

ment of external rights and duties, though decidedly inferior in methodical clearness and precision, does not differ in principle from that of Paley or Bentham, except that he lays greater stress on the immediate conduciveness of actions to the happiness of individuals, and more often refers in a merely supplementary or restrictive way to their tendencies in respect of general happiness. It may be noticed, too, that he still accepts the "social compact" as the natural mode of constituting government, and regards the obligations of subjects to civil obedience as normally dependent on a tacit contract; though he is careful to state that consent is not absolutely necessary to the just establishment of beneficent government, nor the source of irrevocable obligation to a pernicious one.

An important step further in political utilitarianism was taken by Hume in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739). Hume concedes that a compact is the natural means of peacefully instituting a new government, and may therefore be properly regarded as the ground of allegiance to it at the outset; but he urges that, when once it is firmly established, the duty of obeying it rests on precisely the same combination of private and general interests as the duty of keeping promises; it is therefore absurd to base the former on the latter. Justice, veracity, fidelity to compacts and to governments, are all co-ordinate; they are all "artificial" virtues, due to civilization, and not belonging to man in his "ruder and more natural" condition; our approbation of all alike is founded on our perception of their useful consequences. It is this last position that constitutes the fundamental difference between Hutcheson's ethical doctrine and Hume's.¹ The former, while accepting utility as the criterion of "material goodness," had adhered to Shaftesbury's view that dispositions, not results of action, were the proper object of moral approval; at the same time, while giving to benevolence the first place in his account of personal merit, he had shrunk from the paradox of treating it as the sole virtue, and had added a rather undefined and unexplained train of qualities,—veracity, fortitude, activity, industry, sagacity,—immediately approved in various degrees by the "moral sense" or the "sense of dignity." This naturally suggested to a mind like Hume's, anxious to apply the experimental method to psychology, the problem of reducing these different elements of personal merit—or rather our approval of them—to some common principle. The old theory that referred this approval entirely to self-love is, he holds, easy to disprove by "crucial experiments" on the play of our moral sentiments; rejecting this, he finds the required explanation in the sympathetic pleasure that attends our perception of the conduciveness of virtue to the interests of human beings other than ourselves. He endeavours to establish this inductively by a survey of the qualities, commonly praised as virtues, which he finds to be always either useful or immediately agreeable, either (1) to the virtuous agent himself or (2) to others. In class (2) he includes, besides the Benevolence of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, the useful virtues, Justice, Veracity, and Fidelity to compacts; as well as such immediately agreeable qualities as politeness, wit, modesty, and even cleanliness. The most original part of his discussion, however, is concerned with qualities immediately useful to their possessor. The most cynical man of the world, he says, with whatever "sullen incredulity" he may repudiate virtue as a hollow pretence, cannot really refuse his approbation to "discretion, caution, enterprise, industry, frugality, economy, good sense, prudence, discernment," nor again, to "temperance, sobriety, patience, perseverance, considerateness, secrecy, order, insinuation, address,

¹ Hume's ethical view was finally stated in his *Inquiry into the Principles of Morals* (1751), which is at once more popular and more purely utilitarian than his earlier work.

presence of mind, quickness of conception, facility of expression." It is evident that the merit of these qualities in our eyes is chiefly due to our perception of their tendency to serve the person possessed of them; so that the cynic in praising them is really exhibiting the unselfish sympathy of which he doubts the existence. Hume admits the difficulty that arises, especially in the case of the "artificial" virtues, such as justice, &c., from the undeniable fact that we praise them and blame their opposites without consciously reflecting on useful or pernicious consequences; but considers that this may be explained as an effect of "education and acquired habits."²

So far the moral faculty has been considered as contemplative rather than active; and this, indeed, is the point of view from which Hume mainly regards it. If we ask what actual motive we have for virtuous conduct, Hume's answer is not quite clear. On the one hand, he speaks of moral approbation as derived from "humanity and benevolence," while expressly recognizing, after Butler, that there is a strictly disinterested element in our benevolent impulses (as also in hunger, thirst, love of fame, and other passions). On the other hand, he does not seem to think that moral sentiment or "taste" can "become a motive to action," except as it "gives pleasure or pain, and thereby constitutes happiness or misery." It is difficult to make these views quite consistent; but at any rate Hume emphatically maintains that "reason is no motive to action," except so far as it "directs the impulse received from appetite or inclination;" and recognizes—in his later treatise at least—no "obligation" to virtue, except that of the agent's interest or happiness.

