maintained[1] during the 16th and 17th centuries; though scriptural texts, interpreted and supplemented by the light of natural reason, now furnished the sole principles on which cases of conscience were decided. But in the 17th century the interest of this quasi-legal treatment of morality gradually faded; and the ethical studies of educated minds were occupied with the attempt, renewed after so many centuries, to find an independent philosophical basis for the moral code. The renewal of this attempt was only indirectly due to the Reformation; it is rather to be connected with the more extreme reaction from the mediæval religion which was partly caused by, partly expressed in, that enthusiastic study of the remains of old pagan culture that spread from Italy over Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. To this "humanism" the Reformation seemed at first more hostile than the Roman hierarchy; indeed, the extent to which this latter had allowed itself to become paganized by the Renaissance was one of the points that especially roused the Reformers' indignation. Not the less important is the indirect stimulus given by the Reformation towards the development of a moral philosophy independent alike of Catholic and Protestant assumptions. Scholasticism, while reviving philosophy as a handmaid to theology, had metamorphosed its method into one resembling that of its mistress; thus shackling the renascent intellectual activity which it stimulated and exercised by the double bondage to Aristotle and to the church. When the Reformation shook the traditional authority in one department, the blow was necessarily felt in the other. Not twenty years after Luther's defiance of the pope, the startling thesis "that all that Aristotle taught was false" was prosperously maintained by the youthful Ramus before the university of Paris; and almost contemporaneously the group of remarkable thinkers in Italy who heralded the dawn of modern physical science—Cardanus, Telesius, Patritius, Campanella, Bruno—began to propound their un-Aristotelian theories of the constitution of the physical universe. It was to be foreseen that a similar assertion of independence would make itself heard in ethics also; and, indeed, amid the clash of dogmatic convictions, the variations and aberrations of private judgment, that the multiplying divisions of Christendom exhibited after the Reformation, reflective persons would naturally be led to seek for an ethical method that might claim universal acceptance from all sects.

IV. MODERN, ESPECIALLY ENGLISH, ETHICS.—The need of such independent principles was most strongly felt in the region of man's civil and political relations, especially the mutual relations of communities. Accordingly we find that modern ethical controversy was commenced in the form of a discussion of the law of nature, of which first Albericus Gentilis (1557–1611), then Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) in his epoch-making work on international law, endeavoured to give a complete theoretical view. Natural law, according to Grotius, is that part of divine law which follows from the essential nature of man; it is therefore as unalterable even by God himself as the truths of mathematics, although it may be overruled in any particular case by express revelation; hence it is cognizable *a priori*, from the abstract consideration of human nature, though its existence may also be known *a posteriori* from its universal acceptance in human societies. The conception, as we have seen, was taken from the later Roman jurists; by them, however, the law of nature was hardly conceived as actually having a substantive existence independent of positive codes; it was rather something that underlay existing law, and was to be looked for through it, though it might perhaps be expected ultimately to supersede it, and in the meanwhile represented an ideal standard, by which improvements in legislation were to be guided. Hence they do not seem to have framed, except in poetical or mythical imagination, the notion of a state of nature in which human beings were governed by the law of nature alone. But as soon as the principles of this code were contemplated as determining international rights and duties, it was obvious that in the present mutual relations of independent nations, regarded as corporate units, we have an actual example of this state of nature. Thus it was an easy step to suppose definitely that in prehistoric times individuals or single families lived similarly side by side,—under none other than such "natural" laws as those prohibiting mutual injury, and mutual interference with each other's use of the goods of the earth that were common to all, giving parents authority over their children, imposing on wives a vow of fidelity to their husbands, and obliging all to the observance of compacts freely entered into. It was not, of course, assumed that these laws were universally obeyed; indeed, one point with which Grotius is especially concerned is the natural right of private war, arising out of the violation of more primary rights. Still a general observance was involved in the idea of a natural law as a "dictate of right reason indicating the agreement or disagreement of an act with man's rational and social nature;" and we may observe that it was especially necessary to assume such a general observance in the case of contracts; since it was by an "express or tacit pact" that the right of property (as distinct from the mere right to non-interference during use) was held to have been instituted; and only by a similar "fundamental pact" could men be thought to pass legitimately from the state of nature to that of an organized society.

Grotius.

The ideas above expressed were not peculiar to Grotius; in particular the doctrine of the "fundamental pact" as the jural basis of government had long been maintained, especially in England, where the constitution historically established readily suggested such a compact. At the same time the rapid and remarkable success of Grotius's treatise would bring his view of Natural Right into prominence, and would suggest to penetrating minds such questions as—"What is man's ultimate reason for obeying these laws? Wherein does this their agreement with his rational and social nature exactly consist? How far, and in what sense, is his nature really social?"

