

KANT'S ETHICS
AND
SCHOPENHAUER'S CRITICISM

M. KELLY. M.A., M.D.



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KANT'S ETHICS
AND
SCHOPENHAUER'S CRITICISM

BY
M. KELLY, M.A., M.D.
Late Major, R.A.M.C.

AUTHOR OF "KANT'S PHILOSOPHY AS RECTIFIED BY SCHOPENHAUER"



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PREFACE

OF Kant it may be said that what is good and true in his philosophy would have been buried with him, were it not for Schopenhauer, and that the false and the worthless still survives in spite of the latter. The educated German of to-day, and the Rationalists in general, believe that Kant's great merit was the so-called discovery of the "categorical affirmative," although Schopenhauer proved in the clearest possible manner that it was nothing but their old friend the Decalogue, so carefully disguised that neither Kant himself nor his followers could recognise it. That educated Englishmen should have been taken in by such a fraud can only be explained by the regrettable fact that the pedantic drivel and mystification which supplanted Kant's philosophy in Germany has been taught with such success in the English Universities that some

distinguished clergymen, although they lay claim to the Apostolic succession, still fail to see that Hegel's evolution theory is both anti-Christian and anti-religious. It is high time to get rid of the absurd notion that the Germans are par excellence a nation of thinkers. The faculty of acquiring knowledge and developing ideas borrowed from other countries must be distinguished from the faculty of thinking philosophically. Schopenhauer, the greatest thinker of them all, says that:—"The English are the most intelligent people in Europe; every page of Hume is worth more than all the works of Herbart, Schleiermacher, and Hegel put together; Thomas Reid is worth ten times more than all the post-Kantian philosophers taken together; Leibnitz, instead of learning from his great contemporaries Spinoza and Locke, dished up his own fantastic inventions." As it was Hume's thoughts on scepticism that suggested the problem of causality to Kant, while Locke's investigation of the part played by the senses in perception pointed out the way in which the solution was to be sought, the two Britishers deserve, according to the

dictum¹ of Lessing, as much credit for Kant's discovery as Kant himself. The natural course for the English student of philosophy should be, accordingly, from the mistakes of Locke and Hume to the discoveries of Kant, and from the mistakes of the latter to the discoveries of Schopenhauer, who distinguished himself from all others by never abandoning the solid ground of empirical experience. Bearing in mind that the task of the philosopher is to explain the world from what it presents, without any help from revelation, it is absurd and contradictory to take any notice of impostors who profess, by a process of "intellectual perception," to see what goes on in the supernatural world. If these worthies, as Schopenhauer remarks, had used their reason instead of deifying it, they would have come to the conclusion that, if such a faculty existed, there would be as much agreement in regard to religion and Ethics as there is in ordinary perception, whereas the contrary is notoriously the case. The English student

¹ Ich meine mich um die Wahrheit eben so verdient gemacht zu haben, wenn Ich verfehle, mein Fehler aber die Ursache ist, dass ein anderer sic entdeckte, als wenn Ich sic selber entdeckte. Letter to Klotz.

being naturally prone to candour and straightforwardness, it is all the more reprehensible to force upon him the art of mystification as it has been perfected by Hegel for the edification of his countrymen, who are accustomed to take words for ideas. To seek support for truth from what is false and dishonest must, in the long run, be disastrous to the former. But, just as no genuine discovery in science can ever be opposed to religion, it will be found that Schopenhauer's appeal to experience leads to a remarkable confirmation of what is really the essence of Christian Ethics. The statement of Kant's case here given has been extracted from the "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," and from the "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten."

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PART I

STATEMENT OF KANT'S CASE

KANT'S ETHICS AND SCHOPENHAUER'S CRITICISM

CHAPTER I

KANT'S PHILOSOPHY AS A WHOLE

IN order to understand how Kant was led astray by a preconceived idea and by a false analogy, it is necessary to have a clear notion of what his philosophy proved, or professed to have proved.

This may be briefly summarised in four successive stages :—

- 1 The organs of sense furnish empirical perception of objects in the phenomenal world by means of *à priori* perception of space and time. A change in the state of a sense organ being the starting point of our knowledge, we could have no consciousness of the change without an *à priori* perception of time, which is simply the possibility of change. An impression

produced on an organ within the body could not be referred to a space without it unless we had an *à priori* perception of space.

- 2** This empirical perception is not experience of an object. To convert it into experience is the function of the thinking faculty (*Verstand*), the faculty of forming immediate conclusions, or judgments, which he assumes to be distinct from the reason (*Vernunft*), or faculty of forming mediate conclusions. As there are twelve varieties of judgments, each of which discloses a distinct *à priori* mental operation, he maintains that the "manifold" of an object, before we can have any experience of it, must be connected together in accordance with the rules contained in the mental operations. These twelve rules are the "categories," and the manifold of empirical experience is conditioned by them. Being the conditions necessary for experience, they must exist before the latter in our faculty of cognition, and can have no sense or meaning except when applied to what is given in perception. An object of the phenomenal world consists, accordingly, of an "appearance," or "phenomenon," and a "thing-in-itself," which is totally beyond the range of our knowledge.
- 3** As the *Verstand* was assumed to be a faculty

for thinking objects given in perception, so Kant assumes that the reason is a special faculty for seeking the "unconditioned" to what is conditioned by the former, but shows that it cannot realise the "transcendental ideas," which it is supposed to originate.

- 4 Finally, he assumes that the reason, in addition to its speculative or theoretical use, has a practical application, by which it furnishes the so-called moral law. This moral law leads to the postulates of freedom of the will, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God; that is, ideas which to the speculative reason were transcendental and unprovable. The moral law, therefore, furnishes the bridge between the "conditioned" and the "unconditioned."

If empirical experience were dependent on the faculty of thinking, the lower animals could either have no experience, or must be able to think as man does. The whole theory of the categories must, therefore, fall to the ground. *

Schopenhauer has demonstrated that what is necessary to complete perception is the intelligence which man has in common with the lower animals, that this is what is meant by the German word *Verstand*, and that its sole

function is that of referring the change in a sense organ to its cause. The senses supply the raw material, and the Verstand, by operating on this and making use of the *à priori* perceptions of time and space, constructs the cause as an object in space. This faculty cannot be derived from experience, since the latter is dependent on it. This *à priori* origin of causality gives it the character of necessity, and there can be no exception to it.

Time, space, and causality being thus the conditions of the empirical perception, or original functions with which the brain is endowed for the purpose of apprehending the phenomenal world, it follows that the latter, in so far as it comes within the range of our experience, must conform to the laws of time, space, and causality, just as objects looked at through a blue glass must look blue. These laws constitute what Kant calls the Metaphysics of Nature, remembering that causality is the only one of his twelve categories that comes into play; and his preconceived idea in regard to Ethics was that, as the mechanism of nature is determined by *à priori* laws, so the moral actions of man must be governed by an *à priori* moral law, for such an origin alone could give

it the character of necessity and universality which it must be supposed to have. If the analogy held good, human actions would necessarily conform to the moral law, and the latter would have no applicability to the real essence, or thing-in-itself, of man, whereas Kant tries to prove exactly the opposite.

Before proceeding further it is necessary to explain what causality really means, since the moral law is based on the postulate that the will can originate action of itself; that is, without any determining cause or motive. Remembering that a change of state in our own body is what forces us to the conclusion that something external has acted upon it, it is obvious that causality has to do with changes of state only, that every time a change takes place in any body it must have been preceded by a change in another, and that a change can only take place on something which cannot change itself. If ice be converted into water, and this again into steam, we know that some external change has in each case produced the result, but that there is something underlying the ice which has not changed. Every object of perception has, accordingly, a "matter" or "substance" which cannot change,

and a "form," which is the special manner in which it manifests itself to us by acting upon our senses. This "form," the "empirical matter," of perception, is what changes. Now, since a cause must in every case be a change, and the "substance" unchangeable, it follows that the latter cannot be the cause of the "form." Nevertheless, Kant assumes that it is so, notwithstanding his repeated warning that the categories had no validity whatever beyond the range of possible experience. He was led to this false assumption by the necessity of explaining our respect for the moral law, and our voluntary submission to it. The categorical affirmative being the product of our own autonomy, in so far as we have an existence in the transcendental or "intelligible" world, and this being the determining cause of our existence in the world of the senses, it follows that we respect and obey the moral law because it is self-imposed, and for no other reason.

The law of causality means that every change in the phenomenal world, every event, and every action of man must have been the result of some change preceding it in time, on which it necessarily followed.

A cause, however, cannot produce its effect

without the intermediation of something in the body acted upon, which gives the former its capability of causing a change at a certain time and in a certain place.

The change is the product of two factors, *viz.*, the original force of the thing acted upon, and the determining cause which compels the former to manifest itself. The original force in the inorganic world is the so-called force of nature; in plants and in the vegetative life of man and animals, the vital force; and, when the actions of the two latter are considered, the force is represented by the will, which reacts to the motive with unerring precision according to its particular quality in each case. The relation between cause and effect, although less manifest as we ascend the scale, retains the character of necessity throughout, and the force which gives to the cause its capability of acting remains unchanged.

The motive which acts upon the animal is the object of perception which it recognises, assuming that it is susceptible of being influenced by this particular object. The lower animal is, therefore, with some apparent exceptions, tied down to the present. The motives for man, in addition to objects of

perception, are the abstract ideas which he forms from the latter by the process of thinking, and which enable him to connect past, present and future, and so emancipate himself more or less from the influence of the former. The special and individual quality of the will, in virtue of which it reacts differently in every man to the same motives, constitutes what is called his "empirical character," because it can only be known by experience.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF MAN

BEFORE considering the problem of Ethics it is necessary to have an accurate knowledge of what man really is. Like everything else in the phenomenal world, he is, in so far as he is an object of external observation, part of the mechanism of nature and subject to its general laws. What he is "in himself" can only be ascertained, as Schopenhauer has pointed out, by self-examination through the empirical fact of consciousness, and by distinguishing the consciousness of outer things from self-consciousness. The latter furnishes, through the inner sense and in time only, nothing but various affections of the will. The will, then, being the final manifestation of the real essence or thing-in-itself of man, we must take it as the representative of the latter.

Now, the problem of freedom has been confused and misunderstood, because it is commonly assumed that the will is the cause of

the movements and the actions of the body. We have already seen that the "form" of a body is the manifestation of the "substance," not its effect; and so the movements of the body and the will are the same thing, apprehended through the outer and inner senses in the former case, and through the inner sense only in the latter. The usual answer made when freedom of the will is denied is an expression of this fact.

- The answer is: "I can do what I will." The problem of freedom is not this, but: "Can I will to do otherwise?" I can give all I have to the poor and become a beggar myself, if I will to do so; but can I will it? That depends on the character of the individual. Although the common ground of objection to the idea of empirical necessity is its supposed incompatibility with moral responsibility, it is a false assumption to suppose that necessity is opposed to religion; for in the two great religions of the East, Hinduism and Buddhism, it is a matter of creed, while the teaching of Christianity would be inconsistent and incomprehensible if it were not so. In the Bible, Jeremiah (x. 23) says: "Man's action is not in his power, nor is it in any man's power to direct his course."

Luther, in a special book, "De servo arbitrio," denies freedom of the will on theological grounds.

Augustine—"De libero arbitrio"—does not admit that man can become just and worthy of beatitude through his own efforts, which would be inconsistent with the doctrine of Original Sin, the necessity of Redemption, and Divine Grace. However, in order to reconcile moral responsibility with the justice of God, he upheld freedom, but only that delusive kind of freedom already referred to, and which is expressed in the phrase: "I can do what I will."

All the great thinkers of the world have believed in empirical necessity, while those that deny it in words admit it in practice. Some evade the question by the subterfuge of substituting freedom of the "mind" for freedom of the will, forgetting that the intellect is not free, but must conform to the rules of logic and to the objects of its cognition.

Again, on the assumption of freedom of the will, every human action would be an inexplicable miracle, *etc.*, an effect without a cause. It would be impossible to explain why two men brought up under exactly similar conditions

should behave in a diametrically opposite manner in a given situation ; for freedom means that the character must have been from the onset a perfect *tabula rasa* without any inclination to one side or the other. The cause of the difference cannot, on this supposition, be in the subjective. Still less can it be in the objective ; for, if external objects determined the action, there could be no freedom. The attempt to attribute the difference to the manner in which the objective is apprehended by the subjective would make conduct a matter of judgment, and ethics would be converted into logic. Should the advocates of freedom seek an escape from the dilemma by saying that the difference, although not innate, arises from a difference in outer circumstances, impressions, experience, example, teaching, etc., and that the character established in this way explains the subsequent difference in conduct, they must admit that, if such were the case, character would set in late in life, whereas it is distinctly observable in children, and that most men would die before they could acquire a character.

Further, since the outward circumstances which are supposed to produce the character

are totally[?] beyond our power and dependent either on chance or on providence, all moral responsibility for our conduct would fall to the ground. On the truth that character is invariable depends the fact that we always try first of all to find out the motive, but then assign praise or blame, not to this, but to the character that allowed itself to be determined by it; that honour once lost can never be restored; that we can have remorse of conscience after an indefinite length of time; and that, in spite of the best intentions and the most solemn promises, we commit the same errors when the same occasion again presents itself. Knowledge being the medium of the motives, and the character being invariable, the influence of the former is capable of manifold extension and constant rectification. This is the object of education, and it explains how a man's situation on a second occasion, although apparently similar to what it was on the first, may be really quite different, because he has in the meantime become capable of understanding the circumstances more perfectly and correctly, so that motives now work upon him to which he was formerly inaccessible. The supposed strengthening of the will by exercise consists

simply in increasing the facility with which a given motive may be brought into play on an emergency.

Since Kant maintains that, if a man's empirical character and all the secret motives that act upon it were known with certainty, his action under given conditions could be foretold as accurately as an eclipse of the moon, it is evident that moral responsibility must be sought elsewhere than in man considered merely as part of the mechanism of nature. This brings us to his proof of the compatibility of transcendental freedom with empirical necessity, which Schopenhauer considers to be the profoundest thought that has ever been conceived by the human intellect, although it is, according to him, a correct conclusion from false premises.

But, first of all, it is necessary to examine how the case would be, taking the common view that objects, time and space, are things-in-themselves totally independent of our modes of perception, and that man is free in his actions. To use Schopenhauer's words: "What would become of the world, and more especially in regard to the reproduction of individuals, if necessity did not penetrate and bind all things together? A monster, a rubbish heap, a

caricature without sense or meaning, the work of blind chance."

If the existence of time and space be taken for the existence of things-in-themselves, and if God be assumed to be the cause of the existence of the "substance," we must admit that man's actions have their determining cause in what is beyond his power. In fact, if the actions of man as they occur in time were not his own determinations as phenomenon but as a thing-in-itself, freedom would be impossible; for he would then be a thinking automaton in which the consciousness of spontaneity would be falsely taken for liberty, a marionette constructed and wound up by the supreme Master of all works of art. Again, if time and space be attribute of things-in-themselves only for temporal beings, and if God be the cause of the existence of the latter, but not of the former, His causality in regard to the existence of things would be conditioned even by time, and the contradictory conclusion would be inevitable that He was neither independent nor without beginning.

Hence, if the ideality of time and space, and necessity as its consequence, be not assumed, there only remains Spinozism, in which time and

space are essential determinations of God, while the things dependent on Him, man included, would not be "substances" but "accidents" inhering in Him. According to this the actions of man would be the actions of God, and there would be no moral responsibility.

The development of Spinozism known as the evolution theory of Hegel, which assumes the state, and more particularly the Protestant Germanic state, to be the highest manifestation of God's returning consciousness, removes the ethical factor beyond the sphere of the individual and makes him totally irresponsible. The state is concerned only with justice, and would denounce as a crime any attempt to extend the more important cardinal virtue of love beyond its own limits. The fact is, the ethical significance of human actions can only be studied in the individual, who is a microcosm in himself, while the state is only an abstraction which takes pure egoism for its guide in dealing with other nations.

On the other hand, if the existence in time be regarded as our own mode of sensuous presentation, all these difficulties and contradictions would disappear; for it would not concern man as a thing-in-itself, and creation

would apply only to the noumena. As it would be a contradiction to say that God is the creator of phenomena, so it would be to say that, as Creator, He is the cause of actions in the world of the senses.

And now we come to Kant's proof of freedom. The understanding (*Verstand*), as already explained, is assumed to be a faculty of bringing forth ideas which arise only when the senses are affected, and which only serve the purpose of bringing the perceptions of the latter under rules. The reason (*Vernunft*), on the contrary, is so exalted above the *Verstand*, and shows such a pure spontaneity under the name of the "ideas," that it transcends all that can be supplied by the senses, and demonstrates its most important function in distinguishing the world of the senses from the world of intelligence (*Verstandeswelt*), whereby it prescribes to the *Verstand* its proper limits. A rational being, accordingly, must regard himself and his powers from two points of view, *viz.*, in so far as he belongs to the world of the senses, and at the same time to the world of intelligence. In the former he is subject to the laws of nature (heteronomy), and in the latter to laws which are furnished by reason itself (autonomy).

It will be noted here that Kant uses the expression *Verstandeswelt* for the world of the intelligence, although he attributes the origin of this idea to the reason. He is confronted with the difficulty of explaining how the category of causality, which has its origin in the *Verstand*, can be applied to a thing-in-itself, and solves it in the following manner:—

Although the objective reality of the categories can only be deduced in regard to objects of possible experience, their origin in the pure *Verstand* proves that they allow us to “think” objects in general, whether they be sensuous or non-sensuous, and that they can, consequently, be applied to noumena without determining anything concerning these for our theoretical knowledge in the absence of perception.

What makes this application necessary is the “practical” motive, for the *Verstand*, besides its relation to objects in theoretical knowledge, has also one to the faculty of desire, which is called the will, and the pure will in so far as the pure *Verstand* (which is then called reason) is practical through the mere idea of a law. The objective reality of a pure will is given *à priori* as a “fact” in the moral law,

that is to say, a determination of the will which is unavoidable although it does not rest on empirical principles. The argument may be thus stated :—It is impossible to prove freedom theoretically, since it cannot be verified in experience ; it is not self-contradictory to assume causality with freedom in the noumenon ; the *a priori* origin of causality in the *Verstand* justifies its application to the noumenon, since objective reality is given by the moral law.

So far Kant has only attempted to show how transcendental freedom can be considered as possible, the moral law requiring it as a necessary postulate. The only proof he can offer that it is so is, that man as a rational being conscious of his existence in the intelligible world can never think otherwise than under the idea of freedom, and that this unalterable conviction implies that he is for all practical purposes free, that is to say, the laws that are inseparably connected with freedom are as valid for him as if his will were in itself and in the theoretical philosophy held to be free.

A careful perusal of the foregoing paragraphs will give some idea of the absurdities and contradictions into which Kant can fall in the endeavour to wriggle out of a difficulty. First

of all, the reason (*Vernunft*) is assumed to be a faculty quite distinct from and exalted above the *Verstand*, in order that we may think ourselves in an intelligible world. This world is, nevertheless, called the *Verstandeswelt*, because it is necessary to apply to it the category of causality, which has its origin in the *Verstand*. Finally, the *Verstand* is declared to be identical with the reason, because it must be assumed to have a directing influence on the will.