But even if we consider the moral consciousness merely as a particular kind of pleasurable emotion, there is an obvious question suggested by Hume's theory, to which he gives no adequate answer. If the essence of "moral taste" is sympathy with the pleasure of others, connected by transference with the qualities that tend to cause such pleasure, why is not this specific feeling excited by other things beside virtue? On this point Hume contents himself with the vague remark that "there are a numerous set of passions and sentiments, of which thinking rational beings are by the original constitution of nature the only proper objects." The truth is, that Hume's notion of moral approbation was very loose, as is sufficiently shown by the list of "useful and agreeable" qualities which he considers worthy of approbation.³ It is therefore hardly surprising that his theory should leave the specific quality of the moral sentiments a fact still needing to be explained. An original and ingenious solution of this problem was offered by his contemporary Adam Smith, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Adam Smith does not deny the actuality or importance of that sympathetic pleasure in the perceived or inferred effects of virtues and vices on which Hume laid stress. He does not, however, think that the essential part of common moral sentiment is constituted by this, but rather by a more direct sympathy with the impulses that prompt to action or expression. The spontaneous play of this sympathy he treats as an original and inexplicable fact of human nature, but he considers that its action is powerfully sustained by the pleasure that each man finds in the accord

Adam Smith.

² Hume remarks that in some cases, by "association of ideas," the rule by which we praise and blame is extended beyond the principle of utility from which it arises; but he allows much less scope to this explanation in his second treatise than in his first.

³ In earlier editions of the *Inquiry* Hume expressly included all approved qualities under the general notion of "virtue." In later editions he avoided this strain on usage by substituting or adding "merit" in several passages,—allowing that some of the laudable qualities which he mentions would be more commonly called "talents," but still maintaining that "there is little distinction made in our internal estimation" of "virtues" and "talents."

of his feeling with another's. By means of this primary element, compounded in various ways, Adam Smith explains all the different phenomena of the moral consciousness. He takes first the semi-moral notion of "propriety" or "decorum," and endeavours to show inductively that our application of this notion to the social behaviour of another is determined by our degree of sympathy with the feeling expressed in such behaviour. "To approve of the passions of another as suitable to their objects is the same thing as to sympathize with them." Similarly we disapprove of passion exhibited in a degree to which our sympathy cannot reach; and even, too, when it falls short; since, as he acutely points out, we often sympathize with the merely imagined feelings of others, and are thus disappointed, when we find the reality absent. Thus the prescriptions of good taste in the expression of feeling may be summed up in the principle, "reduce or raise the expression to that with which spectators will sympathize." When the effort to restrain feeling is exhibited in a degree which surprises as well as pleases, it excites admiration as a virtue or excellence; such excellences Adam Smith quaintly calls the "awful and respectable," contrasting them with the "amiable virtues" which consist in the opposite effort to sympathize, when exhibited in a remarkable degree. From the sentiments of propriety and admiration we proceed to the sense of merit and demerit. Here a more complex phenomenon presents itself for analysis; we have to distinguish in the sense of merit—(1) a direct sympathy with the sentiments of the agent, and (2) an indirect sympathy with the gratitude of those who receive the benefit of his actions. In the case of demerit a direct antipathy to the feelings of the misdoer takes the place of sympathy; but the chief part of the sentiment excited is sympathy with those injured by the misdoer. The object of this sympathetic resentment, impelling us to punish, is what we call injustice; and thus the remarkable stringency of the obligation to act justly is explained, since the recognition of any action as unjust involves the admission that it may be forcibly obstructed or punished. To the obvious objection that we often approve and disapprove without sympathizing, it is replied that in such cases we correct or supplement present feelings by the general rules derived from preceding experience of our ordinary sentiments. Similarly the received maxims to which we commonly appeal as recognized standards of judgment are formed by the concurrent and mutually confirmed sympathies of mankind generally. Moral judgments, then, are expressions of the complex normal sympathy of an impartial spectator with the active impulses that prompt to and result from actions. When, however, such judgments are passed on our own conduct, a further complication of the fundamental element is required to explain them. What we call our conscience is really sympathy with the feelings of an imaginary impartial spectator looking at our conduct. Such a spectator, it is true, would not have full means for forming a judgment, but these we can supply in imagination; thus, "praiseworthy" (as distinguished from actually praised) conduct may be defined as "that with which an impartial and fully informed spectator would sympathize."