It was the answer which Hobbes (1588–1679) gave to these fundamental questions that supplied the starting-point for independent ethical philosophy in England. The nature of this answer was determined by the psychological views to which Hobbes had been led, partly under the influence of Bacon,[2] partly perhaps through association with his younger contemporary Gassendi, who, in two treatises, published between the appearance of Hobbes's *De Cive* (1642) and that of the *Leviathan* (1651), endeavoured to revive interest in the life and teaching of Epicurus. Hobbes's psychology is in the first place materialistic; he holds, that is, that in any of the psychophysical phenomena of human nature the reality is a material process of which the mental feeling is a mere "appearance." Accordingly he regards pleasure as essentially motion "helping vital action," and pain as motion "hindering" it. There is no logical connexion between this theory and the doctrine that appetite or desire has always pleasure (or the absence of pain) for its object; still a materialist,

[1] As the chief English casuists we may mention Perkins, Hall, Sanderson, as well as the more eminent Jeremy Taylor, whose *Ductor Dubitantium* appeared 1660.

[2] This influence was not exercised in the region of ethics. Bacon's brief outline of moral philosophy (in the *Advancement of Learning*) is highly pregnant and suggestive; but the outline was never filled in, and does not seem to have had any effect in determining the subsequent course of thought in England.

framing a system of psychology, will naturally direct his attention to the impulses arising out of bodily wants, whose obvious end is the preservation of the material organism; and this, together with a philosophic wish to simplify, may lead him to the conclusion that all human impulses are similarly self-regarding. This, at any rate, is Hobbes's cardinal doctrine in moral psychology, that each man's appetites or desires are naturally directed either to the preservation of his life, or to that heightening of it which he feels as pleasure;[1] including the aversions that are similarly directed "fromward" pain. Hobbes does not distinguish instinctive from deliberate pleasure-seeking; and he confidently resolves the most apparently unselfish emotions into phases of self-regard. Pity he finds to be grief for the calamity of others, arising from imagination of the like calamity befalling oneself; what we admire with seeming disinterestedness as beautiful (*pulchrum*) is really "pleasure in promise;" when men are not immediately seeking present pleasure, they desire power as a means to future pleasure, and thus have a derivative delight in the exercise of power that prompts to what we call benevolent action. Since, then, all the voluntary actions of men tend to their own preservation or pleasure, it cannot be reasonable to aim at anything else; in fact, nature rather than reason fixes this as the end of human action to which it is reason's function to show the means. Hence if we ask why it is reasonable for any individual to observe the rules of social behaviour that are commonly called moral, the answer is obvious that this is only indirectly reasonable, as a means to his own preservation or pleasure. It is not, however, in this, which is only the old Cyrenaic or Epicurean answer, that the distinctive point of Hobbism lies; but rather in the doctrine that even this indirect reasonableness of the most fundamental moral rules is entirely conditional on their general observance, which cannot be secured without the intervention of government. *E.g.*, it is not reasonable for me to perform my share of a contract, unless I have adequate reason for believing that the other party will perform his; and this adequate reason I cannot have, except in a state of society in which he will be punished for non-performance. Thus the ordinary rules of social behaviour are only hypothetically obligatory in any society, until they are actualized by the establishment of a strong central authority. On the other hand, Hobbes yields to no one in maintaining the paramount importance of moral regulations. The precepts of good faith, equity, requital of benefits, forgiveness of wrong so far as security allows, the prohibition of contumely, pride, arrogance, and other subordinate rules, he still calls "immutable and eternal laws of nature,"—meaning that, though they do not unconditionally bind us to realize them, they always bind to a desire that they should be realized. The pre-social state of man, in his view, is also pre-moral; but it is therefore utterly miserable. It is a state in which every one has a right to everything that may conduce to his preservation;[2] but it is therefore also a state of war in which every man's hand is against his neighbour's,—a state so wretched and perilous that it is the first dictate of rational self-love to emerge from it into social peace and order. Hence Hobbes's ideal constitution naturally comes to be an unquestioned and unlimited—though not necessarily monarchical—despotism. Whatever the government declares to be just or unjust must be taken to be so, since to dispute its dictates would be the first step towards anarchy, the one paramount peril outweighing all particular defects in legislation and administration. It is perhaps easy to understand how, in 1651, a peace-loving philosopher, weary of the din of warring sects, should regard the claims of individual conscience as essentially anarchical, and the most threatening danger to social well-being; but however strong might be men's yearning for order, a view of social duty, in which the only fixed positions were selfishness everywhere, and unlimited power somewhere, could not but appear offensively paradoxical.