Again, in the "*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*,"¹ the following occurs:—"Practical freedom can be proved by experience. For our will is not determined alone by what affects the senses; we have also a faculty for overcoming the influence of these by means of ideas of what may in the remotest way be useful or injurious. But this consideration of what may be good and useful depends on the reason. This, therefore, also gives laws which are imperatives, or objective laws of freedom, and which say what shall happen, although it may perhaps never happen." Nobody but one completely blinded by a preconceived idea could see any justification for the conclusion which he here draws.

¹ *Methodenlehre* ii Hauptst, 1, Absch.

Another *reductio ad absurdum* to which Kant's proof of freedom leads is that the lower animals, since he assumes them to have no will, can have no thing-in-itself, and consequently no existence at all.

Schopenhauer's proof of freedom is :—

Man, like everything else in nature, has an unchangeable and individual empirical character, which, as an object of our apprehension, is only a phenomenon. What his essence may be in itself is his intelligible character, which is not accessible to our observation. All its actions are determined by motives according to its outer quality, or empirical character. Notwithstanding this necessity, however, it never occurs to anybody, even when convinced of the truth of it, to exonerate himself and put the blame on the motives; for he recognises that a different action would have been possible had he been a different person. This ineradicable feeling of responsibility, the sting of conscience, is an accusation against the essence, and, for that reason, independent of time. What our own empirical character is we can only learn through experience, just as we recognise that of others, and we see that it is unchangeable. The empirical fact of conscience

with its feeling of responsibility, which nobody can get rid of, is a certain proof of freedom ; and since the latter cannot exist in the phenomenon, it must belong to the intelligible character. This leads inevitably to the conclusion that we must have in some way created the latter ourselves, since, if it were the work of another, there could be no responsibility.

What it is important to remember is, that what gives the character of necessity to any conviction is the inability to think otherwise, and this applies to Schopenhauer's proof of responsibility.

NOTE.

Although it may be irrelevant, I think it advisable to draw attention here to the latest sample of the foolish objections that are made to Kant's proofs of the ideality of space and time. The objection has been thus stated in a certain review :—

“If it can be shown, as has in fact been shown, that all the conclusions of Euclidean geometry are rigidly deducible from logically defined notions by means of fundamental logical principles, what part does the Kantian construction in intuition play in geometrical,

and, indeed, in any other mathematical reasoning."

According to this the axiom that "two straight lines cannot enclose a space," would be a logically defined notion, whereas all the logic in the world would not prove the truth of it. The only possible proof consists in the construction of what already exists preformed in the brain, which is only possible on the assumption that we have an *à priori* perception of space. The conviction of the truth of a proposition in Euclid ultimately rests on perception, although the usual proof is carried out in the form of a syllogistic conclusion from assumed premises. Whoever maintains that mathematics can have a logical foundation does not understand what is meant either by mathematics or by logic.

"Who taught the spider parallels design
True as De Moivre, without rule or line?"

Has the spider a logical faculty?

The only way of arguing with such objectors, who are all actuated by theological preconceptions, is to remind them that their objections, if true, inevitably lead to the conclusion that man has no moral responsibility, as has been clearly demonstrated.

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM, AND PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS AT
ITS SOLUTION

HAVING stated the problem of Ethics as :—

“The search for and establishing of the supreme principle of morality,” Kant, in accordance with his preconceived idea, takes it for granted that we have an à priori knowledge of a moral law, and then proceeds to prove :

- 1 That this accords with the popular idea of duty.
- 2 That the common understanding, although it knows quite well what is good, is compelled by a conflict between the desires and wants on the one hand, and the sense of duty on the other, to seek for the source of the latter, in order to protect it against the sophistical claims of the former.
- 3 That a popular philosophy, whether founded on principles borrowed from experience alone, or on a mixture of these with principles of pure reason, cannot furnish a law which must be

valid for all rational beings as well as for man, and for the latter only because he is a rational being.

- 3 That it is, accordingly, necessary to resort to metaphysics with a view to tracing the origin of duty independently of everything in human nature or in the objective world.

Finally, it remains to state what such a law must be, and why we necessarily consider ourselves as subject to it without any subjective motive or interest.

All previous moral systems must be rejected, because they sought to determine the will by an appeal to self-interest.

Conduct founded on education or on the civil constitution would have no moral worth, as the motive would necessarily be one's own advantage or happiness.

The moral systems of the ancients are directions to a happy life, and virtue had its object in this world alone.

The Cynics, with a view to the attainment of this end, recognising that every convenience, luxury and enjoyment brought with it more suffering than is incidental to life in its simplest form and with its natural troubles, followed the way of the greatest possible abstinence, and

fled from all pleasures as snares. In this respect they resembled the mendicant monks of later times, but differed from them in that the motive was confined to this life, and in their pride and contempt of everything else as opposed to the humility of the latter.

The Stoics developed this practical wisdom into a theoretical, based on the conviction that our sufferings depend on a disproportion between our wants and the course of the world, and that, since the latter cannot be altered, the former must be adapted to it. The wise man, having attained to this conviction, considered that he could indulge in the pleasures of life with impunity, because their deprivation would not disturb his equanimity. It is, as Schopenhauer remarks, just as if a hungry dog could be expected to remain indifferent with a piece of roast meat placed in its mouth! The Stoics forgot that every habit develops into a necessity. Their virtue was the consciousness of their wisdom, and a means to the attainment of happiness in this life. If this were no longer possible suicide was justifiable.

The virtue of the Epicurean was the consciousness of his astuteness in practising

moderation, self-restraint, and beneficence, for the purpose of making himself happy.

The idea of perfection, whether in ourselves or in God, as determining ground of the will, belongs to the Epicurean principle of Eudemonism. Perfection in man means talent and the cleverness which strengthens or completes it. Therefore, the motive to promote perfection would be the advantage expected from it, and the same would apply to compliance with the will of God. To regard rewards and punishment as the machinery in the hands of a higher power for the purpose of moving rational beings to the final goal of happiness is so subversive of freedom as to be unworthy of consideration.

The pretension that the moral law is not determined by reason, but by a special sense, according to which the consciousness of virtue is associated with contentedness and pleasure, and that of vice with uneasiness and pain, makes everything depend on the longing for happiness. Moreover, the wicked man could not be tormented by the consciousness of his crimes, nor the virtuous man delighted by the consciousness of his moral actions, if the most important foundation of their character were

not already in some degree morally good. The idea of morality must, therefore, precede all consideration of satisfaction, and cannot be derived from this.

It is well to remove here an impression which prevails in certain quarters that Kant expressed the opinion that the survival of human personality after death would be proved at some future time, and that it was of the utmost importance that it should be so. What gave rise to this idea was a hypothesis which he made in the "Träume eines Geisterschers" for the purpose of showing that, even if the deceased could communicate with the living, no reliance whatever could be placed on such communications. He then ridicules the hypothesis, and states that proof of survival could be of no importance, since conduct influenced by consideration for one's future welfare would have no moral value.

All the above principles are material, and set up heteronomy¹ of the will as the first ground of morality. They cannot, therefore, furnish a categorical imperative, and must be rejected.

¹ If the will seeks the law of its action in the quality of any object external to itself, the result is "heteronomy."

The Christian moral principle, however, according to Kant, is not theological (heteronomy), but autonomy of the pure reason, since it does not make the recognition of God and His will the ground of the moral laws. His extraordinary attempt to prove this will be referred to again.

CHAPTER IV

ASSUMED POPULAR IDEA OF DUTY

THE universal popular idea proves that the will is not regarded as good merely because of its capability of attaining a particular object, or because of anything that it has actually done in favour of something desired. It may fail in carrying out its intention through impediments imposed on it by nature, so that neither its utility nor its inutility can add to or detract from it. It must, therefore, have a value independent of all such considerations, or be "good-in-itself." We recognise in the construction of every organised being that each organ is the best adapted for the work which it has to perform, and must, therefore, conclude that, if the sole object of reason were to provide for our well-being and happiness, nature would have provided an unsuitable instrument, since every action having this end in view would be more effectually and accurately indicated by instinct. As reason, however, is a faculty for

influencing the will, its true destination¹ must be the bringing forth of a will that shall have a value in itself, and not merely in reference to any particular intention. The idea of a good will being contained in that of duty, it is necessary, for the sake of illustration, to explain what the latter means in the common acceptance of the word.

The moral worth of an action depends solely on its being done from a sense of duty. If it is the result of a particular desire for anything, or, if the intention be to benefit ourselves or others, it has no moral value. For example, to preserve one's life, if one is attached to it, is in accordance with duty, but has no moral worth. If, on the other hand, hopeless sufferings have made one wish for death, and the sufferer, nevertheless, prompted by a sense of duty, refrains from committing suicide, then, and then only, has his action moral worth.

Again, the practice of charity from the feeling of sympathy or compassion for the object of it has no moral worth; but when a man by nature cold and indifferent to the sufferings of others, and without any feeling of sympathy for them, is, nevertheless, charitable

1. Vid. page 47.

It may be inevitable from a sense of duty is mechanical. Obeying in god when it is acc. bailed by his volence.

KANT'S ETHICS AND

from a sense of duty, his action has true moral value. The principle or maxim, apart from all possible motives, is what gives the unconditioned value necessary to constitute a virtuous action. From this it follows that duty is the necessity of an action from respect for the law, respect being a feeling which we can only have for what is connected with the will as cause, not as effect. For the latter we may have inclination or affection, but never respect. Thus, as an action from duty excludes the influence of inclination and every object of willing, there remains nothing for the determination of the will but objectively the law, and subjectively pure respect for the latter. In this sense must be understood the command to "love God above all, and thy neighbour as thyself." Love of God, as inclination (pathological love), is impossible, for He is not an object of the senses. The love of man is possible, but cannot be commanded, since it is in nobody's power to love on command. To love God means to obey His laws willingly; to love one's neighbour, to do one's duty towards him cheerfully. What is commanded is to have the right sentiment in actions that conform to duty.

may mean

Therefore, the mere idea of the law in itself, which exists only in rational beings, in so far as it, and not the anticipated effect, determines the will, is what we consider morally good in its possessor when he acts in accordance with it. The law that must determine the will, in order that this may be absolutely and without limitations good, can, accordingly, contain nothing but the universal legality of the actions, and its requisite is: "I must choose my maxim so that I may be able to will that it should become a universal law." For instance, I may, in order to get out of a difficulty, consider it expedient to make a promise without any intention of keeping it, but cannot wish that my maxim should become a universal law; for, if I did so, others might "pay me back in the same coin," and so my maxim, considered as a general law, would be self-destructive.

law +
will

In this way we come to the principle which the common human judgment adopts as the standard of its decision. With this compass in the hand everybody knows what is good and honourable, wise and virtuous, and requires nothing more than to have attention drawn to his maxim, as must be expected when we bear

in mind that it is the duty and concern of even the most ignorant man to know what is good. The latter is even more likely than the philosopher to estimate the true value of actions, because the philosopher has no other principle for his guidance, while his judgment is liable to be led astray by a variety of irrelevant considerations. Although philosophy is, accordingly, unnecessary for the determination of what is good, the counterpoise offered by the natural tendency to the indulgence of wants and desires in the pursuit of happiness compels the common human reason to secure its principle against such opposing claims by investigating its source in the field of practical philosophy.

CHAPTER V

IDEA OF POPULAR PHILOSOPHY

THE common idea of duty is not derived from experience, because if we appeal to the latter it is impossible to find any certain example that actions, although they may be in accordance with duty, have emanated solely from a sense of duty, which is the necessary criterion of their moral worth. Nothing, therefore, can save us from the overthrow of our idea of duty but the clear conviction that the reason imperatively commands that certain things should be done, notwithstanding that experience may be unable to offer any example of their practicability. Moreover, since the law of morality is of such universal significance that it must be valid for "all rational beings" as well as for man, its source must be independent of all accidental human conditions, and be valid for man only because it is so for the former. The supreme principle of morality must, consequently, be free from

everything empirical, whether in human nature itself or in the objective world ; nor can it be composed of a mixture of principles derived partly from pure reason, partly from experience, which would often move the will to what is bad, and only accidentally to what is good. The pure idea of the law free from everything empirical has a so much stronger influence than all motives that can be derived from the field of experience that the consciousness of its own dignity causes it to despise the latter and gradually overcome them. All moral ideas, therefore, must have their seat and origin *à priori* in the reason, and in the most ordinary as well as in the most speculative. They must also be independent of the special nature of human reason, since they are valid for all rational beings, and can, accordingly, only be derived from the general idea of a rational being. This leads to the necessity of investigating the general faculty of reason with the view of showing where the idea of duty springs from it.

A rational being is distinguished by its faculty of acting in accordance with the "idea" of laws; or principles, while everything in nature is bound by definite laws. This faculty

is called the will. Since reason is required for the derivation of actions from laws, the will is nothing else but practical reason. It is, in fact, a faculty of selecting what the latter *will* represents as good independently of inclination. Should the will not be fully in accordance with the reason, the actions which are recognised to be objectively necessary are subjectively accidental, and the objective principle becomes a command. The formula of this command is called an "imperative."

All imperatives are expressed by a "shall," thus showing the relation of an objective law to a will which, owing to its subjective quality, is not determined by it. They say what is practically good, because they determine the will for reasons that are valid for every rational being as such. What is practically good is distinguished from what is agreeable in that the latter has influence on the will for causes that may vary in different individuals and cannot, for that reason, have general validity. An imperative does not apply to a perfect will, because the subjective quality of the latter is such that it is determined by objective laws alone. The "shall" in such a case becomes a "will," because the willing itself is in con-

formity with the law. [A “categorical” affirmative has to be distinguished from a “hypothetical” inasmuch as the latter indicates the necessity of an action merely as a means to the attainment of something, whereas the former represents it as objectively necessary, that is, without reference to any particular end in view.] A categorical affirmative says what is good, but says it to a will which does not at once carry out the action, partly because the subject does not always know that it is good, partly because its maxims may be opposed to the objective principles of practical reason. This, the affirmative of morality, concerns accordingly only the principle, no matter what the result may be, and is not determined by the necessity of attaining any particular object in view.

The question now arises: How is such an imperative possible? As experience can furnish no certain example of an imperative that may not be due to some hidden motive, such as fear of disgrace, it is always doubtful whether the will has been determined by the law, although it may appear to have been so. The possibility of a categorical affirmative must, therefore, be investigated à priori, after the

formula which constitutes it has been stated. Since the imperative contains nothing but the law and the necessity that the maxim should be in accordance with it, while the law itself contains no limiting condition, the formula must be :—

“Act in accordance with a maxim which thou canst at the same time will to be a general law.”

The universality of a law in accordance with which results follow, being that which constitutes nature, in so far as it is determined by general laws, the imperative of duty may be thus expressed :—

“Act so that the maxim of your deed may, through your will, become a general law of nature.”

To illustrate this, Kant divides the duties into those that we owe to ourselves and to others, and each of these into perfect and imperfect. For example :—

- 1 One driven by a series of misfortunes to consider the advisability of suicide would, while still in possession of his reason, ask himself whether the maxim of such a deed could become a general law, the maxim being the indulgence of his self-love by shortening his

life, because its continuance promises more suffering than happiness. It will be at once apparent that a nature whose law it is to urge the preservation of life would contradict itself by using the same principle as a reason for destroying it, and could not exist as nature. Such a maxim could not be a general law of nature, and would be totally opposed to the supreme principle of duty.

- 2 Another, finding himself in urgent want of money, considers whether it would be justifiable to obtain it by promising to repay it on a certain date, although he knows that it will not be possible for him to do so. If he adopts this selfish maxim, and then asks himself whether it could become a general law, the impossibility would be at once evident, "for then nobody would believe the promise, and the object in view would not be attained."

This is a curious illustration of a law which requires that there should be no "object in view."

- 3 Another, possessed of a talent which, if cultivated, would make him a generally useful citizen, prefers the pursuit of pleasure to the trouble of improving his natural gifts. But if he asks himself whether this accords with

what is generally considered as duty, he will see that, although a nature can exist in accordance with such a general law, he cannot "will" that his maxim should become a general law of nature; for, as a rational being, he must necessarily wish that all his faculties should be developed, since they are given for various useful purposes.

4 A fourth, seeing others struggling with hardships, says: "I envy no man his good luck and do not wish to deprive him of anything, but I have no desire to contribute to his welfare or help him when he is in distress." Although it is possible that a nature could exist if such a maxim were a general law, it is impossible to will that it should be so; for a will that came to such a conclusion "would rob itself of all hope of succour when in want of the love and sympathy of others." Here, again, note the inevitable appeal to egoism.

According to Kant, an action against the first two, the perfect or indispensable duties, cannot even be thought of as a general law, but in the case of the other two, the imperfect or meritorious, this inner impossibility does not hold good. It is, nevertheless, impossible

to will that the maxim should be raised to the generality of a law of nature.

It has been shown that duty, if it is to have any significance and power of legislating for our actions, can only be expressed in categorical affirmatives, not in hypothetical; but it remains to be proved *à priori* that such an imperative exists, that it furnishes a law which commands absolutely and without motives, and that the observance of such a law is a duty. It is, first of all, necessary to warn against the derivation of this principle from the special quality of human nature; for duty is the practical necessity of an action, and must be valid for all rational beings, and, only for this reason, for the human will. Moreover, the value of an absolutely good will consists in the principle of action being free from all accidental grounds that can be derived from experience.

The question is:—Is it a necessary law for all rational beings to judge their actions in accordance with maxims which they can wish to become general laws?

If it is so, the ground must be sought in the idea of the will of a rational being in general. The will is thought of as a faculty of determining its own action in accordance with the

idea of certain laws, and such a faculty can exist only in rational beings.

The subjective ground of an action must be distinguished from the objective, which is furnished by the reason alone and valid for all rational beings. The former has only a "relative" value, depending on the special tendencies of each individual, and can, therefore, only supply hypothetical imperatives. The ground of a categorical affirmative must be something which, as an object-in-itself, has "absolute" value. Now, I maintain that man, and every rational being, exists as an object-in-itself, and must in all actions concerning himself or others be regarded not merely as a means to an end, but also at the same time as object. Beings devoid of reason have only a relative value as means to an end, and are, therefore, called "things," while rational beings are called "persons," because their nature distinguishes them as objects-in-themselves.

If there be a categorical imperative for the human will, it must be such that the idea of what is necessarily a motive for everybody must, because it is an object-in-itself, constitute an objective principle of the will, or serve as a

general practical law. The practical imperative will thus be the following:—"Act so that you treat humanity both in your own person and in that of everybody else as an object, and not merely as a means to an end."

For instance, taking the examples already given:—

- 1 He that contemplates suicide, on asking himself whether his action would be consistent with the idea of humanity as an object-in-itself, will see that he is making use of a person merely as a means of maintaining a tolerable condition to the end of his life, and that he should not thus dispose of man in his own person.
- 2 In regard to the necessary duty to others, he that meditates a lying promise will at once see that he is making use of another simply as a means to an end without the latter containing the motive in himself. In order that he should approve of such treatment his object should be the same.
- 3 The meritorious duties to ourselves require that our actions should, in addition, harmonize with humanity by promoting its perfection. To neglect the gifts with which we are endowed for this purpose would consist with

the maintenance of humanity as an object-in-itself, but would not promote this object.