That the general rules of morality impressed on us by this complicated play of sympathy are "justly to be regarded as the laws of the Deity," Adam Smith takes care to assure us; but it can hardly be said that his theory affords any cogent arguments for this conclusion, or in any way establishes these rules as objectively valid. In the same way Hume insists emphatically on the "reality of moral obligation;" but is found to mean no more by this than the real existence of the likes and dislikes that human beings feel for each other's qualities. The fact was, that

amid the observations and analysis of feelings to which the moral sentimentalism of Shaftesbury's school had led, the fundamental ethical questions "What is right" and "Why?" had been allowed to drop into the background, and the consequent danger to morality was manifest. The binding force of moral rules becomes evanescent if we admit, with Hutcheson, that the "sense" of them may properly vary from man to man as the palate does; and it seems only another way of putting Hume's doctrine, that reason is not concerned with the ends of action, to say that the mere existence of a moral sentiment is in itself no reason for obeying it. A reaction, in one form or another, against the tendency to dissolve ethics into psychology was inevitable; since mankind generally could not be so far absorbed by the interest of psychological hypothesis as to forget their need of establishing practical principles. It was obvious, too, that this reaction might take place in either of the two lines of thought, which, having been peacefully allied in Clarke and Cumberland, had become distinctly opposed to each other in Butler and Hutcheson. It might either fall back on the moral principles commonly accepted, and, affirming their objective validity, endeavour to exhibit them as a coherent and complete set of ultimate ethical truths; or it might take the utility or conduciveness to pleasure, to which Hume had referred for the origin of most sentiments, as an ultimate end and standard by which these sentiments might be judged and corrected. The former is the line adopted with substantial agreement by Price, Reid, Stewart, and other members of the still existing Intuitionist school; the latter method, with considerably more divergence of view and treatment, was employed independently and almost simultaneously by Paley and Bentham in both ethics and politics, and is at the present time widely maintained under the name of Utilitarianism.

Price's *Review of the Chief Questions and Difficulties of Price's Morals* was published in 1757, two years before Adam Smith's treatise. In regarding moral ideas as derived from the "intuition of truth or immediate discernment of the nature of things by the understanding," Price revives the general view of the earlier school of rational moralists; but with several specific differences which it is important to notice. Firstly, his conception of "right" and "wrong" as "single ideas" incapable of definition or analysis—the notions "right," "fit," "ought," "duty," "obligation," being coincident or identical—at least avoids the confusions into which Clarke and Wollaston had been led by pressing the analogy between ethical and physical truth. Secondly, the emotional element of the moral consciousness, on which attention had been concentrated by Shaftesbury and his followers, is henceforth distinctly recognized as accompanying the intellectual intuition, though it is carefully subordinated to it. While right and wrong, in Price's view, are "real objective qualities" of actions, moral "beauty and deformity" are subjective ideas; representing feelings which are partly the necessary effects of the perceptions of right and wrong in rational beings as such, partly due to an "implanted sense" or varying emotional susceptibility. Thus, both reason and sense or instinct co-operate in the impulse to virtuous conduct, though the rational element is primary and paramount. Price further distinguishes the perception of merit and demerit in agents as another accompaniment of the perception of right and wrong in actions; the former being, however, only a peculiar species of the latter, since, to perceive merit in any one is to perceive that it is right to reward him. It is to be observed that both Price and Reid are careful to state that the merit of the agent depends entirely on the intention or "formal rightness" of his act; a man is not blameworthy for unintended evil, though he

may of course be blamed for any wilful neglect which has caused him to be ignorant of his real duty. When we turn to the subject matter of virtue, we find that Price, in comparison with More or Clarke, is decidedly laxer in accepting and stating his ethical first principles; chiefly because he (like Reid and Stewart afterwards) appeals to common sense rather than abstract reason as the judge of moral evidence. Thus he maintains with Butler that gratitude, veracity, fulfilment of promises, and justice are obligatory independently of their conduciveness to happiness; but he does not exactly exhibit the self-evidence of the abstract proposition "that truth ought to be spoken;" he rather argues, by an inductive reference to common moral opinion, that "we cannot avoid pronouncing that there is an intrinsic rectitude in sincerity." Similarly in expounding justice,— "that part of virtue which regards property,"—he seems prepared to accept *en bloc* as ultimate the traditional principles of Roman jurisprudence, which refer the right of property to "first possession, labour, succession, and donation." We must bear in mind that Price's task is considerably more difficult than that of the earlier rational moralists; owing to the new antithesis to the view of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson by which his controversial position is complicated, so that he is specially concerned to show the existence of ultimate principles besides benevolence. Not that he repudiates the obligation either of rational benevolence or self-love; on the contrary, he takes more pains than Butler to demonstrate the reasonableness of either principle. "There is not anything," he says, "of which we have more undeniably an intuitive perception, than that it is 'right to pursue and promote happiness,' whether for ourselves or for others." Finally, Price, writing after the demonstration by Shaftesbury and Butler of the actuality of disinterested impulses in human nature, is bolder and clearer than Cudworth or Clarke in insisting that right actions are to be chosen, because they are right by virtuous agents as such,—even going so far as to lay down that an act loses its moral worth in proportion as it is done from natural inclination.

