula just discussed as supplying a criterion of good conduct in any particular case; he expressly leaves this to be determined by "correct reasoning, and the judgment of the practically wise man." We cannot, however, find that he has furnished any substantial principles for its determination; indeed, he hardly seems to have formed a distinct general idea of the practical syllogism by which he conceives it to be effected.¹ And, indeed, it would not have been easy for him to make this point plain, without bringing into prominence a profound discrepancy between his own view of rational action and the common opinion and practice of mankind. The kind of reasoning which his view of virtuous conduct requires is one in which the ultimate major premise states a distinctive characteristic of some virtue, and one or more minor premises show that such characteristic belongs to a certain mode of conduct under given circumstances; since it is essential to good conduct that it should contain its end in itself, and be chosen for its own sake. But he has not failed to observe that practical reasonings are not commonly of this kind, but are rather concerned with actions as means to ulterior ends; indeed, he lays stress on this as a characteristic of the "political" life, when he wishes to prove its inferiority to the life of pure speculation. Though common sense will admit that virtues are the best of goods, it still undoubtedly conceives practical wisdom as chiefly exercised in providing those inferior goods which Aristotle, after recognizing the need or use of them for the realization of human wellbeing, has dropped out of sight; and the result is that, in trying to make clear his conception of practical wisdom, we find ourselves fluctuating continually between the common notion, which he does not distinctly reject, and the notion required as the keystone of his ethical system.

On the whole, there is probably no treatise so masterly as Aristotle's *Ethics*, and containing so much close and valid thought, that yet leaves on the reader's mind so strong an impression of dispersive and incomplete work. It is only by dwelling on these defects that we can understand the small amount of influence that his system exercised during the five centuries after his death, in which the schools sprung from Socrates were still predominant in Græco-Roman culture; as compared with the effect which it has had, directly or indirectly, in shaping the thought of modern Europe. Partly, no doubt, the limited influence of the "Peripatetics"² (as Aristotle's disciples were called) is to be attributed to that exaltation of the purely speculative life which distinguished the Aristotelian ethics from other later systems, and which was too alien from the common moral consciousness to find much acceptance in an age in which the ethical aims of philosophy had again become paramount. Partly, again, the analytical distinctness of Aristotle's manner brings into special prominence the difficulties that attend the Socratic effort to reconcile the ideal aspirations of men, and the principles on which they agree to distribute mutual praise and blame, with the principles on which their practical reasonings are commonly conducted. The conflict between these two elements of Common Sense was too profound to be compromised; and the moral consciousness of mankind demanded a more trenchant partisanship than Aristotle's.

¹ There is a certain difficulty in discussing Aristotle's views on the subject of practical wisdom, and the relation of the intellect to moral action, since it is most probable that the only accounts that we have of these views are not part of the genuine writings of Aristotle. Still books vi. and vii. of the *Nicomachean Ethics* contain no doubt as pure Aristotelian doctrine as a disciple could give, and appear to supply a sufficient foundation for the general criticism expressed in the text.

² The term is derived from *περιπατεῖν*, "to walk about," and was applied to the disciples of Aristotle in consequence of the master's custom of giving instruction while walking to and fro in the shady avenues of the gymnasium where he lectured.

Its demands were met by a school which separated the moral from the worldly view of life, with an absoluteness and definiteness that caught the imagination; which regarded practical goodness as the highest result and manifestation of its ideal of wisdom; and which bound the common notions of duty into an apparently complete and coherent system, by a formula that comprehended the whole of human life, and exhibited its relation to the ordered process of the universe. This school was always known as the "Stoic," from the portico (*στοά*) in which its founder Zeno used to teach. The intellectual descent of its ethical doctrines is principally to be traced to Socrates through the Cynics, though an important element in them seems attributable to the school that inherited the "Academy" of Plato. Both Stoic and Cynic maintained, in its sharpest form, the fundamental tenet that the practical knowledge which is virtue, with the condition of soul that is inseparable from it, is alone to be accounted good. He who exercises this wisdom or knowledge has complete wellbeing; all else is indifferent to him. It is true that the Cynics were more concerned to emphasize the negative side of the sage's wellbeing, its independence of bodily health and strength, beauty, pleasure, wealth, good birth, good fame; while the Stoics brought into more prominence its positive side, the magnanimous confidence, the tranquillity undisturbed by grief, the joy and good cheer of the spirit, which inseparably attended the possession of wisdom. This difference, however, did not amount to disagreement. The Stoics, in fact, seem generally to have regarded the eccentricities of Cynicism as an emphatic manner of expressing the essential antithesis between philosophy and the world; a manner which, though not necessary or even normal, might yet be advantageously adopted by the sage under certain circumstances.³