- 4 Humanity would exist if nobody contributed to the happiness of others while not intentionally doing anything to diminish it; but the idea of humanity as an object-in-itself requires that we should promote the objects of others, since these should also be ours.

From this principle of every rational being as an object-in-itself follows the idea of the will of every rational being as universally lawgiving. It also followed from the principle that we should be able to wish that our maxim should become a general law. Therefore, every maxim must be rejected which is not consistent with the universal legislation of the will, and the will is only subject to the law because the latter emanates from itself. *

This third formula of the supreme principle of morality excludes all influence of interest from willing from a sense of duty. A will which is a supreme lawgiver cannot be dependent on an interest, since this would require another law to limit it to the condition requisite to its validity as a general law.

Therefore, if there is a categorical affirmative, it can only command in accordance with the

maxim of a universal legislative will, for then the practical principle is unconditioned by any interest. All previous ethical systems failed because duty was dictated by them for our own interest or for the interest of others.

The idea of a rational being who must be regarded as universally lawgiving, in order to judge himself and his actions from this standpoint, leads to the idea of a "kingdom of motives," that is, a systematic combination of rational beings by means of common objective laws.

A rational being belongs to this kingdom as member when he is universally lawgiving, but at the same time subject to its laws; as supreme head when he is, as lawgiver, not subject to the will of another, his own will being free from all selfish limitations.

Thus morality consists in the referring of all action to the legislation through which a "kingdom of motives" is possible, and the principle of this legislation is, that every action should be in accordance with a maxim that can become a general law, and that the will should at the same time be able to regard itself as universally lawgiving. Duty is the

necessity of an action when the maxim is not in accordance with this general principle.

The duty of referring every maxim of the will, as universally lawgiving, to every other will and to every action towards itself, arises not from any motive of inclination or future advantage, but from the idea of the "dignity" of a rational being who obeys no law but that given by himself. That which constitutes the condition under which alone something can be an object-in-itself has not merely a "relative" value or price, but an "inner" value or "dignity." Now, morality is the condition under which a rational being can be an object-in-itself; therefore morality, and humanity, in so far as it is capable of it, is the only thing that has "dignity."

Dignity may also be defined as "an unconditioned, incomparable value," for which the word "respect" is the suitable expression.

The rational nature distinguishes itself from all others in that its motive must be the matter of every good will. A kingdom of motives is only possible in accordance with the analogy of a kingdom of nature, the former being dependent on maxims or self-imposed rules, the latter on outwardly imposed laws. The

rule for the maxim of a kingdom of motives is given by the categorical affirmative, and the kingdom would come to pass if they were generally followed.

The supreme principle of morality is "autonomy" of the will; that is to say, the fitness of the maxims of every good will to be made a general law is the only law which every rational being imposes on himself without any motive or interest as ground for it.

How is such a law possible, and why is it necessary?

We have not maintained its truth here, nor pretended to have a proof of it in our power. We have only shown, through analysis of the universally current idea of morality, that autonomy of the will necessarily underlies it. Therefore, assuming morality to be a reality and not a mere chimera, the principle here given must be admitted. Now, the principle of freedom being also that of the categorical affirmative, if the former be presupposed, morality with its principle follows by mere analysis of the idea of a free will. We could not, however, prove the reality of freedom in ourselves or in human nature, but must pre-

suppose it if we think of ourselves as beings endowed with reason and the consciousness of causality in regard to our actions. This consciousness of freedom in our actions is, according to Kant, sufficient proof that we are practically free, and the possibility of it is explained by the fact that we consider our actions from two points of view, being conscious not only of an existence in the world of the senses, but also of one in the "intelligible" world which furnishes the determining cause of actions in the former.

This also, as already stated, furnishes the answer to the question : Why should I subject myself to the categorical affirmative without any interest? Because it is self-imposed!

CHAPTER VI

THE HIGHEST GOOD

WHAT is an object of pure reason?

If an object be taken as the determining ground of our faculty of desire, its physical possibility through the free use of our strength must be considered before we can decide whether it is an object of pure reason; but if the *à priori* law be regarded as the determining ground of the action, the only question is, whether we may "will" an action which aims at the existence of an object if this were in our power. In the latter case it is the moral possibility alone that has to be considered, for the law of the will, and not the object, would be the cause of the action. The only objects of practical reason are, therefore, the "good" and the "bad." The idea of "good," if not derived from a pre-existing practical law, would only refer to something with which a feeling of pleasure was connected, and that of "bad" to anything that causes pain. Practical

maxims derived from this conception would only contain what is good for the attainment of some object of the will; the good would always be the useful, and the object would be outside the will and in sensation. "Good" and "bad," however, always refer to the will in so far as it is determined by the law of reason to make something its object, since it is a faculty of adopting such a law as the motive of its action.

In the decision of our practical reason a great deal depends on our happiness, but not all. Reason would not elevate man above mere animality if it were only used for the sake of what is served in animals by instinct. It must have a higher destination, *viz.*, to distinguish what is in itself good or bad from what is agreeable or disagreeable, and make the former the supreme condition of the latter. If the law immediately determines the will, the corresponding action is in itself good, and the will whose maxim is always in accordance with this law is absolutely good, and the supreme condition of all that is good.

The cause of all the mistakes made by philosophers in regard to the supreme principle of morals was that they sought an object of the will, in order to make it the matter and ground

of a law, instead of searching for a law which should à priori and immediately determine the will, and the object in accordance with it. Whether they set the object of pleasure which should furnish the supreme idea of "the good" in happiness, in perfection, in the moral law, or in the will of God, the principle was always heteronomy, and depended on empirical conditions. Only a formal law, that is, such a one as prescribes to the reason, as supreme condition of its maxims, nothing more than the form of its general legislation, can be an à priori determining ground of the practical reason.

Kant's explanation of the mechanism by which reason produces the ideas of good and bad now follows, and it will, I think, be admitted that there could be no better proof that such a thing is impossible.

As the assumption presupposes a causality of pure reason, the ideas of good and bad do not refer to objects, but are "modi" of a single category, *viz.*, that of causality in so far as its determining ground consists in the presentation of a law furnished by reason itself.

It will be remembered that the categories

were attributed to the *Verstand* alone, and had nothing whatever to do with the reason. Finding it necessary, however, to assume categories of practical reason, he now uses the expression "ideas of the *Verstand*, or categories of reason in its theoretical use," an obvious subterfuge.

Now, since actions are subject to the law of freedom for beings in the intelligible world, but are at the same time occurrences in the world of the senses, the determinations of practical reason refer to the latter, and must be in accordance with the categories of the *Verstand*, in order to subject the "manifold of the desires" to the unity of consciousness in a practical reason that gives moral laws.

The categories were rules for synthesising the manifold which is given in empirical perception; but those of freedom, having only to do with the determination of a free will, have the advantage that they simply require the form of a free will instead of the form of perception (space and time), and have not to wait on perceptions to acquire significance, since they themselves bring forth what they refer to (the sentiment of the will).

The categories of freedom in regard to the

ideas of good and bad are contained in the following table :

I. OF QUANTITY.

Subjective, according to maxims (Pleasure of the individual).

Objective, according to principles.

Objective as well as Subjective à priori principles of freedom (Laws).

II. OF QUALITY.

Practical rules of commission.

” ” ” omission.

” ” ” exceptions.

III. OF RELATION.

To the personality.

To the state of the person.

Reciprocal of one person to the state of another.

IV. MODALITY.

The allowed and what is not allowed.

Duty and what is opposed to duty.

Perfect and imperfect duty.

Here one sees a total plan of what one has to perform!

As Kant assumed the speculative reason to be a faculty for seeking the totality of the conditions to what is conditioned by the Verstand, so also he assumes that the practical reason is a faculty for seeking the unconditioned to what is practically conditioned by desires and natural wants, but not as determining ground of the will. The unconditioned totality of the object of practical reason is the "highest good," in the idea of which the moral law is included as supreme

condition, so that it is really the moral law, and not a mere object, that determines the will in accordance with the principle of autonomy.

Although virtue is the supreme condition of all that is desirable, it is not the total and completed good without happiness; for to be in want of happiness, to be also worthy of it and yet not enjoy it, would be inconsistent with the will of an all-powerful rational being, if we try to think of such. The union of virtue with happiness may be so understood that the endeavour to be virtuous and the rational quest of happiness are identical actions, or that the former produces the latter as effect. The Epicureans and Stoics identified virtue and happiness but on different grounds. The Stoic maintains that virtue is the total highest good, and happiness only the consciousness of its possession; the Epicurean that happiness is the total highest good, and virtue the rational use of the means to obtain it.

Now the maxims of virtue and those of happiness are, in regard to their supreme principle, quite dissimilar, and, far from harmonizing, although they belong to one highest good in order to make this perfect, limit and detract from one another in the same

subject. Thus the question of the practical possibility of the highest good remains unsolved in spite of all attempts at coalition hitherto made. As the union is, however, recognised *à priori*, and the possibility of the highest good does not rest on any empirical principles, the deduction of the idea must be transcendental.

It is *à priori* morally necessary to bring forth the highest good through freedom of the will; therefore, the condition of its possibility must rest on *à priori* grounds of knowledge.

Now, either the desire for happiness must be the motive to maxims of virtue, or the maxims of virtue must be the efficient cause of happiness. But the first is absolutely impossible, as already explained; and the second also, because all connection of causes and effects in the world as result of determination of the will is not regulated in accordance with moral sentiments of the will, but with the knowledge of the laws of nature and our physical capacity of utilising them for our purposes.

Therefore, no union of virtue and happiness can be expected in the world from the most punctilious observance of the moral laws. As the moral law, however, commands that we should promote the highest good, which contains

this union in its idea, the possibility of it must have a transcendental source. That virtue necessarily brings forth happiness is only false in so far as the form of causality in the world of the senses is considered, and on the supposition that the existence in the latter is the only possible existence of a rational being. But as I am justified in thinking my existence as a noumenon in the world of intelligence, and have at the same time in the moral law a pure intellectual ground of determining my causality in the world of the senses, it is not impossible that morality of sentiment may, through the the intervention of an Author of Nature, have a necessary connection with happiness as cause with effect in the world of the senses, which could only be accidental in the latter and insufficient for the highest good.

Being thus compelled to seek the possibility of the highest good in connection with the intelligible world, it is surprising that the philosophers both of ancient and modern times should have been convinced that virtue and happiness could be found together in suitable proportion even in this life. Epicure and other morally well-disposed persons of later times did not see that the prospect of happiness could not

produce a moral sentiment, if the sense for the latter did not already exist. The source of the error was in taking the effect for the cause, through a deception analogous to the so-called deception of the senses. The immediate determination of the will by reason is the cause of the same feeling of pleasure in the carrying out of the action as would be yielded by the desired action. It is necessary to avoid unreal recommendations of this moral ground of determination as motive by attributing to it a feeling of special enjoyment of happiness which is only consequence. This feeling, which must necessarily accompany the consciousness of virtue, is expressed by the words "respect" and "self contentedness," and is merely a negative feeling of satisfaction in which one is conscious of wanting nothing. The esthetic (improperly so called), which depends on the gratification of desires, no matter how finely excogitated, can never be adequate to it, for the desires change, grow with their encouragement, and leave a still greater void than one has believed to have filled up.

Therefore, it is allowable to think of a natural and necessary connection between the consciousness of virtue and the expectation of a

proportionate degree of happiness resulting from it as possible, although it cannot be recognised. We will now investigate the grounds of this possibility, first in regard to what is immediately in our power, and then in what practical reason offers to complete what is not in our power.

CHAPTER VII

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL AND THE
EXISTENCE OF GOD AS POSTULATES OF
PURE PRACTICAL REASON.

THE production of the highest good in the world is the necessary object of a will that is determinable by the moral law. As the complete conformity of the sentiments to the latter is, however, the supreme condition of the former, it must be possible just as well as the object. But the complete conformity of the will to the moral law is "sanctity," a perfection of which no rational being is capable at any period of his existence. Therefore, since it is demanded as practically necessary, it can only be found in an infinite progress, and such a practical progression must, according to principles of pure practical reason, be accepted as the real object of our will. This infinite progress is only possible on the assumption that the existence and personality of a rational being are continued without end, which means that the

soul is immortal. The highest good being, accordingly, only practicable on the assumption of the immortality of the soul, this is inseparably connected with the moral law as a postulate of pure reason. The principle that the moral destiny of our nature can only be attained by infinite progress is also of the greatest importance in regard to religion; for otherwise the moral law would be degraded from its dignity by being represented as indulgent and conformable to our convenience, while the expectation of complete acquisition of sanctity of the will would impede the unceasing effort to punctiliously observe the strict and unrelenting law of reason. Evidently Kant is conscious that there is a contradiction in saying that a complete conformity to the moral law is necessary for producing the highest good at the same time that this state can never be attained, and he gets out of the difficulty by saying that the Infinite, to whom the condition of time is nothing, sees in what is to us an endless series the total of the conformity to the moral law, and that the required sanctity is to be completely found in a single intellectual perception of the existence of rational beings.

As immortality of the soul is a necessary condition of the first element of the highest good, *viz.*, morality, so the completed highest good is only possible on the assumption of an adequate cause of the second element, the proportionate happiness.

This is proved as follows :—

Happiness is the state of a rational being in the world to whom everything, in the total of his existence, happens according to his wish and his will, and depends on the conformity of nature to his total object, as well as to the essential ground of determination of his will. Now, the moral law commands, as a law of freedom, through grounds which are independent of nature and its conformity to our faculty of desire as motives. But the acting rational being in the world is not the cause of the world and of nature; therefore, the moral law does not contain the slightest ground to a necessary connection between morality and the proportionate happiness of a being forming part of the world and dependent on it. Nevertheless, such a connection is postulated as necessary in the command that we “shall” endeavour to promote the highest good, and the existence of a cause of all nature independent

of nature itself must be postulated as the ground of this connection. This supreme cause must not only contain the ground of the conformity of nature to a law of the will of rational beings, but also to the idea of this law in so far as they make it the supreme determining ground of their will, that is to say, to their moral sentiment. The highest good in the world is, therefore, only possible on the assumption of a supreme cause of nature which has a causality in accordance with the moral sentiment. Now a being which is capable of actions according to the idea of laws is an "intelligence," and the causality of such a being according to the idea of the laws is its "will." The supreme cause of nature, in so far as it is a necessary presupposition of the highest good, must, consequently, be a being who creates nature by intelligence and will, that is to say, must be God; and as it is our duty to promote the highest good, so is it also morally necessary to accept the existence of God.

It must be borne in mind that this moral necessity is a subjective want, not a duty; for there can be no duty to accept the existence of a thing, since that is a matter for the theoretical use of the reason alone. Nor must

it be inferred that the recognition of the existence of God is necessary as a ground of all obligation, which depends exclusively on autonomy of the will.

The Greeks could never solve the problem of the possibility of the highest good, because the existence of God was, in their opinion, not necessary.

The moral law does not of itself promise happiness, but the Christian doctrine makes good the defect by representing the world in which rational beings devote themselves with all their soul as the "Kingdom of God." The sanctity of morals is pointed out to them in this life as a standard, but "salvation" is only attainable in an eternity. Nevertheless, the Christian moral principle is not theological (heteronomy), but autonomy of pure practical reason for itself, because it does not make the knowledge of God and His will the ground of the laws, but of the attainment of the highest good under the condition of observing them, while the only motive to this is in the idea of duty, not in the expected results. In this way the moral law leads, through the idea of the highest good, to religion, that is, the recognition of all duties as divine commands, not as arbitrary

and haphazard ordinances of a foreign will, but as essential laws of every free will for itself, which must, however, be regarded as commands of the Supreme Being, because we can only hope to attain the highest good from a morally perfect and all-powerful will. Here also everything is unselfish and based on duty, without ~~assuming~~ hope and fear as motives.

Those that maintain the honour of God to be the final object of creation have hit upon the best expression ; for God honours nothing more than respect for His command, the observance of the holy duty which His law imposes on us, when His glorious institution is added to crown such a beautiful order with suitable happiness.

NOTE.—It is hardly possible to believe that a great thinker could be guilty of such sophistry as is contained in this chapter.

PART II
THE CRITICISM

CHAPTER I

RELATION BETWEEN THE WILL AND REASON

THE perceptions common to man and the lower animals are known as "intuitive," in contradistinction to the "abstract," which are formed by the process of thinking. This process consists in abstracting certain qualities from the intuitive perceptions, dropping the remainder, and fixing the former by means of words. The words so formed are the abstract perceptions, or ideas, and an idea has no reality unless it can be traced back to a perception. Thinking is further carried out by comparing ideas in judgments, and the latter again in syllogisms. All nations and times before Kant have understood "reason" to mean this special faculty, which distinguishes man from the lower animals. To say that the mental operation brought into play in syllogising is a totally distinct thing from that required to form judgments, and to attribute to the former a faculty of forming transcendental ideas, while the latter (the

Verstand) is supposed to be necessary for thinking objects, is an assumption the absurdity of which has been proved elsewhere.¹ Here it will suffice to refer to the inconsistencies pointed out on page 13.

Again, the assumption that the reason has not only a theoretical or speculative use, but also a practical one for supplying categorical affirmatives, is due solely to Kant, who borrowed the word practical from scholastic philosophy, in which, however, it had a totally different meaning, referring merely to technique.

It has already been shown how Kant's idea of autonomy forced him to the conclusion that the will is practical reason, that the latter is the real essence of man, and that the lower animals have no will. It is manifest, notwithstanding his own refutation of the scholastic arguments for the existence and immortality of the soul as distinguished from the body, that he was influenced by the theory that the former is originally and essentially a knowing, and, only as a consequence of this, a willing being. According to this idea, the soul has a higher

¹ Kant's philosophy as rectified by Schopenhauer, 1909.

and a lower faculty of cognition, and corresponding faculties of the will. In the higher faculty the immaterial soul acts for itself and without the co-operation of the body, having to do with purely intellectual ideas and similar acts of the will, which are all free from anything derived from the senses. Here it recognises only pure abstractions, universals, innate ideas, eternal truths, etc. The lower faculty of cognition and willing is the work of the soul when acting in intimate connection with the body and its organs, whereby its pure activity is interfered with. To this belongs every intuitive perception, which is, accordingly, the indistinct and the confused, whereas the abstract perceptions or ideas are the distinct. The will that is determined by the sensually conditioned knowledge is the low variety, which is generally bad; that which is conducted by reason alone is pure, and belongs to the immaterial soul.

From a dimly conscious reminiscence of such views is derived Kant's doctrine of the autonomy of the will, which, as the voice of pure practical reason, is lawgiving for all rational beings as such, and only knows formal grounds of determination in contradistinction to the

material, which determine the lower faculty of desire in opposition to the former.