On this latter point Reid, in his *Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind* (1788), adopts a more moderate and less Stoical conclusion, only maintaining that "no act can be morally good in which regard for what is right has not some influence." This is partly due to the fact that Reid builds more distinctly than Price on the foundation laid by Butler; especially in his acceptance of that duality of governing principles which we have noticed as a cardinal point in the latter's doctrine. Reid considers "regard for one's good on the whole" (Butler's self-love) and "sense of duty" (Butler's conscience) as two essentially distinct and coordinate rational principles, though naturally often comprehended under the one term, Reason. The rationality of the former principle he takes pains to explain and establish; in opposition to Hume's doctrine that it is no part of the function of reason to determine the ends which we ought to pursue, or the preference due to one end over another. He urges that the notion of "good on the whole" is one which only a reasoning being can form, involving as it does abstraction from the objects of all particular desires, and comparison of past and future with present feelings; and maintains that it is a contradiction to suppose a rational being to have the notion of its Good on the Whole without a desire for it, and that such a desire must naturally regulate all particular appetites and passions. It cannot reasonably be subordinated even to the moral faculty; in fact,

¹ If it is to be observed that whereas Price and Stewart (after Butler) identify the object of self-love with happiness or pleasure, Reid conceives this "good" more vaguely as including perfection and happiness; though he sometimes uses "good" and happiness as convertible terms, and seems practically to have the latter in view in all that he says of self-love.

a man who doubts the coincidence of the two—which on religious grounds we must believe to be complete in a morally governed world—is reduced to the "miserable dilemma whether it is better to be a fool or a knave." As regards the moral faculty itself, Reid's statement coincides in the main with Price's; it is both intellectual and active, not merely perceiving the "rightness" or "moral obligation" of actions (which Reid conceives as a simple unanalysable relation between act and agent), but also impelling the will to the performance of what is seen to be right. Both thinkers hold that this perception of right and wrong in actions is accompanied by a perception of merit and demerit in agents, and also by a specific emotion; but whereas Price conceives this emotion chiefly as pleasure or pain, analogous to that produced in the mind by physical beauty or deformity, Reid regards it chiefly as benevolent affection, esteem, and sympathy (or their opposites), for the virtuous (or vicious) agent. This "pleasurable good-will," when the moral judgment relates to a man's own actions, becomes "the testimony of a good conscience—the purest and most valuable of all human enjoyments." Reid is careful to observe that this moral faculty is not "innate" except in germ; it stands in need of "education, training, exercise (for which society is indispensable), and habit," in order to the attainment of moral truth. He does not with Price object to its being called the "moral sense," provided we understand by this a source not merely of feelings or notions, but of "ultimate truths." Here he omits to notice the important question whether the premises of moral reasoning are universal or individual judgments; as to which the use of the term "sense" seems rather to suggest the second alternative. Indeed, he seems himself quite undecided on this question; since, though he generally represents ethical method as deductive, he also speaks of the "original judgment that this action is right and that wrong."

The truth is that, since Reid accepts the common moral opinion of mankind as a final test of the truth of ethical theories, the construction of a scientific method of ethics is a matter of no practical moment to him. Thus, though he offers a list of first principles, by deduction from which these common opinions may be confirmed, he does not present it with any claim to completeness. Besides maxims relating to virtue in general,—such as (1) that there is a right and wrong in conduct, but (2) only in voluntary conduct, and that we ought (3) to take pains to learn our duty, and (4) fortify ourselves against temptations to deviate from it—Reid states five fundamental axioms. The first of these is merely the principle of rational self-love, "that we ought to prefer a greater to a lesser good, though more distinct, and a less evil to a greater,"—the mention of which seems rather inconsistent with Reid's distinct separation of the "moral faculty" from "self-love." The third is merely the general rule of benevolence stated in the somewhat vague and lax Stoical phrase, that "no one is born for himself only." The fourth, again, is the merely formal principle that "right and wrong must be the same to all in all circumstances," which belongs equally to all systems of objective morality; while the fifth prescribes the religious duty of "veneration or submission to God." Thus, the only principle which might not be equally well stated by Paley or any religious utilitarian is the second (also Stoical), "that so far as the intention of nature appears in the constitution of man, we ought to act according to that intention," the vagueness² of which is obvious.

A similar incompleteness in the statement of moral principles is found if we turn to Reid's disciple, Dugald

² *E.g.*, Reid proposes to apply this principle in favour of monogamy, arguing from the proportion of males and females born; without explaining why, if the intention of nature hence inferred excludes occasional polygamy, it does not also exclude occasional celibacy.