Wherein, then, does this knowledge or wisdom that Stoicism makes free and perfect consist? Both Cynics and Stoics agreed that the most important part of it, that which constituted the fundamental distinction between the wise and the unwise, was the knowledge that the sole good of man lay in this knowledge or wisdom itself. It must be understood that by wisdom they meant wisdom realized in act; indeed, they did not conceive the existence of wisdom as separable from such realization. We may observe, too, that the Stoics rejected the divergence which we have seen gradually taking place in Platonic-Aristotelian thought from the position of Socrates, "that no one aims at what he knows to be bad." The stress that their psychology laid on the essential unity of the rational self that is the source of voluntary action, prevented them from accepting Plato's analysis of the soul into a regulative element and elements needing regulation. They held that what we call passion, so far as it governs the voluntary action of a reasoning being, must always be erroneous judgment as to what is to be sought or shunned. From such passions or errors the truly wise man will be free. He will of course be conscious of the solicitations of physical appetite; but he will not be misled into supposing that its object is really a good; he cannot, therefore, hope for the attainment of this object or fear to miss it, as these states involve the conception of it as a good. Similarly, though he will be subject like other men to bodily pain, this will not cause him mental grief or disquiet, as his worst agonies will not disturb his clear conviction that it is really indifferent to his true reasonable self. And so of all other objects that commonly excite men's hope, fear, joy, or grief; they cannot produce these states in the sage, because he cannot judge them to be

³ It has been suggestively said that Cynicism was to Stoicism what monasticism was to early Christianity. The analogy, however, must not be pressed too far, since orthodox Stoics do not ever seem to have regarded Cynicism as the more perfect way.

good or bad. That this impassive sage was a being not to be found among living men the later Stoics at least were fully aware. They faintly suggested that one or two moral heroes of old time might have realized the ideal, but they admitted that all other philosophers (even) were merely in a state of progress towards it. This admission did not in the least diminish the rigour of their demand for absolute loyalty to the exclusive claims of wisdom. The assurance of its own unique value that such wisdom involved they held to be an abiding possession for those who had attained it; and without this assurance no act could be truly wise or virtuous. Whatever was not of knowledge was of sin; and the distinction between right and wrong being absolute and not admitting of degrees, all sins were equally sinful; whoever broke the least commandment was guilty of the whole law. Similarly, in any one of the manifestations of wisdom, commonly distinguished as particular virtues, all wisdom was somehow involved; though whether these virtues were specifically distinct, or only the same knowledge in different relations, was a subtle question on which the Stoics do not seem to have been agreed.

Was, then, this rare and priceless knowledge something which it was possible for man to attain, or were human shortcomings really involuntary? There is an obvious danger to moral responsibility involved in the doctrine that vice is involuntary; which yet seems a natural inference from the Socratic identification of knowledge with virtue. Hence Aristotle had already been led to attempt a refutation of this doctrine; but his attempt had only shown the profound difficulty of attacking the paradox, so long as it was admitted that no one could of deliberate purpose act contrary to what seemed to him best. Now, Aristotle's divergence from Socrates had not led him so far as to deny this; while for the Stoics who had receded to the original Socratic position, the difficulty was still more patent. In fact, a philosopher who maintains that virtue is essentially knowledge has to choose between alternative paradoxes: he must either allow vice to be involuntary, or affirm ignorance to be voluntary. The latter horn of the dilemma is at any rate the less dangerous to morality, and as such the Stoics chose it. But they were not yet at the end of their perplexities; for while they were thus driven on one line of thought to an extreme extension of the range of human volition, their view of the physical universe involved an equally thorough-going determinism. How could the vicious man be responsible if his vice were strictly predetermined? The Stoics answered that the error which was the essence of vice was so far voluntary that it could be avoided if men chose to exercise their reason; no doubt it depended on the innate force and firmness² of a man's soul whether his reason was thus effectually exercised; but moral responsibility was saved if the vicious act proceeded from the man himself and not from any external cause.

With all this we have got little way towards ascertaining the positive practical content of this wisdom. How are we to emerge from the barren circle of affirming (1) that wisdom is the sole good and unwisdom the sole evil, and (2) that wisdom is the knowledge of good and evil; and attain some method for determining the particulars of good conduct? Both Cynicism and Stoicism stood in need of such a method to complete their doctrine, since neither school was prepared to maintain that what the sage does is indifferent (no less than what befalls him), provided only he does it with a full conviction of its indifference. The Cynics, however, seem to have made no philosophical

¹ The Stoics were not quite agreed as to the inalienability of virtue, but they were agreed that, when once possessed, it could only be lost through the loss of reason itself.