That the will is the primary, the real essence of man, and the intellect, as a function of the brain, secondary, is proved by the following considerations:—

- 1 Consciousness consists in knowing, and this requires subject and object, the knower and the thing known. Self-consciousness, therefore, could not take place if it did not contain something distinct from the knowing subject. This means that, as there can be no object without subject, so also there can be no subject without object, and it is impossible to think of consciousness as pure intelligence. The knower itself cannot be known as such, otherwise it would be the known of another knower. Now, what we know in self-consciousness is exclusively the will; for not only willing and determining in the narrowest sense, but all striving, wishing, hoping, fearing, loving, hating: in short, all that makes up our pleasure and pain, is modification of willing and not willing, and what represents itself as an act of the will when it acts outwardly. But in all cognition that which is known is the first and the essential, not the knower; there-

fore the thing known, that is, the will, must be the first and the original in self consciousness, and the knower the secondary, the mirror. A plant may be taken as the emblem of consciousness. The root is the essential, the original, and perennial, the death of which involves that of the crown; the crown, on the other hand, is the manifestation, which passes away without the death of the root. The root represents the will, the crown the intellect, and the neutral point or rhizoma the ego, which belongs to both as common terminal point. This ego is the *pro. tem.* identical subject of knowing and willing, the identity of which is the great miracle of the world.

2 To know what consciousness is, it is first necessary to investigate what is found in the same way in every consciousness, as this will be the common, the constant, the essential; and secondly, what distinguishes one consciousness from another, since this will be the added, the secondary. Now, what we take for granted as existing in every animal consciousness, even in the weakest and most imperfect, is the will, and we attribute unchanged to the animal all the affections of the will that we know in ourselves, speaking without hesitation

of its desire, fear, anger, hate, love, joy, sadness, longing. On the contrary, when phenomena of mere knowledge are considered, we become uncertain, and do not venture to say that an animal thinks, judges, understands. We ascribe perception to them as certain, because without it their will could not be set in motion as it is. Thus, in regard to an animal's faculty of cognition, our ideas are indefinite, and we can only make conjectures, whereas longing, desiring, detesting, avoiding, &c., are common to every consciousness, to the polyp as well as to the human being. This is, accordingly, the essential and the basis of every consciousness. The diversity of its manifestations in the various races of animals depends on the different extent of their spheres of cognition, in which their motives lie. We understand directly from our own nature all acts and gestures of animals that express movements of the will, while the gulf between them and us arises solely from a difference in the intellect. This shows plainly that the will in all animal beings is the primary and substantial, and the intellect the secondary, a mere instrument for the use of the first.

We also see that the organ of intelligence,

the cerebral system, together with the organs of sense, keeps pace with the increasing complication and requirements of the organism, and that the increase in the perceptive part of consciousness (in contrast with that of willing) manifests its bodily predominance in the constantly increasing proportion of the brain generally to the remaining nervous system. The last step made by nature is the addition of abstract perception or thinking, that is, of reason, and with it reflection, which henceforth displays a predominant activity as compared with that of the primary part of consciousness. While the perception of satisfied or unsatisfied desire constitutes the chief part of the consciousness of animals, the reverse is the case in man. Although his cravings may be stronger than those of any animal, nevertheless his consciousness remains constantly and pre-eminently occupied with ideas and thoughts. This has doubtless given rise to the fundamental error of all philosophers that thinking is the fundamental and the primary, and that willing is the mere result of it. But if willing merely emanated from thinking, how could animals, even the lower among them, have such a violent and uncontrollable will with

extremely little knowledge? The complete detachment of the willing from the knowing part of consciousness, whereby the latter becomes purely objective and a clear mirror of the world, brings forth the conceptions of genius.

- 3** If we survey the downward scale of animals, we see the intellect becoming weaker and less perfect, but no corresponding degradation of the will. This always retains its identical nature, and is as complete and decided even in the smallest insect as it is in man. The difference is solely in what it wills, that is, in the motives, which are a matter of the intellect. This, as secondary and bound to bodily organs, has innumerable grades of perfection, and is generally very limited and imperfect. The will, on the contrary, as original and thing-in-itself, can never admit of grades or be imperfect, but is in every act what it can be, its excitation only having grades from the weakest inclination to passion. The intellect has not only grades of excitation, but also grades of its essence, of perfection, which therefore ascends by steps from the lowest animals to man, and in the latter from the blockhead to the genius.

The will is everywhere totally itself, for its function is of the greatest simplicity, consisting in willing and not willing, which takes place with the greatest ease and requires no exercise, while knowing has many functions and never takes place without exertion, for which reason it is capable of greater perfection through education and training. The radically different nature of the will and intellect becomes manifest if we observe in our own interior how the images and thoughts which rise in the intellect set the will in motion, when it will be seen that the latter dances to the tune played by the former. This depends on the fact that the will is without knowledge, and the intellect without will. The primacy of the will is, notwithstanding, evident when it proves its mastery in the last instance by forbidding the intellect certain ideas or trains of thought, because it knows, that is, learns from the intellect itself, that it would be set in motion by the latter. It bridles the intellect and compels it to direct itself to other things.

This is called "being master of one's self," the will being obviously the master, and the intellect the servant. The relation of the will to the intellect is also to be recognised by the

fact that the latter is originally ignorant of the conclusions of the former. It furnishes the motives, but only learns afterwards how they have worked. Very often we do not know what we wish or fear, and can entertain a wish for years without acknowledging it to ourselves or allowing it to come to clear consciousness, because the intellect must not know of it, in which case the good opinion we entertain of ourselves would suffer. If it is fulfilled, however, we ascertain through our joy, not without a feeling of shame, that we have wished this particular thing, for instance, the death of a near relation from whom we inherit something.

What we really fear is also often unknown to us, because the courage fails us to bring it to distinct consciousness. We are sometimes even in error as to the real motive for doing or not doing something until an accident reveals the secret, and we discover that what we have taken for the motive was not the real one, but another which we would not admit to ourselves, because it does not correspond to the good opinion which we have of ourselves. For example, we forbear from doing something, as we think, for purely moral reasons, but ascertain subsequently that fear withheld us, since we do

it as soon as all danger is past. If the intellect, as all philosophers maintain, were our real essence, and the decision of the will a mere result of knowledge, the motive assumed would determine our moral worth.

4 The intellect tires; the will is untirable. After sustained intellectual work the tiring of the brain is felt just as that of the arm would be after uninterrupted bodily work; willing is our own essence, the manifestations of which take place without trouble, and spontaneously. Therefore, when our will is strongly excited, as in anger, fear, affliction, etc., and we are urged to knowing, with the object of rectifying these passions, the force which we must do to ourselves testifies to the transition from the original and natural to the derived, indirect and forced activity. Infants with only a feeble trace of intelligence are full of obstinacy, and show by their uncontrollable, aimless blustering and crying the impetus of the will with which they overflow, while their will has no object; that is, they will without knowing what they will.

The intellect, on the contrary, is developed slowly, following the completion of the brain and the maturity of the entire organism, which are its conditions. The common fault of pre-

cipitation shows the inexhaustibility of the will. Instead of waiting for the completion of the explorative and deliberative work of the intellect, it steps forth uncalled for, and displays itself as fear, hope, joy, envy, anger, courage, etc., and drives to rash words or deeds generally followed by regret, after time has shown that the intellect had not been able to complete its task of apprehending the circumstances, considering their connection, and concluding as to what was advisable, because the will did not wait for it, but assumed the initiative without the intellect being able to resist. Of ten things that cause us anger nine would not be able to do so if we understood them thoroughly from their causes, and recognised their true quality and necessity.

The intellect is for the will what bridle and bit are for an uncontrollable horse. In intoxication, in extreme anger, in despair, the will has taken the bit between its teeth and follows its original nature. In mania sine delirio, in which it has completely lost bridle and bit, it shows its original nature most clearly, and that the intellect is as different from it as the bit from the horse. This consideration shows the will as the original, and, therefore, metaphysical; the intellect, on the contrary, the secondary

and physical. The latter, like all that is physical, is subject to vis inertiae, that is, it is only active when driven by the will which rules it. Therefore it rests willingly when allowed to do so, and often shows itself lazy and indisposed to work. Through continued exertion it tires to total dulness and exhaustion, and requires the complete suspension of its activity in sleep, that is, in rest of the brain, which consequently precedes it as the stomach precedes digestion.

The will, on the other hand, is never lazy, is absolutely untiring, its activity is its essence, it never ceases to will, and when it is abandoned by the intellect in deep sleep, so that it cannot act outwardly to motives, it is active as vital force, takes care of the interior economy of the organism, and brings, as vis medicatrix naturae, all irregularities again into order. It does not diminish in old age, but becomes more constant, inflexible, irreconcilable, and obstinate, because the intellect has become less receptive. The general weakness and imperfection of the intellect, as it appears in the want of judgment, in the limitation, perversity, and folly of most men, would also be inexplicable if the intellect were the immediate and

original essence, and not something secondary that merely supervened. For, how could the original essence so frequently err and fail in its peculiar function? The will, the really original in human consciousness, always succeeds perfectly. To regard the immoral in man as an imperfection is a radically false point of view. Morality has a source outside nature, is opposed to the natural will, which is absolutely egoistic, and leads to the suppression of the latter.

5 That the will is the real and essential in man, but the intellect secondary and conditioned, is also manifest from the fact that the latter can only carry on its function purely and correctly so long as the will is silent, while it is perceptibly disturbed by every excitation of this. An immediate disturbance of the will by the intellect, on the contrary, cannot be conceived. That falsely apprehended motives lead the will astray is not to be interpreted in this way. That is a failure of the intellect in its own domain, and the influence of the will is indirect. The indecision from opposition of motives does not result from activity of the will, but from outer objects produced by the intellect, which pull the will in opposite directions. If the intellect were not something quite distinct from

the will, but, as has been hitherto supposed, knowing and willing were at the root the same thing and similar original functions of an absolutely simple being, the excitement of the will in which passion consists would also increase the activity of the intellect, whereas the contrary is the case, so that the ancients called passion "*animi perturbatio*." The intellect being the mere function of the brain, which is parasitically borne and nourished by the organism, every perturbation of the will, and with it of the organism, must disturb or paralyse the former. The organism is the will itself as it is objectively perceived in the brain, and many of its functions are, consequently, exalted and accelerated by the joyful passions.

6 The functions of the intellect may also be promoted and increased by the impulse and spur of the will, showing that the former is an instrument of the latter. A strongly active motive, such as a longing wish or some urgent necessity, raises the intellect to a degree of which we would not have thought ourselves capable. Difficult circumstances, which impose on us the necessity of certain performances, develop quite new talents in us, the germs of which lay concealed, and for which we assumed

that we had no faculty. This fact is expressed by the saying: "Necessity is the mother of the arts," from which the fine arts are to be excluded. Even the intelligence of animals is considerably enhanced by necessity, as may be seen, for instance, by the manner in which they consider it safer not to fly when they believe that they are not seen. Memory is also increased by pressure of the will, and, even when it is otherwise weak, retains perfectly what has value for the prevailing passion. Deep reflection leads to the conclusion that the memory in general requires the foundation of the will as a point of attachment or rather a thread, on which memories arrange themselves and which holds them together. It is impossible to think of a memory as existing in a pure intelligence, that is, in a being which simply knows and is devoid of a will.

Again, the intellect often obeys the will, as when we wish to think of anything, and this succeeds after some exertion. Sometimes the intellect refuses obedience, for instance, when we try in vain to recollect something that has been entrusted to the memory. The anger of the will on such occasions demonstrates in a

forcible manner their relation and their distinctness. The worried intellect sometimes brings back after an interval what has been demanded of it, and often quite unexpectedly. The will never obeys the intellect, but deliberates on what has been laid before it by the latter, selecting with necessity according to its nature. Therefore no Ethics is possible to model or improve the will. To believe that knowledge determines the will is the same thing as believing that the lantern which one carries at night is the cause of one's steps. Experience proves that a fundamental fault of character cannot be eradicated from our personality. In spite of repentance and the best intentions transgression follows on the next opportunity, and we condemn ourselves accordingly. Here we see that which condemns and that which is condemned stand apart from each other. The will proves itself the stronger, the unchangeable, the primitive, and at the same time the essential, while the intellect bemoans its faults and finds no consolation in the correction of its knowledge, its only function.

7 If the will emanated from knowledge as its result or product, it would follow that where there is much will there would also be much

knowledge, insight, and intelligence, whereas it is by no means so. We find in many men a strong, determined, inflexible, persevering, obstinate, and violent will associated with very feeble intelligence. Animals have still less intelligence, but frequently a violent and obstinate will; plants only will without any intelligence. If the will arose from knowledge alone, our anger would be in exact proportion to its actual occasion, or, at least, to our comprehension of it. Usually, however, it goes far beyond the latter, which would not be the case if our essence consisted in knowing and the will merely resulted from its knowledge; for nothing could come into the result that was not in the elements of it.

The difficulty of convincing a man against his will, and vice versâ, also shows how distinct the intellect is from the will.

- 8 History and experience prove that intellect and will, or character, occur quite independently of each other. We never infer a good will from an excellent head, or vice versâ, but everybody takes them for totally distinct qualities, the presence of each of which must be ascertained by experience. Great limitation of the head may co-exist with great kindness of heart,

and the highest intellectual eminence with the greatest moral depravity. When one man is said to have a good heart but a bad head, and another a good head but a bad heart, everybody feels that the praise outweighs the blame in the former case, and the contrary in the latter. Accordingly, when anybody does something bad, his friends try to shift the blame from the will to the intellect, and to represent faults of the heart as faults of the head. They will even plead mental aberration or insanity when a serious crime is in question. If we ourselves have caused an accident or injury, we readily put the blame on our stupidity, in order to escape the reproach of malice. The accusation of want of judgment is not a crime before the moral judgment seat; it even gives privileges. Those that unsuccessfully try to fulfil a certain task always appeal to their good will, which has not been wanting, because they thus hope to exculpate their own essence, for which they are properly responsible. The insufficiency of their faculties, on the other hand, they attribute to the want of a suitable instrument. If a man is stupid, he is excused because he can do nothing for it; but he that would excuse a bad man on a similar ground

would be laughed at. And yet one is innate just as well as the other.

High mental endowments have always been regarded as gifts of nature or of the gods, that is, as something distinct from man himself and granted to him by favour. Moral merits, however, although they are innate, have always been looked upon as something proceeding from man himself, essentially belonging to him, and constituting his very self. Accordingly, all religions promise a reward in eternity for the merits of the will, but none for the merits of the head. Virtue expects its reward in another world; prudence hopes for it in this. Therefore, the will is the eternal, and the intellect the temporal. Intercourse and community among men are generally founded on relations that concern the will, seldom on those of the intellect. Brilliant qualities of mind win admiration, but not affection, which is reserved for moral qualities of the character.

Everybody would rather have as his friend the honest, the good-natured, even the obliging, compliant, and easily determined person, than the merely ingenious one. How is the self-satisfaction which we feel in moral consideration so radically different from that regarding

the intellect? The virtuous man wishes all to be like himself, and is sorry for the backward; the one conscious of his intellectual superiority displays arrogance, triumphant vanity, and contempt for others. That the meaning and the aim of life are not intellectual but moral is also evident when we see how the greatest minds and the most learned are so often snatched away before they have attained the acme of their capacity. The thorough difference between the mental and the moral qualities reveals itself also in the fact that the intellect suffers important changes through time, while the will and character are unaffected by it. The attack of age, which gradually diminishes the intellectual forces, leaves the moral qualities intact.

9 On what does personal identity depend? Not on the matter of the body or its form, for both are completely changed in the course of time. Notwithstanding these changes a man can always be recognised after years by the expression of his look, which shows that there is something in him that remains completely untouched by time. We also feel, no matter how old we may be, that we are exactly the same as we were even in childhood. That which is always the same and does not grow old is the

core of our being, which is not in time. The assumption that personal identity depends on that of consciousness, or the connected recollection of the course of life, is insufficient; for, with the exception of the principal events and the most interesting scenes, a thousand occurrences are forgotten for every one retained. Old age, disease, injury of the brain, insanity, can completely rob us of our memory, but not of our sense of identity, because this rests on the will and its unchangeable character. It is this that makes the expression of the countenance unchangeable. The man lies concealed in the heart, not in the head. In consequence of our relation to the outer world, we are accustomed to regard as our proper self the subject of knowing, the knowing ego, which at night disappears exhausted in sleep, and appears again in the morning with renewed strength.

This is, however, the mere function of our brain, and not our own self. The real self is what lies concealed behind the latter and knows nothing but willing and not willing, satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It is what brings forth the intellect, does not sleep with it, and remains untouched by death. All that belongs

to knowledge, even the actions of moral significance, cannot be recalled ; but we cannot forget the character itself, of which the deeds merely furnish the evidence, since this remains the same. The identity of consciousness must, consequently, depend on something which gives it unity and connection as its constant foundation, and cannot be conditioned by the consciousness itself. This is the will, which is unchangeable and absolutely identical, and has brought forth the consciousness for its purposes.

10 Not to live at all is better than to live badly. Although this is evident to the intellect, nevertheless most people live very wretchedly rather than not live at all. This attachment to life cannot have its ground in the object of it, since this is constant suffering, or, at least, a business which does not pay the expenses. Therefore the attachment must be founded in the subject. But it is not in the intellect, nor a consequence of deliberation, nor a matter of choice. We are ourselves the will to live, and must, accordingly, live well or badly. The attachment to life and the natural dread of death are only explainable by the fact that they are totally à priori, and not à posteriori. On this unutter-

able horror mortis, is grounded the favourite doctrine that the suicide must be insane; for suicide is a decision of the intellect, whereas our will to live is a prius of this. The primacy of the will in self-consciousness is thus again confirmed.

- 11 Nothing proves more clearly the secondary, dependent, conditioned nature of the intellect than its periodical intermittence. But the core of our being, which the organic functions necessarily presuppose as their primum mobile, can never pause without life coming to an end and, as a being of metaphysical nature, requires no rest. Accordingly, the philosophers that have set up this metaphysical core as a soul have been compelled to maintain that the latter, as an original knowing being, is totally untiring in its perception and cognition, and continues this work in the deepest sleep, although on awaking no recollection of it remains.

Sleeping and waking, however, show in the plainest manner that cognition is a secondary function, and conditioned by the organism. All the organic functions, regulated by the ganglionic nervous system, which has only an indirect and remote connection with the brain, are continued in sleep, but the brain alone, and with

it cognition, pauses in deep sleep. For it is the minister for the exterior, as the ganglionic system is that for the interior. The brain is a vedette posted by the will, and, like every one on active service, in a state of tension and exertion, so that it gladly marches from its post when its work is done. This relief is sleep, which is, therefore, agreeable; to be disturbed from it is unpleasant, because that is a recall to duty. A soul, if it were originally a knowing being, would on the contrary, on awaking, feel like a fish returned to the water. The phenomena of sleep prove, consequently, that consciousness, perception, cognition and thinking are nothing original in us, but rather a secondary state.

In magnetic somnambulism there is a doubling of consciousness, and the waking consciousness knows nothing of what happens in the state of somnambulism, but the will in both retains its identical character, expressing in both the same likes and dislikes. The function allows itself to be doubled, but not the essence-in-itself.

12 The expressions "heart" and "head" are found in every language, and their use has sprung from a correct appreciation of their

fundamental difference. The heart, the *primum mobile* of animal life, is justifiably chosen as the symbol or synonym of the will, to represent the original essence of our phenomenon in contradistinction to the intellect, which is identical with the head. Everything that is a matter of the will in the widest sense, such as wish, passion, joy, pain, kindness, malice, and what is generally understood by "temperament," is attributed to the heart. Hence the use of the expressions: "He has a bad heart": "It breaks his heart": "His heart bleeds": "His heart beats with joy": "Who can see into a man's heart?" "It is heart-breaking": "He is good-hearted": "Heartless": &c. Love affairs are specially designated as "*affaires de coeur*," because sexual love is the focus of the will, and the selection in regard to it constitutes the chief concern of natural human willing.