Stewart, whose *Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man* (1828) contains the general view of Reid and Price,—expounded with more neatness and grace, but without important original additions or modifications. Stewart lays stress on the obligation of justice as distinct from benevolence; but his definition of justice represents it as essentially impartiality,—a virtue which (as was just now said of Reid's fourth principle) must equally find a place in the utilitarian or any other system that lays down universally applicable rules of morality. Afterwards, however, Stewart distinguishes "integrity or honesty" as a branch of justice concerned with the rights of other men, which form the subject of "natural jurisprudence." In this department he lays down the moral axiom "that the labourer is entitled to the fruit of his own labour" as the principle on which complete rights of property are founded; maintaining that occupancy alone would only confer a transient right of possession during use. The only other principles which he discusses are veracity and fidelity to promises, gratitude being treated as a natural instinct prompting to a particular kind of just actions.

It will be seen that neither Reid nor Stewart offers more than a very meagre and tentative contribution to that ethical science by which, as they maintain, the received rules of morality may be rationally deduced from intuitive first principles. A more ambitious attempt in the same direction was made by Whewell in his *Elements of Morality* (1846). Whewell's general moral view differs from that of his Scotch predecessors chiefly in a point where we may trace the influence of Kant; viz., in his rejection of self-love as an independent rational and governing principle, and his consequent refusal to admit happiness, apart from duty, as a reasonable end for the individual. The moral reason, thus left in sole supremacy, is represented as enunciating five ultimate principles,—those of benevolence, justice, truth, purity, and order. With a little straining these are made to correspond to five chief divisions of Jus,—personal security (benevolence being opposed to the ill-will that commonly causes personal injuries), property, contract, marriage, and government; while the first, second, and fourth, again, regulate respectively the three chief classes of human motives,—affections, mental desires, and appetites. Thus the list, with the addition of two general principles, "earnestness" and "moral purpose," has a certain air of systematic completeness. When, however, we look closer, we find that the principle of order, or obedience to government, is not seriously intended to imply the political absolutism which it seems to express, and which English common sense emphatically repudiates; while the formula of justice is given in the tautological or perfectly indefinite proposition "that every man ought to have his own." Whewell, indeed, explains that this latter formula must be practically interpreted by positive law, though he inconsistently speaks as if it supplied a standard for judging laws to be right or wrong. The principle of purity, again, "that the lower parts of our nature ought to be subject to the higher," merely particularizes that supremacy of reason over non-rational impulses which is involved in the very notion of reasoned morality. Thus, in short, if we ask for a clear and definite fundamental intuition, distinct from regard for happiness, we find really nothing in Whewell's doctrine except the single rule of veracity (including fidelity to promises); and even of this the axiomatic character becomes evanescent on closer inspection, since it is not maintained that the rule is practically unqualified, but only that it is practically undesirable to formulate its qualifications.

On the whole, it must be admitted that the doctrine of the intuitional school of the present and preceding century has been developed with less care and consistency than might have been expected, in its statement of the fundamen-

tal axioms or intuitively known premises of moral reasoning. And if the controversy which this school has conducted with utilitarianism had turned principally on the determination of the matter of duty, there can be little doubt that it would have been forced into more serious and systematic effort to define precisely and completely the principles and method on which we are to reason deductively to particular rules of conduct.¹ But in fact the difference between intuitionists and utilitarians as to the method of determining the particulars of the moral code was complicated with a more fundamental disagreement as to the very meaning of "moral obligation." This Paley and Bentham (after Locke) interpreted as merely the effect on the will of the pleasures or pains attached to the observance or violation of moral rules, combining with this the doctrine of Cumberland or Hutcheson, that "general good" or "happiness" is the final end and standard of these rules; while they eliminated all vagueness from the notion of general happiness by defining it to consist in "excess of pleasure over pain"—pleasures and pains being regarded as "differing in nothing but continuance or intensity." The utilitarian system gained an attractive air of simplicity by thus using a single perfectly clear notion—pleasure and its negative quantity pain—to answer both the fundamental questions of morals, "What is right?" and "Why should I do it?" But since there is no logical connexion between the answers that have thus come to be considered as one doctrine, this apparent unity and simplicity has really hidden fundamental disagreements, and caused no little confusion in current ethical debate.

In Paley's *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*² Paley

¹ We may observe that some recent writers, who would generally be included in this school, avoid in various ways the difficulty of constructing a code of external conduct. Sometimes they consider moral intuition as determining the comparative excellence of conflicting motives (James Martineau), or the comparative quality of pleasures chosen (Laurie), which seems to be the same view in a hedonistic garb; others hold that what is intuitively perceived is the rightness or wrongness of individual acts,—a view which obviously renders ethical reasoning practically superfluous.