However, offensive or not, there was an originality, a force, an apparent coherence in Hobbism which rendered it undeniably impressive; in fact, we find that for two generations the efforts to construct morality on a philosophical basis take more or less the form of answers to Hobbes. From an ethical point of view Hobbism divides itself naturally into two parts, which are combined by Hobbes's peculiar political doctrines into a coherent whole, but are not otherwise necessarily connected. Its theoretical basis is the principle of egoism, that it is natural and so reasonable for each individual to aim solely at his own preservation or pleasure; while, for practically determining the particulars of duty it makes morality entirely dependent on positive law and institution. It is this latter part or aspect of the system which is primarily attacked by the first generation of writers that replied to Hobbes. This attack, or rather the counter-exposition of orthodox doctrine, is conducted on different methods by the Cambridge moralists and by Cumberland respectively. The latter retains the legal view of morality, and endeavours, while showing the actuality of the laws of nature, to systematize them by reducing them to a single principle. The former, regarding morality primarily as a body of truth rather than a code of rules, insist on its absolute character and intuitive certainty.

The Cambridge moralists. Cudworth.

Cudworth was the most distinguished of the little group of thinkers at Cambridge in the 17th century, commonly known as the "Cambridge Platonists," who, embracing what they conceived to be Platonic principles, but also strongly influenced by the new thought of Descartes, endeavoured to blend rational theology with religious philosophy. In his treatise on *Eternal and Immutable Morality* (which was not published till more than 40 years after his death in 1688), his main aim is to maintain the "essential and eternal distinctions of good and evil" as independent of mere will, whether human or divine. These distinctions, he insists, have an objective reality, cognizable by reason or intellect as much as any physical fact; and he endeavours to refute Hobbism—which he treats as a "novantique philosophy," a mere revival of the relativism of Protagoras—by the following *argumentum ad hominem*. He argues that Hobbes's atomic materialism involves the conception of an objective physical world, the object not of sense that varies from man to man, but of the intellect that is the same in all; there is therefore an inconsistency in refusing to admit a similar exercise of intellect in morals, an objective world of duty, which the mind by its normal activity clearly apprehends as such. Cudworth, in the work above mentioned, gives no systematic exposition of the ethical principles which he holds to be clearly apprehended. But we may supply this deficiency from the *Enchiridion Ethicum* of Henry More, another thinker of the same school. More gives a list of 23 "Noemata Moralia," the truth of which will, he says, be immediately manifest. Some of these are purely egoistic,—as (*e.g.*) that goods differ in quality as

[1] He even identifies the desire with the pleasure, apparently regarding the stir of appetite and that of fruition as two parts of the same "motion."

[2] In spite of Hobbes's uncompromising egoism, there is a noticeable discrepancy between his theory of the ends that men naturally seek and his standard for determining their natural rights. This latter is never Pleasure simply, but always Preservation—though on occasion he enlarges the notion of "preservation" into "preservation of life so as not to be weary of it." His view seems to be that in a state of nature *most* men *will* fight, rob, &c., "for delectation merely" or "for glory," and that hence all men must be allowed an indefinite right to fight, rob, &c., "for preservation."

well as duration, and that the superior good is always to be preferred, and similarly the lesser evil; that absence of a given amount of good is preferable to the presence of equivalent evil; that future good or evil is to be regarded as much as present, if equally certain, and nearly as much if very probable. Objections, both general and special, might be urged by a Hobbist against these modes of formulating man's natural pursuit of self-interest; but the serious controversy between Hobbism and modern Platonism did not relate to such principles as these, but to others which demand from the individual a (real or apparent) sacrifice for his fellows. Such are the evangelical principle of "doing as you would be done by;" the principle of justice, or "giving every man his own, and letting him enjoy it without interference;" and especially what More states as the abstract formula of benevolence, that "if it be good that one man should be supplied with the means of living well and happily, it is mathematically certain that it is doubly good that two should be so supplied, and so on." If we ask what motive any individual has to conform to these social principles when they conflict with his natural desires, Cudworth gives no explicit reply, and the answer of More is hardly clear. On the one hand he maintains that these principles express an absolute good; which is to be called intellectual because its essence and truth are defined and apprehended by the intellect. We might infer from this that the intellect, so judging, is itself the proper and complete determinant of the will, and that man, as a rational being, ought to aim at the realization of absolute good for its own sake. But this does not seem to be More's view. He explains that though absolute good is discerned by the intellect, the "sweetness and flavour" of it is apprehended, not by the intellect proper, but by what he calls a "boniform faculty;" and it is in this sweetness and flavour that the motive to virtuous conduct lies; ethics is the "art of living well and happily," and true happiness lies in "the pleasure which the soul derives from the sense of virtue." In short, Platonism, in More's mind, has been so far modernized that it turns out as hedonistic as Hobbism; the difference between the two lies merely in the degree of refinement of the pleasure that is taken as ultimate end.