The head, on the contrary, designates all that is matter of knowledge. Hence: "A prudent head": "A fine head": "A bad head": "To lose one's head": &c. Heart and head comprise the whole man, but the head is always the second, the derived; for it is not the centre, but the highest

efflorescence of the body. When a hero dies his heart is embalmed, not his head. On the contrary, it is the head of the poet, the artist, and the philosopher that is preserved.

If man were originally a knowing or thinking, and only in consequence of that, a willing being, he would have become what he is as a result of his knowledge, and must have come into the world morally at zero. He would then, from the knowledge which he acquired in this, decide to be so and so, and also, after the acquisition of fresh knowledge, would alter his conduct, that is to say, become a different person. He would further recognise that a thing is good, and then will it, instead of calling it good because he wills it. According to this doctrine he is his own work in the light of knowledge, whereas the reverse is the truth.

CHAPTER II

WHAT THE CATEGORICAL AFFIRMATIVE HAS TO
OVERCOME

KANT assumes that we have an *à priori* knowledge of the categorical affirmative, and that the commonest human understanding, without any aid from science or philosophy, only requires to have attention drawn to its own principle, in order to know what is honest and good, wise and virtuous. Let us now suppose the case of a hungry burglar condemned by the inequality in the distribution of property to a life of want and hardship, while others live before his eyes in affluence and leisure. Such a man will rarely admit that the inequality corresponds with his deserts, and may, if the opportunity presents itself, be tempted to stretch out his hand towards the superfluous wealth of his neighbour. If, however, attention is called to his own categorical affirmative, which says to him: "Thou canst, for thou shalt," he will thus

soliloquize with himself:—"If my maxim were to become a general law, it is possible that I may at some future time be a wealthy man myself, and that somebody would then pay me back in the same coin. My feeling of exaltation and my respect for the law are so great, because I know that it is the result of my own autonomy, that I must now withhold my hand and enjoy my hunger rather than the proceeds of my contemplated crime."

The Rationalists, having never noticed that Kant's appeal was really to egoism, still cling to autonomy, and the feeling of dignity supposed to arise from it, as the potent factor in determining human conduct. It might be thought that the Christian doctrine of man's divine origin, and the necessity of obeying a law imposed by a benevolent and all-powerful Being, when implicitly believed in, would produce a greater feeling of dignity and a more ready compliance than could be expected from the knowledge that man is a law unto himself. Moreover, the supreme necessity of loving one's neighbour as one's self, which flows from the idea of a common origin, would be an additional incentive. It will, therefore, throw some light on the difficulty of regulating

human conduct if we consider what has been the influence of this exalted doctrine on the most advanced and civilised races of the world. The religion of the ancient Greeks had scarcely any moral tendency; no dogma was taught, and no morality openly preached, and yet it cannot be said that they were morally worse than men of the Christian centuries. Notwithstanding the superiority of the Christian doctrine over all others that had appeared in Europe, the morality of Europeans did not increase in proportion, and it would be easy to show that as much honesty, fidelity, tolerance, benevolence, generosity, and self-denial, are to be found among Mohammedans, Hindus, and Buddhists as among Christian races, and that the record of the inhuman barbarities that have accompanied Christianity would rather turn the scale against the latter. Macaulay says that, "When the Mahrattas swept down on the fertile plains of Bengal, their rule was mild and merciful compared with that of the John Company."

Campbell gives, in poetical language, a harrowing picture of the sufferings brought on the natives by the oppressions of the same Company. The maltreatment of the American

natives by European settlers was so scandalous that, according to Pope, the Heaven of the Indians was a country where "no fiends torment, nor Christians thirst for gold." During the times of the slave trade, negroes in tens of thousands were torn from their homes and families, and those that survived the barbarous treatment to which they were subjected during the voyage were condemned to perpetual hard labour that Christians might grow rich. Most of the wars that devastated Europe for centuries could be traced directly or indirectly to religion, while the different sects persecuted one another with fire, sword, and robbery, until toleration was finally recognised as necessary, for the simple reason that neither side could gain a decided advantage over the other.

There has been nothing more disgraceful in the history of the world than the witch persecutions, which continued down to quite a recent date, nor is it likely that any cause was ever defended by such a lot of rascals as the Crusaders. Again, if we compare the different Christian sects, it might be expected that the Roman Catholic confession, the most powerful and solemn influence that

can be brought to bear on the human mind, would give an advantage to the Catholic. Nevertheless, if the comparison be made under exactly similar conditions, no impartial observer could maintain that religion makes any practical difference.

The egregious mistake should not be made of taking the records of the police courts as tests of morality. The crudeness and impulsiveness of slum dwellers, and of certain races, bring them within reach of the law for offences which are venial in comparison with those committed with impunity every day under the cloak of respectability. It may be confidently asserted that no other nation in Europe would have abolished slavery as the English did, and that the latter were more influenced by their innate love of liberty than by religious dogmas. Every extension of civil and religious liberty in Europe has been the result of agitation or revolution, and nothing has been voluntarily conceded. If we contrast the excellent morality preached by Christianity, and, more or less by every religion, with the practice of their followers, and then imagine how it would be if the laws of the state were removed for

one day, it must be admitted that the influence of all religions on conduct is trifling.

Since the categorical affirmative is an unconscious appeal to egoism, it is necessary to have a clear idea of what this means, in order to duly appreciate what has to be overcome by any moral law.

Egoism is intimately connected with the innermost core and essence of man, and is, in fact, identical with it. Therefore, all his actions spring, as a rule, from egoism; from this must be sought, in the first instance, the explanation of any particular action, and on it must be grounded the calculation of the means required to direct a man to a particular goal. Egoism is, in its nature, unlimited. Man will maintain his existence unconditioned, free from pain, want and privation; will have the greatest possible amount of comfort, every pleasure of which he is capable, and seek to develop new faculties of enjoyment. Everything that opposes the pursuit of his egoism excites his displeasure, anger, hatred, and he will try to annihilate it as his enemy. "All for me, and nothing for the others" is his motto. If the choice were given him between his own destruction and that of the rest of the

world, it is easy to tell how the vast majority would decide. There is no greater contrast than that between the high and exclusive interest which everybody takes in himself, and the indifference with which, as a rule, others regard him. It has even its comical side to see the innumerable individuals, each of whom considers himself in practice as alone real, and the others as, to a certain extent, mere phantoms. This depends on the fact that he is given to himself directly, but the others indirectly, through the idea evoked in his head by them, and the directness maintains its right.

In consequence of the subjectivity which is essential to consciousness, everybody is the entire world to himself; for everything objective exists only indirectly, as a mere idea of the subject, so that all cleaves to the self-consciousness. The only world that each man knows is carried in his head as his representation, and he is, consequently, the centre of it. Therefore, everybody is all in all to himself; he finds himself the possessor of all reality, and nothing can be more important to him than himself. While his own self appears of this colossal magnitude in his subjective opinion, it shrinks in the objective almost to nothing.

At the same time he knows for certain that this supremely important self, this microcosm, of which the macrocosm appears as a modification or accident, that is, his entire world, must perish in death, which is, accordingly, for him the same thing as the end of the world. These are the elements from which, on the basis of the will to live, egoism grows, and it always forms a deep ditch between man and man, so that it excites astonishment and evokes applause when one springs over it to help another. Politeness is the conventional and systematic denial of egoism in the trifles of daily intercourse, and is admittedly hypocrisy. Nevertheless, it is demanded and praised, because that which it conceals is so unpleasant that nobody wishes to see it, just as unsightly objects are covered at least by a curtain. Since egoism pursues its objects without reservation, the *bellum omnium contra omnes* would be the natural order if it were not opposed by external force, including fear of temporal or supra-mundane powers, or by the genuine moral spring.

Therefore, human reason has invented the organisation of the state, which, arising from common fear of mutual violence, prevents the

injurious consequences of egoism, so far as this can be done in the negative way. Hence, the boundless egoism of all, the wickedness of many, and the cruelty of some cannot come to light. The deception caused by this fact is so great that, if the state is unable to protect, or if it is eluded, we utter a cry of horror when we witness the consequent display of insatiable greed, mean avarice, deeply concealed falsehood, and malicious wickedness, as if we encountered a previously unseen monster. But such occurrences would be the natural order of things if it were not for the compulsion of the laws and the necessity of civil honour.

To realise what man really is, one must read the records of crimes and the descriptions of states of anarchy. The thousands that throng the streets before our eyes in friendly intercourse are to be regarded as so many tigers and wolves whose mouths are firmly muzzled; therefore, when that muzzle is believed to be removed, every judicious person shudders at the spectacle that is to be expected, showing how little influence is attributed to religion, to the conscience, or to the natural foundation of morality, whatever that may be. In truth, the honesty which is generally practised and

maintained as an unshaken maxim rests on a double foundation, *viz.*, on the civil law, which protects the rights of the individual, and on the recognised necessity of a good name to success in the world. Every step in life takes place under the supervision of public opinion, which is inexorably strict, and never pardons any lapse in this respect, but attaches it to the culprit as an indelible stain till his death.

Without these two safeguards we should be in a sad plight, especially in regard to property, which is the chief concern in human life. For the purely ethical motives, assuming that they exist, can only refer directly to natural right, and to the positive only in so far as the former underlies it. But the natural right appertains to no other property than that acquired by the exertions of the owner, and it requires considerable education to recognise the ethical claim and respect it from pure moral impulse. Therefore, many regard the property of others as a possession by positive right alone, and do not hesitate to snatch it from them, should they find an opportunity of circumventing the law; for they consider that the owners have lost it by the same means that they employed to acquire it, and that their own claims are, for

this reason, as well founded as those of the latter. The rich man is, however, often of inviolable honesty, because he supports with his whole heart a maxim on the observance of which depends his entire property, together with the advantages which it gives him over others. There is, in reality, such an objective attachment to good faith, with the resolve to hold it sacred, which depends solely on the fact that it is the foundation of all free intercourse among men, of good order, and sure possession, and that it may, in consequence, often turn out to our advantage.

Whoever has lived and kept his eyes open must admit that for public honesty we are, in the main, indebted to the two above mentioned guardians, that many try to evade their watchfulness, and that some regard justice and honesty as only a signboard, under the protection of which their depredations may be more successfully carried out. But egoism, although the most important, is not the only force with which the moral spring has to contend. The cardinal virtue of the love of humanity is more frequently opposed by malevolence and hatred. Malevolence is frequent in the lower grades, and easily

reaches the higher. It is very fortunate that prudence and politeness throw their mantle over it, and do not allow us to see how universal it is. But occasionally it reveals itself in inconsiderate and malicious slander, and is very evident in outbreaks of anger, which are generally far in excess of their occasion, because, as hatred long brooded over, they have been compressed like powder in a musket. Although malevolence arises chiefly from the inevitable collisions of egoism, it is also excited by the contemplation of the vices, faults, and imperfections presented more or less by everybody, or by the happiness and advantages enjoyed by others. Envy and malignity, the latter of which is to some extent the opposite of the former, are in themselves theoretical, but become practical as malice and cruelty, when the sufferings of others are not merely a means to an end but a source of enjoyment.

This short survey of the forces that are opposed to morality in human nature shows how difficult is the problem of discovering a motive powerful enough to move man to a course of conduct which would be in antagonism with such deeply-rooted tendencies. So

difficult is it, that, for mankind in general, recourse to the machinery of another world has been necessary. Gods were pointed out whose will and command required conduct of a certain kind, and who imparted emphasis to this command by punishments and rewards, either in this world, or in another to which man would be transferred after death. Assuming that experience proved that such teachings had the desired effect, legality of actions beyond the limits to which justice and police could reach would be brought to pass, but that would not be what is understood by morality of sentiment; for conduct based on such motives would obviously have its roots in egoism. Here it must be remarked that we are often in error regarding our own motives, and that many a man, while accounting for his best conduct by motives of this sort, has acted from a purer, nobler, and less manifest impulse, and has been prompted by pure love of his neighbour to do what he attributes to a command of God.

Having thus duly reconnoitred the enemy to be dealt with, it is obvious that something more real and substantial than an *à priori* soap bubble, like the categorical affirmative, is required.

And now, for the other side of the picture. Let us see what is the result of sympathy—an undoubted empirical fact in human nature.

“Who would dare for a moment to deny that at all times, in every race, and in every situation in life, even in the lawless state and in the midst of the horrors of revolutions and wars, on the large scale and on the small, every day and every hour, it exercises a decided and truly wonderful influence, prevents a great deal of injustice every day, calls into being, often quite unexpectedly, many a good deed without any hope of reward, and that where it, and it alone, has been operative, we all, with emotion and respect, attribute true moral worth to the deed.”

CHAPTER III

FALSE IDEAS OF LAW AND DUTY

KANT commits, to begin with, a flagrant *petitio principii* by saying that Ethics has to do with the explanation of what "shall" happen, although it may never take place, and then assumes, without any investigation whatever, that there are pure moral laws to which we must submit. Who says that there are laws to which our conduct must be subjected? The problem for the ethical philosopher is to explain, independently of theology, the significance of what really happens, and that is more than has been accomplished up to the present day. There is no justification whatever for making an unsupported assumption and then maintaining that this is the only possible one.

The proper and original signification of law is limited to the civil law, an institution of human origin and depending on human will.

The application of the idea to nature is derived and metaphorical, the laws of nature

being the expression of the constant and uniform behaviour of the latter. For man, in so far as he belongs to nature, there is a demonstrable inviolable law, which, without any exception, brings real necessity with it, and that is the law of motivation, the form of the law of causality which is carried out through the intermediation of knowledge. It says that every action can only take place in consequence of a sufficient motive, and is a law of nature, whereas moral laws should not be assumed without proof, independently of human ordinance, the institution of the state, or the teaching of religion. The assumption of a moral law is made still more audacious by attributing "absolute necessity" to it, since he himself admits that experience can furnish no certain example of compliance with it. Absolute necessity means nothing but inevitable compliance. The existence of original laws independent of human ordinance should not be accepted in scientific Ethics without proof; until such proof is furnished, the Mosaic Decalogue must be recognised as the only source of the ideas "law," "precept," shall."

Kant betrays this origin in the first example which he gives of a moral law, *viz.*, "Thou

shalt not lie." The idea of duty also, taken in the unconditioned sense which he attaches to it, has its origin in Theology, and is out of place in philosophical Ethics until it receives valid confirmation from human nature or the objective world. Although the metaphysical significance of human conduct is undeniable, and recognised by all races and religions, and by all philosophers except the materialistic, it is not essential to it to be conceived in the form of command and obedience, of law and duty. These ideas, apart from the theological preconceptions from which they have emanated, have no meaning, and it is only a self-contradiction to talk of an "absolute shall" or an "unconditioned duty." Every "shall" has sense and meaning only in connection with threatened punishment or promised reward. Therefore, Locke says :—" For since it would be utterly in vain to suppose a rule set to the free actions of man without annexing to it some enforcement of good and evil to determine his will, we must, wherever we suppose a law, suppose also some reward or punishment annexed to that law."

Every shall is, accordingly, conditioned by punishment and reward, or, to use Kant's

language, is essentially and unavoidably hypothetical, and never, as he maintains, categorical. Whether a commanding voice comes from within or from without, it is absolutely impossible to think of it otherwise than as threatening or promising. Obedience to it would then be, according to circumstances, prudent or stupid, but always selfish and without moral value. The complete inconceivability and absurdity of this idea of an "unconditioned shall," which underlies Kant's Ethics, appears later in his system, when he postulates a reward and also a rewarder. This reward, which is postulated for virtue, is respectably disguised under the name of the "highest good," the union of virtue and happiness—nothing but eudemonism. The conditioned shall, on the other hand, can be no fundamental idea of Ethics, since everything that is done with reference to reward or punishment is necessarily egoistical, and, as such, without moral value.

As every shall is bound to a condition, so also is every duty, for the two ideas are closely related and almost identical. The only difference is that shall may depend on mere compulsion, whereas duty presupposes the

— acceptance of the duty. Since nobody undertakes a duty gratuitously, every duty gives a right. A slave has no duty, because he has no right; but there is a shall for him, which rests on compulsion.

The conception of Ethics in an imperative form as the doctrine of duties, and the thinking of the moral value or worthlessness of actions as the fulfilling or violation of duties, are undeniably derived from theological Ethics, and directly from the Decalogue. It rests, accordingly, on the assumption of man's dependence on another will, and cannot be separated from that. The setting up in the imperative form of commands, laws, and duties is neither self-evident nor essential in philosophical Ethics, and it is a poor subterfuge to replace the outer condition attaching to these ideas by such a word as "absolute" or "categorical," whereby a self-contradiction arises.

Having borrowed this imperative form from the Ethics of Theology, on the assumptions of which it rested, it was an easy matter for Kant to develop a moral Theology from his Ethics by extracting the ideas which he had surreptitiously appropriated as the basis of the latter, and then setting them up as postulates of practical reason,

Thus appeared, to the great edification of the world, a Theology which had emanated from Ethics. But this resulted from the fact that the latter rests on theological presuppositions. His procedure consisted in making what should have been the principle or the assumption (Theology) the result, and taking for granted what should have been deduced as result (the commandment). After he had reversed the thing in this way, nobody, not even himself, recognised it for what it was, the old, familiar theological Ethics.

The inclusion of duties to ourselves under the imperative form must be totally rejected. These are, like all others, either duties of justice or of love. The former are impossible, because we always do what we will, and, consequently, cannot suffer injustice from ourselves. The latter do not require the assistance of Ethics. The impossibility of violating the duty of self-love is assumed in the command to "love thy neighbour as thyself," according to which the love of one's self is taken as the maximum and the condition of every other love. Even Kant himself says: "What everybody unavoidably wills does not belong to the idea of duty." Nevertheless, this idea of duties to ourselves

has since then remained in general favour, which is not to be wondered at! It has an amusing effect when people are anxious for their safety, and then seriously talk of the duty of self-preservation, while one plainly sees that fear does not require any support from a command of duty. What is usually meant by duties to ourselves is some argument against suicide, based on the shallowest grounds. Those which Kant is not ashamed to give are such absurdities that they do not even deserve an answer. It is laughable to think that such reflections could have taken the dagger out of the hands of Cato, Cleopatra, etc.

The essence of the world is will, which manifests itself in the individual by the ceaseless striving to get and enjoy everything possible, and human life is inseparably associated with disappointment and suffering. The only way of salvation is by negation of the will, or by self-denial and renunciation. Suicide, so far from being a negation of the will to live, is a strong affirmation of it. Negation has its essence in detesting the pleasures of life, not the sufferings, whereas the suicide longs for life, and is only dissatisfied with the conditions. He labours under the delusion that the

phenomenon, the individual objectivation of the will, is the real essence itself, and deeply moved by the miseries of life, thinks that he can destroy the latter with the former. While the will to live remains nothing can destroy it as a metaphysical thing-in-itself. This can only be effected by knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary that the will should appear unhindered, in order to learn its own nature in the individual manifestation. Only in consequence of this knowledge can it remove itself, and, at the same time, the suffering which inevitably accompanies it.