² The originality—such as it is—of Paley's system (as of Bentham's) lies in its method of working out details rather than in its principles of construction. Paley expressly acknowledges his obligations to the original and suggestive, though diffuse and whimsical, work of Abraham Tucker (*Light of Nature Pursued*, 1768-74). In this treatise, as in Paley's, we find "every man's own satisfaction, the spring that actuates all his motives," connected with "general good, the root whereof all our rules of conduct and sentiments of honour are to branch," by means of natural theology demonstrating the "unniggardly goodness of the author of nature." Tucker is also careful to explain that satisfaction or pleasure is "one and the same in kind, however much it may vary in degree, . . . whether a man is pleased with hearing music, seeing prospects, tasting dainties, performing laudable actions, or making agreeable reflections," and again that by "general good" he means "quantity of happiness," to which "every pleasure that we do to our neighbour is an addition." There is, however, in Tucker's theological link between private and general happiness a peculiar ingenuity which Paley's common sense has avoided. He argues that men having no free will have really no desert; therefore the divine equity must ultimately distribute happiness in equal shares to all; therefore I must ultimately increase my own happiness most by conduct that adds most to the general fund which Providence administers.

But in fact the outline of Paley's utilitarianism is to be found a generation earlier,—in Gay's dissertation prefixed to Law's edition of King's *Origin of Evil*,—as the following extracts will show:—"The idea of virtue is the conformity to a rule of life, directing the actions of all rational creatures with respect to each other's happiness; to which every one is always obliged. . . . Obligation is the necessity of doing or omitting something in order to be happy. . . . Full and complete obligation which will extend to all cases can only be that arising from the authority of God. . . . The will of God [so far as it directs behaviour to others] is the immediate rule or criterion of virtue. . . . but it is evident from the nature of God that he could have no other design in creating mankind than their happiness; and therefore he wills their happiness; therefore that my behaviour so far as it may be a means to the happiness of mankind should be such; so this happiness of mankind may be said to be the criterion of virtue once removed."

The same dissertation also contains the germ of Hartley's system, as we shall presently notice.

(1785), the link between general pleasure (the standard) and private pleasure or pain (the motive) is supplied by the conception of divine legislation. To be "obliged" is to be "urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another;" in the case of moral obligation, the command proceeds from God, and the motive lies in the expectation of being rewarded and punished after this life. The commands of God are to be ascertained "from scripture and the light of nature combined." Paley, however, holds that scripture is given less to teach morality than to illustrate it by example and enforce it by new sanctions and greater certainty, and that the light of nature makes it clear that God wills the happiness of his creatures. Hence, his method in deciding moral questions is chiefly that of estimating the tendency of actions to promote or diminish the general happiness. To meet the obvious objections to this method, based on the immediate happiness caused by admitted crimes (such as "knocking a rich villain on the head"), he lays stress on the necessity of general rules in any kind of legislation;¹ while, by urging the importance of forming and maintaining good habits, he partly evades the difficulty of calculating the consequences of particular actions. In this way the utilitarian method is freed from the subversive tendencies which Butler and others had discerned in it; as used by Paley, it merely explains the current moral and jural distinctions, exhibits the obvious basis of expediency which supports most of the received rules of law and morality, and furnishes a simple solution, in harmony with common sense, of some perplexing casuistical questions. Thus (*e.g.*) "natural rights" become rights of which the general observance would be useful apart from the institution of civil government; as distinguished from the no less binding "advantitious rights," the utility of which depends upon this institution. Private property is in this sense "natural," from its obvious advantages in encouraging labour, skill, preservative care; though actual rights of property depend on the general utility of conforming to the law of the land by which they are determined. So, again, many perplexities respecting the duties of veracity and good faith are solved, so as to avoid jesuitical laxities no less than superstitious scruples, by basing their obligation on the utilities general and particular of satisfying expectations deliberately produced. So, too, the general utilitarian basis of the established sexual morality is effectively expounded. We observe, however, that Paley's method is often mixed with reasonings that belong to an alien and older manner of thought; as when he supports the claim of the poor to charity by referring to the intention of mankind "when they agreed to a separation of the common fund," or when he infers that monogamy is a part of the divine design from the equal numbers of males and females born. In other cases his statement of utilitarian considerations is fragmentary and unmethodical, and tends to degenerate into loose exhortation on rather trite topics.