It is to be observed that though More lays down the abstract principle of regarding one's neighbour's good as much as one's own with the full breadth with which Christianity inculcates it, yet when he afterwards comes to discuss and classify virtues he is too much under the influence of Platonic-Aristotelian thought to give a distinct place to benevolence, except under the old form of liberality. In this respect his system presents a striking contrast to Cumberland's, whose treatise *De Legibus Naturæ* (1672), though written like More's in Latin, is yet in its ethical matter thoroughly modern. Cumberland is a thinker both original and comprehensive, who has furnished material to more than one better-known moralist; but his academic prolixity and discursiveness, his academic language, and a want of clearness of view in spite of an elaborate display of exact and complete demonstration, have doomed his work to oblivion. At any rate he is noteworthy as having been the first to lay down that "regard for the common good of all" is the supreme rule of morality or Law of Nature, to which all other rules and virtues are strictly subordinate. So far he may be fairly called the precursor of modern utilitarianism. It is, however, important to notice that in his "good" is included not merely happiness but "perfection;" and he does not even define perfection so as to exclude from it the notion of moral perfection or virtue, and save his theory from an obvious logical circle. A notion so vague could not possibly be used for determining the subordinate rules of morality with any precision; but in fact Cumberland does not attempt this; his supreme principle is not designed to rectify, but merely to support and systematize, common morality. This principle, as was said, is conceived as strictly a law, and therefore referred to a lawgiver, God, and provided with a sanction in the effects of its observance or violation on the agent's happiness. That the divine will is expressed by the proposition "that all rationals should aim at the common good of all," Cumberland, "not being so fortunate as to possess innate ideas," tries to prove by a long inductive examination of the evidences of man's essential sociality exhibited in his physical and mental constitution. His account of the sanction, again, is sufficiently comprehensive, including both the internal and the external rewards of virtue and punishments of vice; and he, like later utilitarians, explains moral obligation to lie in the force exercised on the will by these sanctions; but as to the precise manner in which individual is implicated with universal good, and the operation of either or both in determining volition, his view seems either indistinct or inconsistent.

The clearness which we seek in vain from Cumberland is found to the fullest extent in a more famous writer, whose *Essay on the Human Understanding* (1690) was already planned when Cumberland's treatise appeared. And yet Locke's ethical opinions have been widely misunderstood; since from a confusion between "innate ideas" and "intuitions," which has been common in recent ethical discussion, it has been supposed that the founder of English empiricism must necessarily have been hostile to "intuitional" ethics. The truth is that, while Locke agrees entirely with Hobbes as to the egoistic basis of rational conduct, and the interpretation of "good" and "evil" as "pleasure" and "pain," or that which is productive of pleasure and pain, he yet agrees entirely with Hobbes's opponents in holding ethical rules to be actually obligatory independently of political society, and capable of being scientifically constructed on principles intuitively known. This morality he conceives as the law of God, carefully distinguishing it, not only from civil law, but from the law of opinion or reputation, the varying moral standard by which men actually distribute praise and blame; as being divine it is necessarily sanctioned by adequate rewards and punishments. He does not, indeed, speak of the scientific construction of this code as having been actually effected, but he affirms its possibility in language remarkably strong and decisive. "The idea," he says, "of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and upon whom we depend, and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action, as might place morality among the sciences capable of demonstration, wherein, I doubt not, but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences as incontestible as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out." As Locke cannot consistently mean by God's "goodness" anything but the disposition to give pleasure, it would seem that the supreme rule of his system, as of Cumberland's, must prescribe universal benevolence; though the only instances which he gives of intuitive moral truths are the purely formal propositions, "No government allows absolute liberty." and "Where there is no property there is no injustice."