Nature leads the will to the light, because it can only find its salvation in the light. The knowledge thus acquired leads to the conviction that renunciation must be either voluntary and self-imposed, or induced by bitter experience of the vanity and worthlessness of life.

CHAPTER IV

KANT'S MORAL FOUNDATION

SINCE Kant's moral principle was, in accordance with his preconceived idea, assumed to be of *à priori* origin, it was necessary to assume also that it was the product of pure reason, and, as such, valid for "all rational beings" as well as for man. The strange idea that it was only valid for the latter because it was so for the former had evidently the object of excluding every possible subjective or empirical source.

There is no justification for thus setting up a genus which is only given to us in a single species, for the idea of the former can contain nothing but what was extracted from the latter, and it would be impossible to say anything of it that did not apply to the species. Moreover, in the process of constructing the genus from the species, the condition on which the possibility of the former depends may have been the one thought away from the species. As we only know intelligence in general as a quality of

animal beings, and are therefore not entitled to think of it as existing independently of animal nature, so also is reason only known to us as a characteristic of the human race, and we are not justified in thinking of it apart from the latter by setting up a genus, "rational beings," supposed to be distinct from its only species; much less have we any right to lay down laws for such imaginary beings in the abstract. To talk of a rational being outside man is just the same as the idea of a "heavy being" apart from the body.

Kant's next step, with a view to the substantiation of the imperative form which he had borrowed from Theology, was to require that the mere idea of duty should be the ground of its fulfilment. The moral worth of an action depended on its being done from a sense of duty alone, and not from inclination or sympathy. This apotheosis of uncharitableness outrages the genuine moral sentiment of Christianity, which sets love above all things, and insists that without it all else is valueless. If a man "by nature cold and indifferent to the sufferings of others" practises charity from "a sense of duty alone," his hand must have been opened by a slavish fear of God or some other private

motive. What else but fear could move a hard heart?

Again, the moral worth of an action is supposed to lie, not in the intention, but in the maxim which is followed. On the contrary, the intention of an action is what decides its moral value, and the same deed may, according to the intention, be objectionable or praiseworthy. Therefore, whenever an action of moral importance is discussed, everybody seeks to ascertain the intention, and judges the deed accordingly. So also everyone justifies himself by the intention when he sees his action misrepresented, or that it has had an injurious consequence.

Kant's definition of duty, the fundamental idea of his Ethics, is: "The necessity of an action out of respect for the law."

The expression "necessity of an action" is nothing but an artificially concealed paraphrase of the word "shall," since what is necessary must inevitably happen, whereas he himself admits that experience can furnish no certain example of an action resulting from the idea of duty alone. His intention is manifest when it is noted that the word "respect" is used in the same definition where "obedience" is meant.

He says: "Respect signifies simply the subjection of my will to a law. The immediate determination by the law, and the consciousness of it, is respect." What respect, taken in this sense, really means is obedience, and he has obviously adopted the word for the purpose of disguising the derivation of the imperative form and idea of duty from theological Ethics. "Necessity of an action" takes the place of "shall," because the latter is the language of the Decalogue. The definition, deprived of its mask, would be: "Duty is an action which shall take place from obedience to a law."

As regards the moral law itself, there are two questions to be considered. One concerns the principle, the other the foundation of Ethics, two totally distinct things, although they are usually confounded, and often intentionally so. The principle, or supreme maxim, is the shortest and concisest expression for the conduct which it prescribes, or to which it ascribes moral worth; the foundation is the ground of that obligation or commendation, whether it be in the nature of man, in the outer relations of the world, or elsewhere. Most ethical philosophers obliterate the distinction by forcing the well-known principle into an artificial

formula, out of which it is deduced as the conclusion from certain premises, whereby the reader receives the impression that he has learned not only the thing itself but also the ground of it. The simplest and purest expression for this principle, on the content of which there is common agreement, is :

“Neminem laede ; imo omnes, quantum potes, juva,”

which contains the two cardinal virtues, *viz.*, to injure nobody, and promote the happiness of all. To establish the foundation of this maxim is the problem of Ethics, the solution of which has, like the philosopher's stone, been sought for thousands of years. Every other moral principle is a paraphrase, an indirect or disguised way of putting the above simple sentence. This applies, for example, to the maxim : “Do not do to others what you would not wish others to do to you,” the defect of which is that it only expresses the duties of justice, which may, however, be remedied by a suitable alteration of the words. It will be observed that it pretends to give the foundation as well as the principle ; but it by no means follows that, because I do not wish something to be done to me, I should not do it to others. The

same is true of every principle that has been hitherto set up.

It is necessary to make a very careful examination of Kant's moral law and its foundation, since nearly all his followers have laboured under the delusion that he had established the categorical affirmative as a fact of consciousness. But that would be an empirical foundation, *viz.*, experience through the inner sense, which is diametrically opposed to Kant's opinion. He says: "The possibility of the categorical affirmative must be investigated exclusively *à priori*, since we have not here the advantage that its reality can be given in experience." Even his first disciple, Reinhold, has fallen into the same error, for he says: "Kant assumes the moral law as an immediate, certain faktum, as an original fact of moral consciousness."

Had Kant wished to establish the categorical affirmative as a fact of consciousness, he would not have failed to do so, but nowhere is such an attempt to be found. Schopenhauer again quotes, from a periodical edited by Reinhold, the following:—

"We distinguish the moral self-consciousness from the experience with which it is associated

in the human consciousness as an original fact which no knowledge can transcend, and we understand by that self-consciousness the immediate consciousness of duty, that is, the necessity of taking the legality of the will, independently of pleasure and displeasure, as the motive and standard of the actions of the will."

Into what a shameless *petitio principii* has Kant's moral law here grown! If that were true, the foundation of Ethics would be of incomparable solidity, and the greatest wonder would be that such a fact of consciousness had been discovered so late, whereas a foundation for morals has been zealously and laboriously sought for thousands of years. Kant's foundation of the moral law is by no means an empirical proof of it as a fact of consciousness, nor an appeal to the moral feeling, nor a *petitio principii* under the respectable modern name of an "absolute postulate." Everything of empirical origin having been rigidly excluded, there remained nothing for the substance of the law but its "form," and this form is merely the legality. The legality consists in its universal validity, which is, therefore, the only content of the law. The universal validity is expressed in the formula:—

“Act only in accordance with the maxim which thou canst at the same time will to be a general law for all rational beings.”

This is the universally misunderstood foundation of Kant's entire Ethics, and the reason, in so far as it carries out the particular process of thinking contained in it, receives the name “practical,” while the categorical affirmative is the result ensuing from it. The practical reason is, therefore, not what the majority, Fichte included, have taken it for, *viz.*, a sort of original moral instinct similar to the moral sense of Hutcheson, but, as Kant repeatedly asserts, one and the same thing as the theoretical reason when specially directed to the will.

The first objection to this foundation of Ethics is, that it presupposes that it spontaneously occurs to man to seek for a law to which his will must subject and adapt itself. That is utterly impossible until some real moral motive has at first acted upon him and given occasion to the idea, which would be directly opposed to Kant's contention that the process of thought above referred to is the starting point of all moral ideas. Artificial combinations of ideas, such as Kant's moral

law, can never contain the true impulse to justice and love. This must be something which requires little reflection, abstraction, or combination, and which can appeal to the most uncultured man, because it is impressed upon him by the reality of things. As only the empirical, or what is assumed to be empirical, has reality for man, the moral motive must be empirical and present itself uncalled for, and with such force, that it may possibly overcome the opposing gigantic motives of egoism.

So long as this is not the case, the conduct of man will be determined by the latter alone, in accordance with the law of motivation. For Ethics has to do with the real actions of man, and not with an *à priori* house of cards to which no man would turn in the stress of life, and which, when opposed to the storm of the passions, would have as little influence as a hypodermic syringe in a conflagration. The second defect of the Kantian foundation is, accordingly, want of real content, in the absence of which it can have no efficacy. This has never been remarked, and least of all by those that have celebrated and disseminated it. Kant himself seems to have

been conscious of the insufficiency when he says that the moral law is "as it were, a fact of pure reason." But what is a fact is universally opposed to what is recognisable by pure reason, and could be nothing else but empirical. Encouraged by this and other similar expressions, Kant's followers continued further on the same road. Fichte warns against: "Allowing ourselves to be misled by the wish to explain and infer the consciousness that we have duties from grounds outside this consciousness itself, since that would derogate from the dignity and absoluteness of the law." Fine excuses!

And again: "The principle of morality is a thought which is founded on the intellectual perception of the absolute activity of the intelligence, and is the immediate idea of pure intelligence of itself."

"What flourishes a windbag can make use of to conceal his helplessness!" remarks Schopenhauer.

In order to show how completely Kant's followers gradually forgot and ignored his original foundation and derivation of the moral law, Schopenhauer quotes the following from Reinhold's "Contributions to the Survey of

Philosophy in the beginning of the 19th Century":—

"In the Kantian philosophy autonomy (which is identical with the categorical affirmative) is a fact of consciousness, and not to be traced to anything further, since it announces itself through direct consciousness." That would be an anthropological, or empirical basis, which is antagonistic to Kant's emphatic and repeated declarations.

Again, from the same:—

"Both in the practical philosophy of criticism, and in the total purified or higher transcendental philosophy, autonomy is that which founds and is founded by itself, and which is neither capable nor in want of any further foundation, the absolute original, of itself true and certain, the first true, the absolute principle. If anybody supposes, demands, or seeks a ground for this autonomy outside itself, the Kantian school must believe that he is either wanting in moral consciousness, or that he ignores it in speculation through false fundamental ideas. The Fichte-Schelling School declares that he is afflicted with the want of intelligence which makes one unfit for philosophising, and which constitutes the character

of the unholy mob and indolent cattle, or, as Schelling more considerably expresses it, of the profanum vulgus and ignavum pecus."

Everybody feels how it must be with the truth of a doctrine which has to be forcibly extracted by such means.

The respect which this inspired explains the truly childish credulity with which the followers of Kant accepted the categorical affirmative, and then treated it as an established fact. Since the denial of a theoretical assertion might be easily confounded with moral depravity, nobody, even if he felt little indication of a categorical imperative in his consciousness, would admit it, lest it might appear more developed and manifest in others; for nobody willingly turns the inside of his conscience outwards.

CHAPTER V

THE SUPREME PRINCIPLE, OR MAXIM, OF KANT'S
ETHICS

KANT'S foundation of Ethics consisted in the universality of the moral law, and this led to the rule :

“Act only in accordance with the maxim which thou canst will to become a general law for all rational beings.”

It will be noted this is not itself a supreme maxim, but a direction as to how it must be sought ; for my choice will necessarily depend on what I “can will.” Putting aside the obvious absurdity of the idea that, before adopting a law for the guidance of my own will, I should first find one for “all rational beings,” it is clear that the only umpire that can decide what I “can will” is my own egoism, the immediate, ever ready, original and living rule of all acts of the will, which has the right of possession before every moral principle. Kant's rule depends on the tacit

assumption that I can only choose what suits me best. But, since I must regard myself not only as the active, but also as the passive party, when seeking to establish a maxim for universal observance, my egoism will decide for justice and love, not because it wishes to practice them, but in the hope of experiencing them.

Kant himself cannot help adding this indispensable key to the direction which constitutes his supreme principle, taking care, however, to give it low down in the text, where it may escape observation. He says :—

“I cannot will a universal law to lie, because then nobody would believe me, or I might be paid back in the same coin.”

“The generality of a law that everybody might make a promise with the intention of not keeping it, would make the promise and the object in view at the same time impossible ; for then nobody would believe,” &c.

In regard to the maxim of uncharitableness, he says :—

“A will that decided for this would contradict itself, because cases might occur where it would require the love and sympathy of others, and where, through a law which it has

originated, it would rob itself of all hope of the desired succour." Further, "If everybody saw with indifference the distress of others, and you belonged to such an order of things, would you be in it with the approval of your will?"

These passages prove sufficiently in what sense the "can will" in Kant's moral principle is to be understood. It is, however, most clearly expressed in "Die metaphysischen Anfangsgründe der Tugendlehre," where he says: "For everybody wishes that he should be helped. But, if anybody disclosed his maxim of not willing to help others, everybody would be justified in refusing him assistance. Thus the selfish maxim is self-contradictory." It could not possibly be more manifest that the moral obligation rests totally on assumed reciprocity, and that egoism agrees to a compromise on this condition alone.

In the passage: "The principle, to act always according to the maxim, the universality of which one can will to be a law, is the only condition under which a will can never be in antagonism with itself—"the true meaning of the word "antagonism" is, that if a will had sanctioned the maxim of injustice and uncharitableness, it would eventually revoke it

when it became the passive party, and so contradict itself.

From the above explanation it is perfectly clear that Kant's fundamental rule is not a categorical, but a hypothetical affirmative, since the condition tacitly underlies it that the law which is to be set up for my conduct must, in being generalised, also become a law for my suffering, and I cannot, as the eventually passive party, will injustice and uncharitableness. If I remove this condition, and, relying upon my superior bodily and mental resources, think of myself as being always the active party, I can, assuming that there is no other foundation of morals but the Kantian, very easily will injustice and uncharitableness as a universal maxim, and rule the world

“ Upon the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.”

The supreme principle is, moreover, only a disguised form of the common rule, “ Do not do to others what you would not wish others to do to you,” if this be repeated with the “ not ” left out, so as to include the duties of love. But, on what is this grounded, and what

gives it force? Where is the champion to be found that can be successfully pitted against egoism and wickedness? That is, and still remains the problem of Ethics.

Kant tries to confirm his moral principle by undertaking to deduce from it the division of duties into perfect and imperfect, a division which has long been recognised as having its foundation in the nature of morality; but the attempt testifies strongly against it. The duties of justice are supposed to rest on a maxim, the opposite of which, taken as a universal law, cannot even be thought of without contradiction. According to that, the maxim of injustice, the prevalence of might over right, cannot even be thought of as a possible law of nature, whereas it is, in truth, the real and actual prevailing law of nature, not only in the animal but also in the human world. Civilised races have endeavoured to prevent its injurious consequences by the machinery of state, but as soon as this is in any way removed or eluded the law of nature appears again. It always prevails between nation and nation, and the usual jargon regarding justice is notoriously only a subterfuge of diplomacy. Brute force decides. We

see at the present time all civilised countries professing their love of peace, while insisting on the necessity of a strong army and navy in order to preserve it. Genuine justice is, on the other hand, to be found, but always as an exception to the above law.

As an example of a duty of justice to ourselves, Kant adduces the obligation not to voluntarily end one's life when the evils outweigh the pleasures, and assumes that the maxim that suicide is under such circumstances desirable cannot even be thought of as a possible law of nature. But, as a matter of fact, since the power of the state cannot here interfere, this maxim reveals itself unhindered as a really existing law of nature. Daily experience proves that man has recourse to suicide as soon as the gigantic strength of the instinct of self-preservation is positively overcome by the magnitude of the sufferings. That there is any thought that could dissuade him from it, after the powerful fear of death, which is intimately associated with the nature of every living thing, has proved helpless, is a hazardous assumption, more especially as this thought is so difficult to discover that moralists have never succeeded in determining it.

Arguments of the sort set up by Kant have certainly never restrained anybody that was tired of his life. Thus a law of nature which is in daily activity and indisputably exists cannot, in the interest of the division of duties from Kant's moral principle, be thought of as possible without contradiction!

CHAPTER VI

DERIVED FORMS OF THE SUPREME PRINCIPLE

KANT has set up his moral principle in another form, in which it is directly expressed, and not a mere direction as to how it is to be looked for. To this he paves the way by strange and distorted definitions of the ideas "object" (end) and "means." "Object" is, strictly speaking, the direct motive of an act of the will, and the "means" the indirect motive. Therefore, to say that "man," and every rational being in general, exists as an object-in-itself," is an absurdity; for an object-in-itself is unthinkable, a self-contradiction. To be an object means to be willed, and every object is so only in reference to a will of which it is the object or direct motive. Detached from this relation it has no sense. "Object-in-itself" is just the same as "friend-in-himself," "uncle-in-himself," "north-in-itself," &c. The truth is, it is the same with the object-in-itself" as with the "absolute shall." The same thought, *viz.*,

the theological, secretly underlies both as condition.

The "absolute value," which is also attributed to this unthinkable object-in-itself, is another self-contradiction. Every value is a comparative magnitude, and stands necessarily in a double relation. It is, in the first place, relative, because it is for somebody; and in the second, comparative, because it is in comparison with something else, according to which it is estimated. Separated from these two relations, the idea "value" loses all sense and meaning. As these two definitions are an insult to logic, so is genuine morality insulted by the principle that beings devoid of reason (animals) are things, and may, consequently, be treated as "means," which are not at the same time "object." In agreement with this, it is expressly stated in "Die metaphysischen Anfangsgrunde der Tugendlehre" that "Man can have no duty toward any other being but man," and again: "The cruel treatment of animals is opposed to the duty of man to himself, because it deadens the sympathy for suffering in man, whereby a natural disposition which is of great service to morality in the relation to other men is weakened." Thus one

should have compassion for animals only for the sake of exercise!

"I consider," says Schopenhauer, "in common with the whole of Asia that has not been Islamized, such principles as detestable and revolting." At the same time he shows once more how completely his philosophical Ethics is dependent on the Bible. Because Christian Ethics does not take animals into account, these are directly outlawed in philosophical Ethics, are mere "things," means to any end. "Shame on such a Paria, Tschandalas, and Mlekhas morality, which ignores the eternal essence that exists in every living thing, and shines forth with inscrutable significance from all eyes that see the sun's light!"

Thus, *per fas et nefas*, Kant gets to his principle: "Act so that you always use humanity, not only in your own person, but in that of everybody else, at the same time as object, never merely as means." This simply says, in a very artificial way, and by a wide detour: "Consider not only yourself, but others also," and this again is only a paraphrase of: "Do not do to others what you do not wish done to yourself," which itself only contains

the premises to the conclusion which is the goal of all Ethics and moralising :—

“Neminem laede, imo omnes, quantum potes juva.”

Kant's formula drags into this the supposed duties to one's self, concerning which enough has been already said. Another objection to it is, that the criminal about to be executed is justly treated as means and not object, *viz.*, as indispensable means to give the law its force of deterring, which is its object.

Although Kant's second formula is useless either for the foundation of Ethics, or for the immediate and adequate expression of its principles, it has the merit of containing a highly interesting characterisation of egoism. This egoism reveals itself, in spite of various disguises, by the manner in which, by a sort of instinct, we try to make use of everybody that comes before us as a means to some one of our many objects. Our first thought on making a new acquaintance is, in most cases, whether the man can be of any use to us. If we find that he cannot be so, he counts for nothing in our estimation. To seek in everybody a possible means to our ends is almost evident in the character of the human glance, but whether the

tool has to suffer more or less by the use we make of it is a thought that comes later, and frequently not at all. That we presuppose this sentiment in others is shown in many ways, *e.g.*, when we ask anybody for information or advice. As soon as we discover that he has the smallest or remotest interest in the matter we lose all confidence in his statements, because we take for granted that he would use us as a means to his end, and that his advice would accord with his intention, not with his insight. So powerful is the influence of the will on knowledge that a man may unconsciously lie when imparting his advice, being unaware that it has been dictated by a regard for his own interest, and the testimony of his own consciousness as to whether he has spoken from insight or intention is mostly worthless. This is, however, not always the case, and many a man takes an immediate and real interest in the welfare of others. On what this difference of character in the last instance depends, that is the true foundation of Ethics.