In unity, consistency, and thoroughness of method, Bentham's utilitarianism has a decided superiority over Paley's. He throughout considers actions solely in respect of their pleasurable and painful consequences, expected or actual; and he fully recognizes the need of making an exhaustive and systematic register of these consequences, free from the influences of common moral opinion, as expressed in the "eulogistic" and "dyslogistic" terms in ordinary use. Further, the effects that he estimates are all of a definite, palpable, empirically ascertainable quality; they are such pleasures and pains as most men feel and all

¹ It must be allowed that Paley's application of this argument is somewhat loosely reasoned, and does not sufficiently distinguish the consequences of a single act of benevolent manslaughter from the consequences of a general permission to commit such acts.

can observe to be felt, so that all political or moral inferences drawn by Bentham's method lie open at every point to the test of practical experience. Every one, it would seem, can tell what value he sets on the pleasures of alimentation, sex, the senses generally, wealth, power, curiosity, sympathy, antipathy (malevolence), the goodwill of individuals or of society at large, and on the corresponding pains, as well as the pains of labour and organic disorders;² and can pretty well guess the rate at which they are valued by others; therefore if it be once granted that all actions are determined by pleasures and pains, and are to be tried by the same standard, the art both of legislation and of private conduct is apparently placed on a broad, simple, and clear empirical basis. Bentham, no doubt, seems to go beyond the limits of mundane experience in recognizing "religious" pains and pleasures in his fourfold division of sanctions, side by side with the "physical," "political," and "moral" or "social;" but the truth is that he does not seriously take account of them, except in so far as religious hopes and fears are motives actually operating, which therefore admit of being observed and measured as much as any other motives. He does not himself use the will of an omnipotent and benevolent being as a means of logically connecting individual and general happiness. He thus undoubtedly simplifies his system, and avoids the doubtful inferences from nature and Scripture in which Paley's position is involved; but this gain is dearly purchased. For in answer to the question that immediately arises, How then is the maximum happiness of any individual shown to be always conjoined with the maximum general happiness, he is obliged to admit that "the only interests which a man is at all times sure to find adequate motives for consulting are his own." Indeed, in many parts of his vast work, in the department of legislative and constitutional theory, it is rather assumed that the interests of some men will continually conflict with those of their fellows, unless we alter the balance of prudential calculation by a careful readjustment of penalties. But on this assumption a satisfactory system of private conduct on utilitarian principles cannot be constructed until legislative and constitutional reform has been perfected. And, in fact, "private ethics," as conceived by Bentham, does not exactly expound such a system; but rather exhibits the coincidence, so far as it extends, between private and general happiness, in that part of each man's conduct that lies beyond the range of useful legislation. It was not his place, as a practical philanthropist, to dwell on the defects in this coincidence;³ and since what men generally expect from a moralist is a completely reasoned account of what they ought to do, it is not surprising that some of Bentham's disciples should have either ignored or endeavoured to supply the gap in his system. One section of the school even maintained it to be a cardinal doctrine of utilitarianism that a man always gains his own greatest happiness by promoting that of others; another section, represented by John Austin, apparently returned to Paley's position, and treated utilitarian morality⁴ as a code of divine legislation; others, with Grote, are content to abate the severity of the claims made by

² This list gives twelve out of the fourteen classes in which Bentham arranges the springs of action, omitting the religious sanction (mentioned afterwards), and the pleasures and pains of self-interest, which include all the other classes except sympathy and antipathy.

³ In the *Deontology* published by Bowring from MSS. left after Bentham's death, the coincidence is asserted to be complete; but it seems doubtful whether this can be accepted as Bentham's real doctrine, even in his later days.

⁴ It should be observed that Austin, after Bentham, more frequently uses the term "moral" to connote what he more distinctly calls "positive morality," the code of rules supported by common opinion in a society.

"general happiness" on the individual, and to consider utilitarian duty as practically limited by reciprocity; while J. S. Mill, who has done more than any other member of the school to spread and popularize utilitarianism in ethics and politics, exalts the "moral hero" for voluntarily sacrificing his own happiness to promote that of others—a phenomenon, it should be observed, which in Bentham's view is not even possible.

The fact is that there are several different ways in which a utilitarian system of morality may be used, without deciding whether the sanctions attached to it are always adequate. (1) It may be presented as practical guidance to all who choose "general good" as their ultimate end, whether they do so on religious grounds, or through the predominance in their minds of impartial sympathy, or because their conscience acts in harmony with utilitarian principles, or for any combination of these or any other reasons; or (2) it may be offered as a code to be obeyed not absolutely, but only so far as the coincidence of private and general interest may in any case be judged to extend; or again (3) it may be proposed as a standard by which men may reasonably agree to praise and blame the conduct of others, even though they may not always think fit to act on it. We may regard morality as a kind of supplementary legislation, supported by public opinion, which we may expect the public, when duly enlightened, to frame in accordance with the public interest. Still, even from this point of view, which is that of the legislator or social reformer rather than the moral philosopher, our code of duty must be greatly influenced by our estimate of the degrees in which men are normally influenced by self-regard (in its ordinary sense of regard for interests not sympathetic) and by sympathy or benevolence, and of the range within which sympathy may be expected to be generally effective. Thus, for example, the moral standard for which a utilitarian will reasonably endeavour to gain the support of public opinion must be essentially different in quality, according as he holds with Bentham that nothing but self-regard will "serve for diet," though "for a dessert benevolence is a very valuable addition;" or with J. S. Mill that disinterested public spirit should be the prominent motive in the performance of all socially useful work, and that even hygienic precepts should be inculcated, not chiefly on grounds of prudence, but because "by squandering our health we disable ourselves from rendering services to our fellow-creatures."