We might give, as a fair illustration of Locke's general conception of ethics, a system which is frequently represented as diametrically opposed to Lockism; namely, that expounded in Clarke's Boyle lectures on the *Being and Attributes of God* (1704). It is true that Locke is not particularly concerned with the ethico-theological proposition which Clarke is most anxious to maintain,—that the fundamental rules of morality are independent of arbitrary will, whether divine or human. But in his general view of ethical principles as being, like mathematical principles, essentially truths of relation, Clarke is quite in accordance with Locke; while of the four fundamental rules that he expounds, Piety, Equity, Benevolence, and Sobriety (which includes self-preservation), the first is obtained, just as Locke suggests, by "comparing the idea" of man with the idea of an infinitely good and wise being on whom he depends; and the second and third are axioms self-evident on the consideration of the equality or similarity of human individuals as such. The second axiom of equity—that "whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable for another to do for me, that by the same I declare reasonable or unreasonable that I in the like case should do for him," is merely a formal statement of the golden rule of the gospel.[1] We may observe that in stating the principle of benevolence, "since the greater good is always most fit and reasonable to be done, every rational creature ought to do all the good it can to its fellow-creatures," Clarke avowedly follows Cumberland, from whom he quotes the further sentence that "universal love and benevolence is as plainly the most direct, certain, and effectual means to this good as the flowing of a point is to produce a line." The quotation may remind us that the analogy between ethics and mathematics ought to be traced further back than Locke; in fact, it results from the influence exercised by Cartesianism over English thought generally, in the latter half of the 17th century. It must be allowed that Clarke is misled by the analogy to use general ethical terms ("fitness," "agreement" of things, &c.), which overlook the essential distinction between what is and what ought to be; and even in one or two expressions to overleap this distinction extravagantly, as (*e.g.*) in saying that the man who "wilfully acts contrary to justice wills things to be what they are not and cannot be." What he really means is less paradoxically stated in the general proposition that "originally and in reality it is natural and (morally speaking) necessary that the will should be determined in every action by the reason of the thing and the right of the case, as it is natural and (absolutely speaking) necessary that the understanding should submit to a demonstrated truth." Here no doubt Clarke is opposed to Locke; and even goes beyond the Platonists in affirming the immediate absolute determination of will by reason. But though it is an essential point in Clarke's view that what is right is to be done as such, apart from any consideration of pleasure or pain, it is to be observed that he is not prepared to apply this doctrine in its unqualified form to such a creature as man, who feels as well as reasons. At least when he comes to argue the preferability of virtue to vice in reference to actual human choice, he does not make more than the very moderate claim that "virtue deserves to be chosen for its own sake, and vice to be avoided, though a man was sure for his own particular neither to gain nor lose anything by the practice of either." He fully admits that the question is altered when vice is attended by pleasure and profit to the vicious man, virtue by loss and calamity; and even that it is "not truly reasonable that men by adhering to virtue should part with their lives, if thereby they deprived themselves of all possibility of receiving any advantage from their adherence."

The truth is that the impressive earnestness with which Clarke enforces the doctrine of rational morality only renders more manifest the difficulty of establishing ethics on an independent philosophical basis; so long at least as the psychological egoism of Hobbes is not definitely assailed and overthrown. Until this is done, the utmost demonstration of the abstract reasonableness of social duty only leaves us with an irreconcilable antagonism between the view of abstract reason and the self-love which is allowed to be the root of man's appetitive nature. Let us grant that there is as much intellectual absurdity in acting unjustly as in denying that two and two make four; still, if a man has to choose between absurdity and unhappiness, he will naturally prefer the former; and Clarke cannot maintain that such preference is irrational.[2]

It remains to adopt another line of reasoning; instead of presenting the principle of social duty as abstract reason, liable to conflict to any extent with natural self-love, we may try to exhibit the naturalness of man's social affections, and demonstrate a normal harmony between these and his self-regarding impulses. This is the line of thought which Shaftesbury (1671–1713) may be said to have initiated. Not, of course, that he is original in insisting on the actual fact of natural affections binding men to their fellows; Cumberland, to say nothing of earlier writers, had dwelt on this at some length. But no moralist before Shaftesbury had made this the cardinal point in his system; no one had undertaken to distinguish clearly, by careful analysis of experience, the disinterested and self-regarding elements of our appetitive nature, or to prove inductively their perfect harmony. He begins by attacking the egoistic interpretation of good which Hobbes had put forward, and which, as we have seen, was not necessarily excluded by the doctrine of moral intuitions. This interpretation, he says, would be only true if we considered man as a wholly unrelated individual. Such a being we might doubtless call "good," if his impulses and dispositions were harmonized and adapted to the attainment of his own felicity. But man we must and do consider in relation to a larger system of which he forms a part, and so we only call him "good" when his impulses and dispositions are so graduated and balanced as to tend towards the good of this whole. And observe, he adds, we do not attribute goodness to him merely because his outward acts have this tendency; the worst of men may be chained from harm, and lashed into usefulness by the fear of punishment. When we speak of a man as "morally" good, we mean that his dispositions or affections are such as tend of themselves to promote the good or happiness of human society. Hobbes's moral man, who, if let loose from governmental constraint, would straightway spread ruin among his fellows, is not what we commonly agree to call such. Moral goodness, then, involves disinterested affections, whose direct object is the good of others; but Shaftesbury does not mean (as he has been misunderstood to mean) that only such benevolent social impulses are good, and that these are always good. On the contrary, he is careful to point out, first, that immoderate social affections defeat themselves, miss their proper end, and are therefore bad; secondly, that as an individual's good is part of the good of the whole "self-affections" existing in a duly limited degree are morally good. The moral ideal, in short, consists in due combination of both sorts of "affections," tendency to promote general good being taken as the criterion of the right mixture or balance. This being established, the main aim of Shaftesbury's argument is to prove that the same balance and blending of private and social affections, which tends naturally to public good, is also conducive to the happiness of the individual in whom it exists. Taking the different impulses in detail, he first shows how the