The third and last form of Kant's moral principle is the autonomy of the will: "The will of every rational being is universally law-giving for all rational beings," the specific

characteristic of which is supposed to be that the will, in willing from duty, is freed from all interest. All previous moral systems had failed, because they presupposed, as compulsion or inducement, either self-interest, or a foreign interest in the actions. "A universally law-giving will, on the contrary, prescribes actions from duty which are founded on no interest," that is, nothing less than willing without a motive, or an effect without a cause; for interest and motive are interchangeable ideas. An interest is nothing else but the influence of a motive on the will. Thus where a motive moves the will, there it has an interest; but where no motive moves it, it can no more act than a stone can move from its place without a blow or a pull. It follows necessarily from this that every action must have a motive, and also an interest. But Kant sets up actions of a new kind which shall occur without any interest or motive. And these are the actions of justice and charity! For the refutation of this monstrous assumption it suffices to trace it to its proper meaning, which was concealed by a play upon the word "interest."

He celebrates the triumph of his autonomy of the will by the establishment of a moral

utopia under the name of a "kingdom of motives (objects)," which is inhabited by mere rational beings in the abstract, who constantly will collectively and individually without willing anything, that is, without interest. The only thing they will is, that they should all will according to one maxim, *viz.*, autonomy!

Autonomy further leads Kant to the idea of the "dignity of man," which depends solely on his autonomy, and consists in the fact that the law which he must follow has been given by himself. He defines "dignity" as "an unconditioned, incomparable value." But every value is the estimation of a thing in comparison with another, that is, an idea of comparison, consequently relative; and this relativity constitutes the essence of the idea of "value." Nevertheless, this imposing expression has become the shibboleth of perplexed and unthinking philosophers, to conceal their want of a real foundation of Ethics, wisely calculating that their readers would gladly see themselves clothed with such a "dignity" and be satisfied with it.

At the end of his exposition Kant says: "How pure reason can be practical without motives that can be derived from any source,

that is, how the mere principle of the universal validity of all its maxims as laws can, without any object of the will in which interest might be previously taken, of itself yield a motive and an interest which would be called purely moral? To explain that human reason is totally incapable, and the labour expended, would be all in vain."

Now one would think that when the existence of something is maintained, the possibility of which cannot even be understood, its reality ought to be proved as a fact; but the categorical affirmative is expressly set up as independent of consciousness or any other experience, as we are repeatedly warned. It is stated: "Whether such an imperative exists at all cannot be proved from any example, or from experience."

The conviction must, therefore, remain that what cannot be understood as possible, nor proved as real, has no confirmation of its existence.

If we make the attempt to present to our imagination a man whose mind is possessed by a demon-like "absolute shall," talking in categorical affirmatives and demanding to constantly control his actions, contrary to his inclinations and wishes, we get no proper

picture of the nature of man, or of what takes place in our interior, but we recognise an artificial substitute for theological Ethics, to which it stands in the relation of a wooden leg to a living one.

The result is that Kant's Ethics, like all previous attempts, is devoid of a certain foundation. It is, as has been shown in the examination of the categorical affirmative, in the main only a reversal of theological Ethics, and a disguise of this in very abstract formulae, which are ostensibly discovered *à priori*. This disguise was all the more artificial and unrecognisable from the fact that Kant certainly deceived himself and really believed that he had, independently of all Theology, established and founded on pure *à priori* cognition the ideas of a law and of a command of duty which have no sense apart from the latter. The masked theological Ethics reveals itself towards end in the doctrine of the "highest good," in the "postulates" of pure reason, and finally in the moral Theology. Yet all this undeceived neither him nor the public regarding the real connection of the matter, and both rejoiced to see all these articles of faith grounded on Ethics. For they loyally took the ground for the conse-

quence, and the consequence for the ground, not perceiving that the pretended consequences already lay concealed in the Ethics as unavoidably necessary presuppositions.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE WILL IS OVERCOME

SCHOPENHAUER'S thesis here is to prove that the object of life is the attainment of self-consciousness, in order that the will may acquire a right knowledge of its own nature, and that the knowledge so acquired must lead to negation, or complete removal, of the will itself.

The arguments may be briefly set forth as follows :—

I. WHAT THE WORLD IS.

We have seen that the will, the essence, or thing-in-itself, of man is a blind, unconscious impulse, that the same must be true in regard to every other object in nature, and that the body is simply the manifestation or objectivation of the will in space and time. The world of the senses is, accordingly, the mirror in which the will sees itself reflected ; life itself is nothing but the will, and the will to live is identical with will itself. The will in itself is free and

omnipotent, but its objectivation is bound by the laws of space, time, and causality, which act as a multiplying glass or principle of individuation, whereby that which underlies all things is manifested in different stages and in different individuals. Everything, as object, is necessary and unchangeable in the chain of causes and effects, and the idea which reveals itself in it, or its character, is a direct manifestation of the will. In conformity with the freedom of the will it was possible that it should not exist at all, or that it might have been something different; but once it is there it is necessarily determined and cannot be altered.

In man, however, the will attains to complete self-consciousness, to the clear and exhaustive knowledge of its own nature as it is reflected in the world. By referring this knowledge to itself the will can deny and remove itself in its highest manifestation, so that the freedom which only belongs to the essence appears in the latter as an antagonism. In this sense man can be said to be free, and is thus distinguished from all other beings. The will can be acted upon by motives, but cannot be altered by these, since their power depends on its being exactly at it is. All that they can do is to alter

the direction of its striving, that is, induce it to seek its object in another way. It must not be concluded from this that it is vain trouble to work for an improvement of character, or that it is more advisable to submit to the inevitable and yield at once to every inclination. The error here is just the same as in the case of unavoidable fate. Although everything is irrevocably determined by fate, it is so only by means of the chain of causes and effects. Therefore, it cannot be determined in any case that an effect can appear without a cause.

The event itself is only predetermined as the result of preceding causes, and if the latter do not occur the former will not do so, both according to the decree of fate, which we only learn subsequently. As events occur in accordance with fate, that is, the endless chain of causes, so will our deeds always correspond to our intelligible character; but, as we have no knowledge of the former, so we have no *a priori* insight into the latter, and only know ourselves *a posteriori* through experience, just as we do others. If the intelligible character involved our making a good resolution after a long struggle with an evil inclination, the struggle must precede and the result be

waited for. The reflection on the immutability of character, on the unity of the source from which all our actions flow, should not mislead us to anticipate in favour of the one side or the other. From the ensuing resolution we shall see what we are, and reflect ourselves in our deeds. This explains the satisfaction or the anxiety with which we look back on the course of our lives. The deeds are past and gone, but their great importance for us consists in their being the impress of our character, the mirror of the will, in which we recognise our innermost self. Since we do not know this beforehand, but afterwards, we strive and struggle in time, in order that the picture which we produce by our conduct may be such that its sight will solace, and not disturb us.

To show that the will in all its manifestations is subject to necessity, the distinction between "acquired character" and empirical must be here explained. The empirical character is, as a mere natural impulse, irrational, and is disturbed by the reason, the more so the stronger the faculty of thinking. Mere willing and capability are insufficient; a man must know what he wills and what he is capable of, and then only can he show character and produce anything

good. Before he attains to this he is, notwithstanding the natural consistency of empirical character, without character, and, although he must remain true to himself and traverse his course as drawn by his demon, he will not describe a straight but a wavering, irregular line, hesitate, deviate, turn back, and prepare regret and pain for himself, because he sees all that is possible for man to attain, and yet does not know what is suitable or practicable for him.

Until we learn what we will and what we can do, we must be thrown back on our course by hard knocks from outwards. When we have at length learned it, we have attained what the world calls acquired character. This is, accordingly, nothing but the best possible knowledge of our own individuality, the clear recognition of the unchangeable qualities of the empirical character, of its strength and its weakness. As soon as we have attained distinct knowledge of our good and strong points, as well as of our faults and weaknesses, and fixed our goal accordingly, satisfying ourselves as to the unattainable, we thereby escape in the surest way, so far as our individuality allows it, the bitterest of all sufferings, the dissatisfaction

with ourselves which is the inevitable result of ignorance of our own individuality, of false conceit, and the presumption that arises from it.

There is no greater consolation for us than the complete certainty of immutable necessity. An evil that has overtaken us does not torment us so much as the thought of the means by which it might have been avoided. Therefore, nothing soothes us more effectually than to consider what has happened from the standpoint of necessity, from which all accidents appear as the instruments of a ruling destiny, so that the evil that has occurred has been brought about by the conflict of outer and inner circumstances. When the complete and adequate knowledge of its own nature has dawned on it, the will may express itself anew by willing on the pinnacle of reflection and self-consciousness as it did when blind and ignorant of itself, that is, may assert itself; or this knowledge becomes a calmative which silences and removes all willing.

2. LIFE AND SUFFERING ARE INSEPARABLE.

The will in all stages of its appearance, from the lowest to the highest, has no final goal or motive, is always striving, since striving is its

only nature, and this cannot be terminated by any object attained. It is, therefore, incapable of any satisfaction. At the same time the various natural forces and organic forms struggle with one another for the matter in which they will to come forth, since each has only what it has torn from another ; and so a constant fight for life and death is kept up, from which proceeds the resistance required for the repression of that vain striving. Every restriction of the will by an obstacle intervening between it and its object is suffering, while the attainment of the object is satisfaction, comfort, happiness.

Now, striving, since it springs from want or discontent with ones' condition, is suffering, so long as it is not satisfied. But satisfaction, so far from being lasting, is only the starting point of fresh striving, which we see everywhere checked, everywhere struggling. Therefore, striving has no final goal, and there is no end of suffering. Suffering increases as the manifestation of the will becomes more perfect, and in proportion as knowledge attains to clearness, reaching its highest degree in man ; and here again it is more evident the higher the intelligence, so that the man of genius suffers the most. The knowledge here meant is taken in

a general sense, and does not refer to mere abstract knowing. Willing and striving, which constitute the essence of man, are like an unquenchable thirst, and he is originally and naturally exposed to pain, which is the basis of willing. If he has no object to will, because he easily acquires the means of satisfaction, he is seized with terrible void and ennui, and his very existence becomes an intolerable burden. The life of most men is a constant struggle for existence itself, with the certainty of losing it in the end. Although perpetually threatened by dangers of every kind, which can only be avoided by constant watchfulness, they pursue their course, encouraged to perseverance more by the fear of death than the love of life.

It is at the same time remarkable that the pains and miseries of life may grow to such an extent as to make death desirable, and that, as soon as want and suffering accord a respite, a pastime is required to dissipate the consequent ennui. When our existence is secured, what sets us in motion is the endeavour to escape from it, to make it imperceptible. To "kill time" is the object of those that have got rid of every other source of trouble. They have now become a burden to themselves, and,

while doing everything possible to prolong life, consider every hour deducted from it an advantage.

Ennui is by no means a trifling evil; it finally paints despair on the countenance, and compels human beings, who have little love for one another, to seek for companionship. Solitude and inactivity often drive convicts to suicide. The only result of the ceaseless endeavours to banish suffering is that it alters its form and appears in a thousand others, according to age and circumstances. The consideration, however, that pain as such is essential to life and unavoidable, and that our present suffering fills a place which, without it, would be taken by another, would produce a sort of stoic indifference and diminish the anxiety for our well-being. Instead of recognising that we bear the inexhaustible source of all our troubles in our own interior, we seek for an external cause of the suffering which we can never avoid. Since satisfaction can never be anything more than the removal of a want, enjoyment is dependent on this, and must cease with it. The life of everybody, when it is surveyed as a whole, and only the most significant features extracted, is in reality a tragedy;

but, when seen in detail, it has the character of a comedy. The wishes never fulfilled, the baffled striving, the hopes ruthlessly crushed by fate, the disastrous errors of the entire life, with increasing suffering and death at the close, always furnish a tragedy.

As investigation of the first elementary characteristics of human life leads *à priori* to the conviction that it is, from its nature, incapable of any true happiness, that it is a diversiform suffering and an altogether unfortunate state, so could this impression be enhanced, if it were desired, by citing examples, to describe the unspeakable misery which history and experience furnish. The life history of every individual is a history of suffering; for every career is, as a rule, a continued series of greater or lesser accidents, which are concealed as much as possible, because it is known that others have seldom any sympathy, and nearly always experience satisfaction from the representation of the troubles from which they are for the present exempted. Probably no man at the end of his life, if he is judicious and straightforward, would wish to go through it again, but would rather prefer non-existence. This is the

meaning of Hamlet's famous monologue ; and "not to be" would be a consummation devoutly to be wished, if the alternative were between existence and non-existence. But there is something in us that says it is not so, that death is no absolute destruction. Where else could Dante have got the material for his hell but in this world? And yet it has become a suitable hell. On the contrary, when he came to the task of depicting heaven and its joys he had an unsurmountable difficulty before him, for our world furnishes no materials for such a thing.

From this it is sufficiently obvious what sort of a thing the world is. Human life, like every bad article, has its outer side covered with false glitter. Everything that suffers hides itself, while everybody carries for show whatever pomp or splendour he can attain, and the less inner contentedness he has the more he wishes to be considered fortunate in the opinion of others. But under all this deception the miseries of life may easily grow to such an extent—an event of daily occurrence—that death, which is feared more than anything else, is seized with avidity. The sufferer may find even this refuge cut off

by destiny, and, falling into the hands of relentless enemies, be irretrievably abandoned to a cruel and prolonged martyrdom. The tortured appeals in vain to his gods for help, and is mercilessly left to his fate. This failure of succour, however, is only the mirror of the invincibility of his will, of which his person is the objectivation. An external power can no more free him from the torments that spring from life, which is the manifestation of his will, than it can alter or remove the latter.

Man is always thrown back on himself. In vain he creates gods, in order to obtain by begging and flattery what the force of his own will alone is able to bring about. As the Old Testament represented man and the world as the work of God, so, according to the New Testament, it was necessary that God should become man, in order to teach that sanctity and salvation from the afflictions of this world should proceed from the latter. Human will is, and remains, what everything depends upon. Saints and martyrs of every faith and name have willingly endured martyrdom, because the will to live had come to an end in them, when the slow destruction of its manifestation was welcome. Optimism is not only an absurd,

but a truly disreputable way of thinking, being a bitter mockery of the unspeakable sufferings of humanity. According to the Christian doctrine, the world and evil are almost synonymous.

3. MEANING OF ASSERTION OF THE WILL.

The assertion of the will is the continuance of willing without disturbance from any knowledge. The body being the objectivation of the will, assertion of the body may be used instead of assertion of the will. The fundamental subject of all acts of the will is the satisfaction of wants which are inseparable from the existence of the body in its health, and which can be traced to preservation of the individual and propagation of the race. Motives of every kind only obtain power over the will in this indirect way. Man wills, knows what he wills, and strives for it with as much success as saves him from despair, and with as much disappointment as protects him from the consequences of ennui. The preservation of the body by its own forces is such a low degree of assertion of the will that it might be assumed that, if it did not go further than this, the will would be extinguished with

the death of the body in which it appears. But the indulgence of the sexual instinct is an assertion of life for an infinite time beyond the death of the individual, and is the most decided expression of the will. A new life is the consequence, and the offspring appears before the progenitor, differing from him in the manifestation, but identical in the idea. In relation to the progenitor, procreation is only the expression of his decided affirmation of the will to live ; in relation to the progeny, it is not the ground of the will that appears in him, but, like every ground, the determining cause of the appearance of the will at this time and in this place. Through this assertion into a new life, suffering and death, which are incidental to the manifestation of life, are at the same time affirmed, and the possibility of emancipation through the most complete faculty of knowledge frustrated.

This view is mythically illustrated in the Christian dogma that we are all sharers in the fall of Adam, which is evidently the indulgence of the sexual instinct, and thereby deserving of suffering and death. This doctrine recognises the "idea" of man, the unity of which is restored from its decomposition into numberless in-

dividuals by the bond of reproduction, which holds all together. In accordance with this every individual is, on the one hand, identical with Adam, the representative of assertion of the will, and, as such, subject to original sin, suffering, and death; on the other hand, the recognition of the "idea" shows every individual as identical with the Saviour, the representative of negation of the will, and, as such, a sharer in His self-sacrifice, and through His merit emancipated from the bonds of sin and death, that is, from the world. Reproduction holds the counterpoise to death, and secures life for all time, in spite of death of the individual. The world, with its innumerable individuals and endless suffering, is a mirror of this assertion. The will produces the great tragedy and comedy at its own expense, is its own spectator, and cannot complain.

4. NATURE OF RIGHT, WRONG, AND JUSTICE. ORIGIN OF THE STATE.

While the will represents the self-assertion of the body in numberless individuals close together, it easily goes beyond this to the negation of that which appears in another, by

using the forces of the latter to increase its own. This encroachment is what is known as "wrong," and the feeling that the will is thus in antagonism with itself is the scruple of conscience. Wrong expresses itself most palpably in cannibalism, then in murder or mutilation of another, in his forcible subjection to slavery, and finally, in attack on his property. According to this explanation the only property that cannot be taken from a man without inflicting wrong is that which he has acquired by the work of his own body, and on this is grounded all real or moral right of possession. Prior possession of a thing gives no right to exclude others from the use of it, and he that does not respect a claim founded on such a declaration cannot be said to be morally wrong. He could justifiably say: "As you have enjoyed it so long, it is right that others should do so now."

Whether wrong be inflicted by force or by fraud, the principle is the same. The idea of wrong is thus the original and the positive; the opposite idea of right is the derived and negative. Without wrong there would be no question of right, and the latter includes any action that is not

the negation of the will of another for the purpose of strengthening one's own. This would include force or stratagem to ward off the attacks of another. Right and wrong, according to this view, are not conventional, but moral determinations, and refer to action alone, not to suffering. Therefore, pure Jurisprudence is also a chapter of Ethics, and its content would be the determination of the limit to which the individual, in the assertion of his own will, can go without negation of that of another, and then of the actions that are wrong because they overstep this boundary. However agreeable wrong-doing may be to a single person, it has a necessary correlate in the wrong-suffering of another; therefore, if all were left to chance, everybody would have to fear that the pain of wrong-suffering would more frequently fall to his share than the enjoyment of wrong-doing. Reason recognised from this that, in order to diminish the universally prevailing suffering, and at the same time distribute it as uniformly as possible, the best and only means of sparing all the pain of wrong-suffering is that all should renounce the pleasure of wrong-doing. The means thus contrived by egoism is the political treaty, or

the law, and the state can have no other origin since it is this motive that has made it a state.

As Ethics is concerned solely with right-or-wrong-doing, so the state has to do solely with wrong-suffering, and would not care about wrong-doing were it not for the necessity of contending with its correlate. Since in Ethics the will, or sentiment, is the object of consideration and the only thing real, the determination to do wrong, although it may be rendered ineffectual by external force, is condemned just as much as the deed. Will and sentiment as such, on the other hand, do not concern the state. The plan of the state is to confront every motive to wrong-doing with a stronger one to refrain from it. The criminal codex is, accordingly, as complete a register as possible of counter motives to every crime presumed as possible. With this end in view, Jurisprudence borrows from Ethics the chapter which determines, in addition to the significance of right and wrong, the precise limits of both, in order to consider, from the other side, all the limits furnished as impassable by Ethics as the limits from the transgression of which another should not suffer. These limits are now

barricaded by laws from the possibly passive side.