² Hence some members of the school, without rejecting the definition of virtue = knowledge, also defined it as "strength and force."

provision for this need; they were content to mean by virtue what any plain man meant by it, except in so far as their sense of independence led them to reject certain received precepts and prejudices. The Stoics, on the other hand, not only worked out a detailed system of duties—or, as they termed them, "things meet and fit" (*καθήκοντα*) for all occasions of life; they were further especially concerned to comprehend them under a general formula. They found this by bringing out the positive significance of the notion of Nature, which the Cynic had used chiefly in a negative way, as an antithesis to the "consentions" (*νόμος*), from which his knowledge had made him free. Even in this negative use of the notion, it is necessarily implied that whatever in man is "natural"—that is, prior to and uncorrupted by social customs and conventions,—must furnish valid guidance for conduct. But whence can this authority belong to the natural, unless nature, the ordered creation of which man is a part, be itself somehow reasonable, an expression or embodiment of divine law and wisdom? The conception of the world, as organized and filled by divine thought, was common, in some form, to all the philosophies that looked back to Socrates as their founder,—the Megarians, as we saw, even maintaining that this thought was the sole reality. This latter doctrine harmonized thoroughly with the Stoic view of human good; but being unable to conceive substance idealistically, they (with considerable aid from the earlier system of Heraclitus) supplied a materialistic side to their pantheism,—conceiving divine thought as an attribute of the purest and most primary of material substances, a subtle fiery ether. They held the physical world to have been developed out of Zeus, so conceived; to be, in fact, a modification of his eternal substance into which it would ultimately be consumed and re-absorbed; meanwhile it was throughout permeated with the fashioning force of his divine spirit, and perfectly ordered by his prescient law. This theological view of the physical universe had a double effect on the ethics of the Stoic. In the first place it gave to his cardinal conviction of the all-sufficiency of wisdom for human wellbeing a root of cosmic fact, and an atmosphere of religious and social emotion. The exercise of wisdom was now viewed as the pure life of that particle of divine substance which was in very truth the "god within him;" the reason whose supremacy he maintained was the reason of Zeus, and of all gods and reasonable men, no less than his own; its realization in any one individual was thus the common good of all rational beings as such; "the sage could not stretch out a finger rightly without thereby benefiting all other sages,"—nay, it might even be said that he was "as useful to Zeus as Zeus to him."³ But again, the same conception served to harmonize the higher and the lower elements of human life. For even in the physical or non-rational man, as originally constituted, we may see clear indications of the divine design, which it belongs to his rational will to carry into conscious execution; indeed, in the first stage of human life, before reason is fully developed, uncorrupted natural impulse effects what is afterwards the work of reason. Thus the formula of "living according to nature," in its application to man as the "rational animal," may be understood both as directing that reason is to govern, and as indicating how that government is to be practically exercised. In man, as in every other animal, from the moment of birth natural impulse prompts to self-preservation, and to the maintenance of his physical frame in its original integrity; then, when reason has been developed and has recognized itself as its own sole good, these "primary ends of nature" and whatever

³ It is apparently in view of this union in reason of rational beings that friends are allowed to be "external goods" to the sage, and that the possession of good children is also counted a good.

promotes these still constitute the outward objects at which reason is to aim; there is a certain value (*ἀξία*) in them, in proportion to which they are "preferred" (*προηγμένα*) and their opposites "rejected" (*ἀποπροηγμένα*); indeed, it is only in the due and consistent exercise of such preference and rejection that wisdom can find its practical manifestation. In this way all or most of the things commonly judged to be "goods"—health, strength, wealth, fame,¹ &c.—are brought within the sphere of the sage's choice, though his real good still is solely in the wisdom of the choice, and not in the thing chosen; just as an archer aims at a bull's eye, his end being not the mark itself, but the manifestation of his skill in hitting it.

It is to be observed that the adoption of "conformity to nature," as the general positive rule for outward conduct, originated in the Academic school, which, after Plato's death, seems to have separated ethics from ontology as completely as Aristotle. We find "nature" used as a cardinal notion in ethics both by Speusippus, Plato's immediate successor, and by Xenocrates, the contemporary of Aristotle. Indeed, their fundamental doctrine apparently differed from the Stoic's only in calling "good" what the latter called "preferred," and consistently affirming that virtue was sufficient by itself for happiness, but not for perfect happiness. A view nearly the same, but allowing more importance to outward circumstances, was maintained by the Peripatetics; on whom, when the energies of Plato's school were absorbed in scepticism (250-100 B.C.), it chiefly devolved to maintain the more moderate² claims of morality in contrast to the paradoxes of Stoicism. It is easy to understand how the one school thought it mere perversity to refuse the common names of "good" and "evil" to things "preferred" and "rejected," and patent inconsistency to make wisdom manifest itself in choosing among objects that wisdom knew to be indifferent; while to the other it seemed the essence of philosophy to be thus independent of outward things while yet exercised upon them.