[1] Even Hobbes accepts the golden rule in its negative application ("Do *not* unto others," &c.) as summarizing his "law of nature."

[2] It should be observed that, while Clarke is sincerely anxious to prove that most principles are binding independently of Divine appointment, he is no less concerned to show that morality requires the practical support of revealed religion.

individual's happiness is promoted by developing and exercising his social affections, mental pleasures being superior to bodily, and the pleasures of benevolence the richest of all. In discussing this he distinguishes, with well-applied subtlety, between the pleasurableness of the benevolent emotions themselves, the sympathetic enjoyment of the happiness of others, and the pleasure arising from a consciousness of their love and esteem. He then exhibits the unhappiness that results from any excess of the self-regarding impulses, bodily appetite, desire of wealth, emulation, resentment, even love of life itself; and ends by dwelling on the intrinsic painfulness of all malevolence.

One more special impulse remains to be noticed. We have seen that goodness of character consists in a certain balance and harmony of self-regarding and social affections. But virtue, in Shaftesbury's view, is something more; it implies a recognition of moral goodness and immediate preference of it for its own sake. This immediate pleasure that we take in goodness (and displeasure in its opposite) is due to a susceptibility which he calls the "reflex" or "moral" sense, and compares with our susceptibility to beauty and deformity in external things; it furnishes both an additional direct impulse to good conduct, and an additional gratification to be taken into account in the reckoning which proves the coincidence of virtue and happiness. This doctrine of the moral sense is sometimes represented as Shaftesbury's cardinal tenet; but though characteristic and important, it is not really necessary to his main argument; it is the crown rather than the keystone of his ethical structure.

The appearance of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* (1713) marks a turning-point in the history of English ethical thought. With the generation of moralists that followed the consideration of abstract rational principles falls into the background, and its place is taken by introspective study of the human mind, observation of the play of the various impulses and sentiments. This empirical psychology had not indeed been neglected by previous writers. More, among others, had imitated Descartes in a discussion of the passions, and Locke's essay had given a still stronger impulse in the same direction; still, Shaftesbury is the first moralist who distinctly takes psychological experience as the basis of ethics. His suggestions were developed by Hutcheson into one of the most elaborate systems of moral philosophy which we possess; through Hutcheson, if not directly, they influenced Hume's speculations, and are thus connected with later utilitarianism; while again, the substance of Shaftesbury's main argument was adopted by Butler, though it could not pass the scrutiny of that powerful and cautious intellect without receiving important modifications and additions. On the other hand, the ethical optimism of Shaftesbury, connected as it was with a natural theology that implied the Christian scheme to be superfluous, challenged attack equally from orthodox divines and from infidel pessimists. Of these latter Mandeville, the author of *The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Public Benefits* (1724), was a conspicuous if not a typical specimen. He can hardly be called a "moralist;" and though it is impossible to deny him a considerable share of philosophical penetration, his anti-moral paradoxes have not even apparent coherence. He is convinced that virtue (where it is more than a mere pretence) is purely artificial; but not quite certain whether it is a useless trammel of appetites and passions that are advantageous to society, or a device creditable to the politicians who introduced it by playing upon the "pride and vanity" of the "silly creature man." The view, however, to which he gave eccentric expression, that moral regulation is something alien to the natural man, and imposed on him from without, seems to have been very current in the polite society of his time, as we learn both from Berkeley's *Alciphron* and from Butler's more famous sermons.