Not less important is the interval that separates Bentham's polemical attitude towards the moral sense from Mill's conciliatory position, that "the mind is not in a state conformable to utility unless it loves virtue as a thing desirable in itself." Such love of virtue Mill holds to be in a sense natural, though not an ultimate and inexplicable fact of human nature; it is to be explained by the "Law of Association" of feelings and ideas, through which objects originally desired as a means to some further end come to be directly pleasant or desirable. Thus, the miser first sought money as a means to comfort, but ends by sacrificing comfort to money; and similarly though the first promptings to justice (or any other virtue) spring from the non-moral pleasures gained or pains avoided by it, through the link formed by repeated virtuous acts the performance of them ultimately comes to have that immediate satisfaction attached to it which we distinguish as moral. Indeed, the acquired tendency to virtuous conduct may become so strong that the habit of willing it may continue, "even when the reward which the virtuous man receives from the consciousness of well-doing is anything but an equivalent for the sufferings he undergoes or the wishes he may have to renounce." It is thus that the before-mentioned self-sacrific

fice of the moral hero is conceived by Mill to be possible and actual. The moral sentiments, on this view, are not phases of self-love as Hobbes held; nor can they be directly identified with sympathy, either in Hume's way or in Adam Smith's; in fact, though apparently simple they are really derived in a complex manner from self-love and sympathy combined with more primitive impulses. Justice (*e.g.*) is regarded by Mill as essentially resentment moralized by enlarged sympathy and intelligent self-interest; what we mean by injustice is harm done to an assignable individual by a breach of some rule for which we desire the violator to be punished, for the sake both of the person injured and of society at large, including ourselves. As regards moral sentiments generally, the view suggested by Mill is more definitely given by the chief living representative of the associationist school, Professor Bain; by whom the distinctive characteristics of conscience are traced to "education under government or authority," though prudence, disinterested sympathy, and other emotions combine to swell the mass of feeling vaguely denoted by the term moral. The combination of antecedents is somewhat differently given by different writers; but all agree in representing the conscience of any individual as naturally correlated to the interests of the community of which he is a member, and thus a natural ally in enforcing utilitarian rules, or even a valuable guide when utilitarian calculations are difficult and uncertain.

This substitution of hypothetical history for direct analysis of the moral sense is really older than the utilitarianism of Paley and Bentham, which it has so profoundly modified. The effects of association in modifying mental phenomena were noticed by Locke, and made a cardinal point in the metaphysic of Hume; who also referred to the principle slightly in his account of justice and other "artificial" virtues. Some years earlier, Gay,¹ admitting Hutcheson's proof of the actual disinterestedness of moral and benevolent impulses, had maintained that these (like the desires of knowledge or fame, the delight of reading, hunting, and planting, &c.) were derived from self-love by "the power of association." But a thorough and systematic application of the principle to ethical psychology is first found in Hartley's *Observations on Man* (1748). Hartley, too, was the first to conceive association as producing, instead of mere cohesion of mental phenomena, a quasi-chemical combination of these into a compound apparently different from its elements. He shows elaborately how the pleasures and pains of "imagination, ambition, self-interest, sympathy, theopathy, and the moral sense" are developed out of the elementary pleasures and pains of sensation; by the coalescence into really complex but apparently single ideas of the "miniatures" or faint feelings which the repetition of sensations contemporaneously or in immediate succession tends to produce in cohering groups. His theory assumes the correspondence of mind and body, and is applied *pari passu* to the formation of ideas from sensations, and of "compound vibratiuncles in the medullary substance" from the original vibrations that arise in the organ of sense.² The same general view was afterwards developed on the psychical side alone by James Mill in his *Analysis of the Human Mind*, with much vigour and clearness. The whole theory has been

¹ In the before-mentioned dissertation. Cf. note 2 to p. 605. Hartley refers to this treatise as having supplied the starting-point for his own system.

² It should be noticed that Hartley's sensationalism is far from leading him to exalt the corporeal pleasures. On the contrary, he tries to prove elaborately that they (as well as the pleasures of imagination, ambition, self-interest) cannot be made an object of primary pursuit without a loss of happiness on the whole,—one of his arguments being that these pleasures occur earlier in time, and "that which is prior in the order of nature is always less perfect than that which is posterior."