So far we have considered the "nature" of the individual man as apart from his social relations; but it is obvious that the sphere of virtue, as commonly conceived, lies chiefly in these, and this was fully recognized in the Stoic account of duties (*καθήκοντα*); indeed, their exposition of the "natural" basis of justice, the evidences in man's mental and physical constitution that he was born not for himself but for mankind, is the most important part of their work in the region of practical morality. Here, however, we especially notice the double significance of "natural," as applied to (1) what actually exists everywhere or for the most part, and (2) what would exist if the original plan of man's life were fully carried out; and we find that the Stoics have not clearly harmonized the two elements of the notion. That man was "naturally" a social animal Aristotle had already taught; that all rational beings, in the unity of the reason that is common to all, form naturally one community with a common law was (as we saw) an immediate inference from the Stoic conception of the universe as a whole. That the members of this "city of Zeus" should observe their contracts, abstain from mutual harm, combine to protect each other from injury, were obvious points of natural law; while, again, it was clearly necessary to the preservation of human society that

¹ The Stoics seem to have varied in their view of "good repute," *εὐδοξία*; at first, when the school was more under the influence of Cynicism, they professed an outward as well as an inward indifference to it; ultimately they conceded the point to common sense, and included it among *προηγμένα*.

² There were different degrees of this moderation, but in no case was it very moderate;—if we may judge from the extent to which Aristotle's successor Theophrastus was attacked for his weakness in conceding that there was a degree of torture which would prevent a good man from being happy.

its members should form sexual unions, produce children, and bestow care on their rearing and training. But beyond this nature did not seem to go in determining the relations of the sexes; accordingly, we find that community of wives was a feature of Zeno's ideal commonwealth, just as it was of Plato's; and other Stoics are represented as maintaining, and illustrating with rather offensive paradoxes, the conventionality and relativity of the received code of sexual morality; while, again, the strict theory of the school recognized no government or laws as true or binding except those of the sage; he alone is the true ruler, the true king. So far, the Stoic "nature" seems in danger of being as revolutionary as Rousseau's. Practically, however, this revolutionary aspect of the notion was kept for the most part in the background; the rational law of an ideal community was peacefully undistinguished from the positive ordinances and customs of actual society; and the "natural" ties that actually bound each man to family, kinsmen, fatherland, and to unwise humanity generally, supplied the outline on which the external manifestation of justice was delineated. It was a fundamental maxim that the sage was to take part in public life; and it does not appear that his political action was to be regulated by any other principles than those commonly accepted in his community. Similarly, in the view taken by the Stoics of the duties of social decorum, and in their attitude to the popular religion, we find a fluctuating compromise between the disposition to repudiate what is artificial and conventional, and the disposition to revere what is actual and established which both equally spring from the very core of their creed.

Among the primary ends of nature, in which wisdom recognized a certain preferability, the Stoics included freedom from bodily pain; but they refused, even in this outer court of wisdom, to find a place for pleasure. They held that the latter was not an object of uncorrupted natural impulse, but an "aftergrowth," a mere consequence of natural impulses attaining their ends. They thus endeavoured to resist Epicureanism even on the ground where the latter seems *prima facie* strongest; in its appeal, namely, to the natural pleasure-seeking of all living things. Nor did they merely mean by pleasure (*ἡδονή*) the gratification of bodily appetite; we find (e.g.) Chrysippus urging, as a decisive argument against Aristotle that pure speculation was "a kind of amusement; that is, pleasure." This being so, the distinction that they drew between pleasure, and the "joy and gladness" (*χαρά, εὐφροσύνη*) that accompanied the exercise of virtue, cannot but seem somewhat arbitrary. We must observe, however, that even this "moral pleasure," as a modern would consider it, though inseparable in the Stoic view from wellbeing, was not its most essential constituent. It is only by a modern misrepresentation of Stoicism that tranquillity or serenity of soul is taken as the real ultimate end, to which the exercise of virtue is merely a means. In Zeno's system, as in Aristotle's, it is good activity, and not the feeling that attends it, which constitutes the essence of good life. At the same time, since pleasant feeling of some kind must always have been the chief element in the common conception of Greek *εὐδαιμονία* as well as of English "happiness," it is probable that the serene joys of virtue and the grieflessness which the sage was conceived to maintain amid the worst tortures, formed the main attractions of Stoicism for ordinary minds. In this sense it may be fairly said that Stoics and Epicureans made rival offers to mankind of the same kind of happiness; and the philosophical peculiarities of either system may be equally traced to the same desire of maintaining that independence of the changes and chances of life which seemed essential to a settled serenity of soul. The Stoic claims on this head were the loftiest; as the