The view of "human nature" against which Butler preached was not exactly Mandeville's, nor was it properly to be called Hobbist, although Butler fairly treats it as having a philosophical basis in Hobbes's psychology. It was, so to say, Hobbism turned inside out,—rendered licentious and anarchical instead of constructive. Hobbes had said "the natural state of man is non-moral, unregulated; moral rules are means to the end of peace, which is a means to the end of self-preservation." On this view morality, so far as Hobbes deals with it, though conventional and dependent for its actuality on the social compact which establishes government, is actually binding on man as a reasonable being. But the quasi-theistic assumption that what is natural must be reasonable remained in the minds of Hobbes's most docile readers; and in combination with his new thesis that unrestrained egoism is natural, tended to produce results which, though not perhaps practically subversive of peace, were at any rate dangerous to social well-being. To meet this view Butler does not content himself, as he is sometimes carelessly supposed to do, with simply insisting on the natural claim to authority of the conscience which his opponent repudiated as artificial; he also uses a more subtle and effective argument *ad hominem*. He first follows Shaftesbury in exhibiting the social affections as no less natural than the appetites and desires which tend more directly to self-preservation; then going further and reviving the Stoic view of the *prima naturæ*, the first objects of natural appetites, he argues that pleasure is not the primary aim even of the impulses which Shaftesbury allowed to be "self-affections;" but rather a result which follows upon their attaining their natural ends. Thus the object (*e.g.*) of hunger is not the pleasure of eating but food; hunger is, therefore, strictly speaking, no more "interested" than benevolence; granting that the pleasures of the table are an important element in the happiness at which self-love aims, the same may certainly be said for the pleasures of love and sympathy. Further, so far from bodily appetites (or other particular desires) being forms of self-love, there is no one of them which under certain circumstances may not come into conflict with it. Indeed, it is common enough for men to sacrifice to passion what they know to be their true interests; at the same time we do not consider such conduct "natural" in man as a rational being; we rather regard it as natural for him to govern his transient impulses. Thus the notion of natural unregulated egoism turns out to be a psychological chimæra; for (1) man's primary impulses cannot be sweepingly called egoistic in any sense, since the objects of all are other than his own happiness and the tendencies of some are as obviously social in the first instance as those of others are self-regarding; and (2) a man cannot be consistently egoistic without being continually self-regulative. Indeed, we may say that an egoist must be doubly self-regulative, since rational self-love ought to restrain not only other impulses, but itself also; for as happiness is made up of feelings that result from the satisfaction of impulses other than self-love, any over-development of the latter, enfeebling these other impulses, must proportionally diminish the happiness at which self-love aims. If, then, it be admitted that human impulses are naturally under government, the natural claim of conscience or the moral faculty to be the supreme governor will be hardly denied.

But has not self-love also, by Butler's own account, a similar authority, which may come into conflict with that of conscience? Butler fully admits this, and, in fact, grounds on it an important criticism of Shaftesbury. We have seen that in the latter's system the "moral sense" is not absolutely required, or at least is only necessary as a substitute for enlightened self-regard; since if the harmony between prudence and virtue, self-regarding and social impulses, is complete, mere self-interest will prompt a duly enlightened mind to maintain precisely that "balance" of affections in which goodness consists. But to Butler's more cautious mind the completeness of this harmony did not seem sufficiently demonstrable to be taken as a basis of moral teaching; he has at least to contemplate the possibility of a man being convinced of the opposite; and he argues that unless we regard conscience as essentially authoritative—which is not implied in the term "moral sense"—such a man is really bound to be vicious; "since interest, one's own happiness, is a manifest obligation." Still on this view, even if the authority of conscience be asserted, we seem reduced to an ultimate dualism of our rational nature. Butler's ordered polity of impulses turns out to be a polity with two independent governments. Butler does not deny this, so far as mere claim to authority is concerned;[1] but he maintains that, the dictates of conscience being clear and certain, while the calculations of self-interest lead to merely probable conclusions, it can never be practically reasonable to disobey the former, even apart from any proof which religion may furnish of the absolute coincidence of the two in a future life.

Wollaston.

This dualism of governing principles in Butler's system, and perhaps, too, his revival of the Platonic conception of human nature as an ordered and governed community of impulses, may be partly attributed to the influence of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature Delineated* (1722). Here, for the first time, we find "moral good" and "natural good" or "happiness" treated separately as two essentially distinct objects of rational pursuit and investigation; the harmony between them being regarded as matter of religious faith, not moral knowledge. Wollaston's theory of moral evil as consisting in the practical contradiction of a true proposition, closely resembles the most paradoxical part of Clarke's doctrine, and was not likely to approve itself to the strong common sense of Butler; but his statement of happiness or pleasure as a "justly desirable" end at which every rational being "ought" to aim corresponds exactly to Butler's conception of self-love as a naturally governing impulse; while the "moral arithmetic" with which he compares pleasures and pains, and endeavours to make the notion of happiness quantitatively precise, is an anticipation of Benthamism.

There is another side of Shaftesbury's harmony which Butler was ultimately led to oppose in a more decided manner,—the opposition, namely, between conscience or the moral sense and the social affections. In the *Sermons*, indeed (1729), Butler seems to treat conscience and calm benevolence as permanently allied though distinct principles, but in the *Dissertation on Virtue*, appended to the *Analogy* (1739), he maintains that the conduct dictated by conscience will often differ widely from that to which mere regard for the production of happiness would prompt. We may take this latter treatise as representing the first in the development of English ethics, at which what were afterwards called "utilitarian" and "intuitional" morality were first formally opposed; in earlier systems the antithesis is quite latent, as we have incidentally noticed in the case of Cumberland and Clarke.[2] The argument in Butler's dissertation was probably directed against Hutcheson, who in his "inquiry concerning the original of our ideas of virtue" had definitely identified virtue with benevolence. The identification is slightly qualified in Hutcheson's posthumously published *System of Moral Philosophy* (1755); in which the general view of Shaftesbury is more fully developed, with several new psychological distinctions, including Butler's separation of "calm" self-love and benevolence from the "turbulent" passions, selfish or social. Hutcheson also follows Butler in laying stress on the "governing" character of the moral sense; but he still regards "kind affections" as the principal objects of moral approbation—the "calm" and "extensive" affections being preferred to the turbulent and narrow—together with the desire and love of moral excellence which is ranked with universal benevolence, the two being equally worthy and necessarily harmonious. Only in a secondary sense is approval due to certain "abilities and dispositions immediately connected with virtuous affections," as candour, veracity, fortitude, sense of honour; while in a lower grade still are placed sciences and arts, along with even bodily skills and gifts; indeed, the approbation we give to these is not strictly moral, but is referred to the "sense of decency or dignity," which (as well as the sense of honour) is to be distinguished from the moral sense. Calm self-love Hutcheson regards as morally indifferent; though he enters into a careful analysis of the elements of happiness,[3] in order to show that a true regard for private interest always coincides with the moral sense and with benevolence. While thus maintaining Shaftesbury's "harmony" between public and private good, Hutcheson is still more careful to establish the strict disinterestedness of benevolent affections. Shaftesbury had conclusively shown that these were not in the vulgar sense selfish; but the very stress which he lays on the pleasure inseparable from their exercise suggests a subtle egoistic theory which he does not expressly exclude, since it may be said that this "intrinsic reward" constitutes the real motive of the benevolent man. To this Hutcheson replies that no doubt the exquisite delight of the emotion of love is a motive to sustain and develop it; but this pleasure cannot be directly obtained, any more than other pleasures, by merely desiring it; it can only be got indirectly by cultivating the affection, which is thus obviously distinct from the desire for benevolent pleasure, being (as is ordinarily supposed) an immediate desire for other's good. He points to the fact that the imminence of death often intensifies instead of diminishing a man's desire for the welfare of those he loves, as a crucial experiment proving the disinterestedness of love; adding, as confirmatory evidence, that the sympathy and admiration commonly felt for self-sacrifice depends on the belief that it is something different from refined self-seeking.

It remains to consider how, from the doctrine that affection is the proper object of approbation, we are to deduce moral rules or "natural laws" prescribing or prohibiting outward acts. It is obvious that all actions conducive to the general good will deserve our highest approbation if done from disinterested benevolence; but how if they are not so done? In answering this question, Hutcheson avails himself of the scholastic distinction between "material" and "formal" goodness. "An action," he says, "is *materially* good when in fact it tends to the interest of the system, so far as we can judge of its tendency, or to the good of some part consistent with that of the system, whatever were the affections of the agent. An action is *formally* good when it flowed from good affection in a just proportion." On the pivot of this distinction Hutcheson turns round from the point of view of Shaftesbury to that of later utilitarianism. His treat-

[1] In a remarkable passage near the close of his eleventh sermon, Butler seems even to allow that conscience would have to give way to self-love, if it were possible (which it is not) that the two should come into ultimate and irreconcilable conflict.

[2] *Cf. ante*, p. 598-9.

[3] It is worth noticing that Hutcheson's express definition of the object of self-love includes "perfection" as well as "happiness;" but in the working out of his system he considers private good exclusively as happiness or pleasure.