It is a strange error to suppose that the state is an institution for promoting morality, and that it is directed against egoism. Still more absurd is the theory that the state is the condition of freedom in the moral sense, and so of morality, for freedom lies beyond the manifestation and human institutions. The state, so far from being directed against egoism, springs from the summation of the common egoism of all, and is there to serve this, being set up on the right assumption that pure morality, that is, right-doing from moral grounds, is not to be expected. If it were so, the state would be superfluous. The state is, therefore, erected, not against egoism, but against its injurious consequences, which proceed mutually from the multitude of egoistic individuals and disturb their comfort. It follows from this that the state alone has the right of punishment, the immediate object of which is the fulfilment of the law as a treaty. But, the only object of the law being to deter from encroachment on the rights of others, it and its execution are directed essentially to the future and not to the past. Punishment is thus distinguished from revenge,

which refers to the past. Kant's theory of punishment as a mere retribution is a totally baseless and absurd idea. No man has the right to make himself the pure moral judge of another and inflict penalties on him for his misdeeds; but the state is justified in using the criminal as a means to an end, *viz.*, the carrying out of the political treaty.

5. IDEA OF ETERNAL JUSTICE.

Temporal justice, which has its seat in the state, must be distinguished from eternal justice, which rules the world, and is independent of human institutions. Since the idea of retribution includes that of time, eternal justice cannot be retributive or admit of postponement, but the punishment must be so connected with the crime that both are one. That such a justice actually inheres in the world is evident from the fact that the latter is the mirror of the will, so that all finitude, suffering, and misery are an expression of the latter. Every being experiences only what is just; for the will is his, and as is the will, so is the world. If all the misery in the world were put into one scale, and all the guilt into the other, the balance would be perfect.

The raw individual, owing to his limited knowledge, does not see the essence of things, which is one, but, its manifestations, which are separate, different, or even opposed. He sees the evil and the pleasure in the world ; but, far from recognising that both are only different sides of the manifestation of the one will to live, he considers that they are quite distinct, or even opposed, and often seeks to escape the evil by inflicting suffering on another, because he is deceived by the principle of individuation, which causes him to distinguish himself from the rest of the world. According to the true nature of things, everybody has to regard all the sufferings of the world as his own, and all that are possible as real for him, so long as he is the fixed will to live, that is, so long as he asserts life with all his force. For the knowledge that sees through the principle of individuation a happy life in time, whether presented by fate or won from it by cleverness, in the midst of the sufferings of others, is only the dream of a beggar in which he is a king, but from which he must awake to learn that only a transitory deception has separated him from the afflictions of life.

He that has attained to this knowledge will

plainly see that, while the will is the "in itself" of all manifestation, the torment inflicted on others and that which is experienced, the wicked and the evil, affect one and the same being, although the manifestations are seen in totally separate individuals. The tormentor and the tormented are one. The former errs in thinking that he does not share the torment, the latter in that he believes that he does not share the guilt. If the eyes of both were opened, the one that inflicts suffering would see that he lives in everything that suffers misery in the world, and the tormented that everything wicked that is done in the world flows from that will which constitutes his own essence, and that, so long as he is this will, he justly suffers from asserting it. The great crime of man is that he was born. The representation of eternal justice as the essence of virtue is directly expressed in the Vedas by parading before the pupil all the beings of the world, animate and inanimate, and repeating, as each goes by, the formula: "Tat twam asi," which means "this art thou." The same truth is taught mythically in the doctrine of transmigration, in accordance with which all the sufferings inflicted on others in this life must be

expiated by exactly the same during another life in this world. This goes so far that whoever kills even an animal must be born again as a similar animal, and suffer the same sort of death.

It affords satisfaction not only to the injured, who is generally animated by revenge, but also to the mere spectator, to see that the author of another's pain receives the same measure of it in return. This appears to be nothing but the expression of the consciousness of that eternal justice, which is misunderstood and falsified by the unenlightened judgment in that it demands from the manifestation what appertains to the thing-in-itself, and does not see how far the insulter and the insulted are one and the same being, which fails to recognise itself in its own manifestation, and so bears the torment and the guilt. But that the deeper knowledge, which is not involved in the principle of individuation, and from which all virtue and morality flow, no longer retains this feeling of retribution, is proved by Christian Ethics, which forbids the returning of evil for evil, and allows the eternal justice to prevail only in a domain distinct from that of the manifestation.

6. IDEAS OF GOOD AND BAD.

The idea of good is essentially relative, and designates the fitness of an object for some definite pursuit of the will. Therefore, what is good for one person may be just the opposite for another. That which does not aid the effort of the will is bad. For the same reason men whose character brings with it that, instead of impeding the efforts of others, they are helpful, benevolent, and friendly, are called good, because of this relation of their will to that of others. In the opposite case they are said to be bad. Only by starting from the passive side could the consideration pass over to the active and investigate the conduct of the so-called good man, not in relation to others but to himself. From this sprang the ethical systems, both the philosophical and those founded on creeds. Both always try to connect happiness and virtue either as identical, or in the relation of cause and effect. The idea of good being relative, "absolute good" is a contradiction, as is also "highest good," since a final satisfaction of the will, a last motive, is unthinkable. When a man is always inclined to do wrong as soon as the

occasion arises, he is said to be bad. In such a man a violent will extending beyond the assertion of his own body is expressed, and he is, in the second place, subject to the delusion that there is a total distinction between his own person and all others, whom he regards as mere masks devoid of all reality. These are the two fundamental elements of the bad character.

This great violence of the will is in itself a constant source of suffering, firstly, because all willing as such arises from want, that is, suffering; secondly, because the will is more frequently crossed than satisfied. For all suffering is nothing but unfulfilled or crossed willing, and pain of the body is explainable on the ground that it is the objectivation of the will. From the inner torment of such a man arises the unselfish pleasure in the sufferings of others, which constitutes malice, and may rise to cruelty. This is explained as follows: Man always compares the actual satisfaction of his will with the possible, which knowledge presents to him. Hence the origin of envy; every privation is endlessly increased by the contemplated enjoyment of others, and lightened by the thought that others have to endure the same suffering. The evils that are

common to all, and inseparable from human life, trouble us little. The man of violent will, finding no relief from his excessive inner torment, seeks it in witnessing the suffering of others, which is also to him the expression of his own power.

Vindictiveness is allied to malice and differs from punishment in referring, not to the future, but to the past. Associated with the violent will, and arising from the same root as malice, is another pain, which is called remorse of conscience, and which is due to two causes. What gives the sting to it is the feeling that it is the same will to live that appears in all its manifestations, and also the knowledge of one's own will and of its degree. The course of life produces the image of the empirical character, the original of which is the intelligible, and the wicked man is frightened by it.

Mere moralising, in the absence of a motive, is ineffectual. But the Ethics that supplies a motive can only act upon self-love; hence genuine virtue cannot be produced by Ethics or abstract knowledge, but must result from the intuitive knowledge that recognises the same individual in another person as in one's

self. Ethical lectures and sermons can no more make a man virtuous than Esthetics can make a poet. It would be very sad if man's ethical value for eternity were dependent on anything the attainment of which is so subject to chance as dogmas, creeds, or systems of philosophy. The dogma is the formula by which a man generally accounts to his own reason for his unselfish conduct, the nature of which he does not understand. The distinction is so difficult to find that we can scarcely ever judge the conduct of others morally, and very seldom our own. The real goodness of disposition results from an intuitive and direct knowledge which cannot be imparted, but must arise of itself in everybody, and which finds its proper and adequate expression, not in words but in conduct.

Voluntary justice, which acknowledges the limit between right and wrong, and allows its validity, has its innermost origin in a certain degree of penetration of the principle of individuation, while the unjust man is totally involved in this. The penetration may take place in higher degree, and lead to benevolence, beneficence, and love of mankind. To be healed from this delusion of Maja, and

to practise works of love, are the same thing, the latter being the inevitable symptom of the former. Good conscience is the satisfaction which we experience after every unselfish deed. It arises also from the recognition of our own being-in-itself in others. The heart thereby feels itself expanded, as it is contracted by egoism. Suffering being essential to life and inseparable from it, goodness, love, and magnanimity to others are always only alleviation of their sufferings, and what can move us to good deeds and works of love is the recognition of the afflictions of others, which is directly comprehensible from our own, and similarly estimated. From this it follows that pure love or charity, is in its nature sympathy, and every love that is not sympathy is selfishness. Weeping also is sympathy with one's self.

It remains now to show that negation of the will arises from the same source as all goodness, love, virtue, and magnanimity, *viz.*, the penetration of the principle of individuation. When a man has so far got rid of this veil that it no longer causes an egoistical distinction between his own person and that of another, he will recognise his innermost and

true self in all beings, regard their endless sufferings as his own, and so appropriate to himself the pain of the whole world. How could he now, with such knowledge, affirm this life by continued acts of his will? The attractions of hope, the flattery of the present, the sweets of enjoyment, the comfort that falls to his share in the midst of the misery of a suffering world, under the domination of accident and error, tend to draw him back and refasten his bonds.

Life may be compared to an orbit consisting of live coals with a few cool spots in it. The cool spot on which he now stands, or which he sees directly before him, consoles the man involved in delusion, and he continues to traverse his course. But he that understands the true nature of things is no longer susceptible of such consolation, sees himself in all places at the same time, and steps aside. This is the negation of the will, the transition from virtue to asceticism. Not content with loving others as he does himself, he is seized with abhorrence of the will to live, the core and the being of that pitiful world, and denies this being, which appears in him and is expressed in his body.

Voluntary and complete chastity is the first

step in asceticism, or the negation of the will to live. It refuses to assert the will beyond the life of the individual, and gives the indication that with the life of the body the will, of which it is the manifestation, will remove itself. If this maxim became universal, the human race would die out, and it may be assumed that its weaker reflection, animality, would at the same time disappear. This seems to be confirmed by an obscure passage in the New Testament (Romans viii. 21, 24). Similar expressions of the same fact occur in Buddhism. Asceticism shows itself next in voluntary and intentional poverty, for the purpose of mortifying the will and preventing the indulgence of the desires from exciting it anew.

The ascetic purposely represses every manifestation of the will, compels himself not to do what he would like to, and, on the other hand, to do everything that he is not disposed to, with no other object than the mortification of the will. He endures, accordingly, every insult and trial with inexhaustible patience and meekness, returns good for evil without ostentation, and allows the fire of anger no more than that of desire to kindle

in him. At the same time he mortifies the objectivity of the will, the body, and nourishes it sparingly, in order not to animate and stimulate the will. He takes to fasting, to self-castigation and self-torment, with the object of breaking and destroying the will, which he detests as the source of his own suffering existence and that of the world. When death finally comes, he joyfully receives it as the emancipation which he had longed for. With it not only the manifestation comes to an end, as in the case of others, but the essence itself is removed after it had existed in the former as a last feeble bond. For him who ends in this way the world is also ended.

This was the enviable life of many saints and beautiful souls among Christians, Hindoos, Buddhists, and the adherents of other creeds. However different may be the dogmas that were impressed on their reason, the inner, direct, intuitive knowledge from which alone all virtue and sanctity proceed, spoke in the same way in their behaviour. The history of the world is silent in regard to such individuals, "but no fear of the constant preponderance of meanness and stupidity will prevent us, who do not here seek to follow

the thread of the manifestations in time, but, as philosophers, to study the ethical significance of actions and take these as the standard of what is important, from confessing that the greatest, most important, and most significant manifestation is, not the world-conqueror, but the overcomer of the world, that is, the quiet and unnoticed life of such a man."

The idea here put forward is confirmed by Christian Ethics, the negation of the will being what is called self-denial and the taking up of one's cross (Matt. xv. 24, 25; Mark vii. 34, 35; Luke ix. 23, 24; xiv. 26, 27, 33). The Apostles prescribe loving one's neighbour as much as one's self, charity, returning of love for hatred, patience, meekness, bearing all possible insults without opposition, abstinence in food, complete resistance to the sexual instinct, when that is possible. This tendency soon developed itself more and more, and gave origin to the penitents, hermits, and to monachism, which was in itself pure and holy, but, for that very very reason, unsuitable for the vast majority.

With the further cultivation of Christianity, we find this germ unfolding to full bloom in the writings of the Christian saints and mystics. These preach, in addition to the purest love,

entire resignation, voluntary poverty, true patience, complete indifference to all worldly things, death of one's own will and rebirth in God, total forgetfulness of one's own person, and immersion in the contemplation of God. What is called negation of the will is carried further, and more vividly represented in the ancient works of the Sanscrit language; and that it is so is probably to be ascribed to the fact that the exalted founder of Christianity had, consciously or unconsciously, to adapt Himself to a totally foreign element, whereby Christianity is composed of two heterogeneous constituents, of which the purely ethical is exclusively Christian, and distinct from the preceding Jewish dogmatism. The Ethics of the Hindoos prescribes love of one's neighbour with complete denial of all self-love; love not limited to the human race but extended to every living thing; charity to the extent of giving away what has been painfully earned; unlimited patience towards all insulters; returning good and love for evil; voluntary and joyful endurance of every affront; abstinence from all animal food; complete chastity and renunciation of all sensuality when sanctity is desired; the throwing away of all property;

abandoning one's home and kindred ; deep and entire solitude spent in silent meditation ; voluntary penance with terrible and continued self-torment to complete mortification of the will, which finally extends to voluntary death.

What has been practised for thousands of years in a nation consisting of so many millions, notwithstanding that it imposes the most difficult sacrifices, cannot be a mere whim, but must have its ground in the nature of humanity. The similarity between the life of an Indian and a Christian saint is remarkable, while the Christian mystics and the teachers of the Vedanta philosophy also agree in considering all external works and religious exercises as superfluous for one that has attained perfection. However, this negation of the will must be always acquired anew by continued struggle ; for, as long as the body exists, the will strives to realise itself and kindle with renewed energy. Nobody can have continued rest on earth. Hence we see those that have once attained to negation of the will maintaining themselves on this path by every effort, by enforced privations, in order to subdue the ever rebellious will.

Suffering in general, as it is imposed by fate,

is a second way of leading to the same end ; and it may be assumed that it is the suffering which they have themselves experienced, not that which they have witnessed, that most frequently leads to complete resignation, and often just before death. Then we see a man, after he has been brought to the brink of despair through all stages of increasing anguish, suddenly recoil within himself, recognise himself and the world, rise above himself and all suffering, and, as if purified and sanctified by it, renounce all that he had previously willed with the greatest impetuosity, receiving death with joy. Even those that were very wicked are sometimes purified to this extent by the deepest pain ; they have become completely transformed. This is well illustrated by the history of Margaretha in Goethe's *Faust*. Proximity of death and hopelessness are not absolutely essential to such perfection through suffering. Great misfortune and pain may forcibly impress the knowledge of the antagonism of the will with itself, and the vanity of all striving. Hence men who have led an active life in the storm of the passions, kings, heroes, knights errant suddenly change, take to resignation and penance, and become

hermits or monks. True salvation from life and suffering is unthinkable without negation of the will. This is the only case where the freedom which resides in the thing-in-itself becomes visible in the manifestation, the will which reveals itself in the latter being in antagonism with it, inasmuch as it denies what this expresses.

The key to the reconciliation of this contradiction is the fact that the state in which the character is withdrawn from the influence of motives does not proceed directly from the will, but from the altered knowledge. The power of motives is irresistible so long as the knowledge is involved in the principle of individuation; but when the latter is seen through, and from this knowledge a universal quietive of the will emerges, then the various motives become inoperative, because the mode of cognition corresponding to them has been eclipsed and driven out by another. Therefore, the character cannot be partially altered, but it can be completely removed through the above-mentioned change. This is what is known in the Christian Church as the "rebirth," and the knowledge from which it results as "Divine Grace." Necessity is the

kingdom of nature ; freedom is the kingdom of grace.

Since this self-removal of the will results from knowledge, and since all knowledge and insight are independent of choice, the negation of the will, the passage into freedom, is not to be forcibly attained by design, but springs from the innermost relation of knowing to willing in man. It therefore comes suddenly, as if flying from outwards. For this reason the Church called it "the influence of Divine Grace." But as it made the latter dependent on the assumption of the grace, so the effect is, in the end, an act of freedom of the will ; and since the whole nature of the man is changed in consequence, so that a new man, as it were, appears in the place of the old, it called the result "rebirth." What it calls the "natural man," to whom all faculty of good is denied, is the will to live, which must be denied if redemption from such an existence as ours is to be obtained.

The doctrine of "original sin" (assertion of the will) and that of the "redemption" (negation of the will) really constitute the essence of Christianity. According to the idea here developed, real virtue and sanctity of sentiment have their origin, not in deliberate

choice (the works), but in the knowledge (faith). If it were the works, which spring from motives and deliberate purpose, that led to salvation, virtue would be nothing but a prudent, methodical, far-seeing egoism. The faith of the Christian Church is, that through the fall of the first man we are sharers in the sin, and subject to death and perdition; that we are redeemed by the Divine Mediator through grace and the assumption of our enormous guilt, and this without our own personal merit; for that which is done through the influence of motives, the works, can never justify us. This faith implies that our state is originally and essentially a hopeless one, from which we require to be redeemed, and that we are ourselves so firmly bound to what is evil that our works in accordance with the law and the precept, that is, according to motives, can neither satisfy justice nor emancipate us. Hence redemption can only be won by faith, or altered knowledge, and this faith can only come from grace, that is, from outwards.

The idea that this annihilation of the will is a total destruction is based on a misunderstanding. The manifestation here, the personality, is certainly destroyed, but what remains can

only be known in a negative sense. From the higher standpoint, what is to us a reality may be nothing. As like can only know like, some such word as Brahm or Nirvana is used as a mythical representation of what is beyond the reach of our cognisance. Those that wish to retain their personality are still involved in the principle of individuation.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

THE foregoing criticism leaves no room for doubt that the categorical affirmative is not what it professes to be, and that systems of ethical teaching founded on it are utterly futile. Some of those that have tried it have already come to the conclusion that religious teaching alone can make any lasting impression on the minds of the young. It is hardly necessary to point out that it is a travesty of the truth to say, as Kant does, that the Christian moral principle is eudemonistic, and that "it does not make the recognition of God and His will the ground of the moral law." He contradicts himself later on by saying that "God honours nothing more than respect for His command." The Hindoo religion also condemns eudemonism as a damnable heresy.

The problem of philosophy being to explain the ethical significance of human conduct independently of revelation, we have at the

present day only two systems to consider, *viz.*, that of Hegel, and its antithesis, that of Schopenhauer. According to Hegel's evolution theory, the Protestant Germanic state, being the highest manifestation of God's returning consciousness, is the source of all religion, and the individual is of no account. Schopenhauer has clearly proved that the state is, on the contrary, the concentrated essence of the egoism of the nation, that it must borrow a chapter from Ethics, and that the ethical significance of conduct must be studied in the individual. This is evidently what Christ meant when He distinguished between the Kingdom of God and that of Caesar. To promote the selfish objects of the state the individual may be called upon to violate every principle of justice and humanity, to shoot down his father and mother, or to give no quarter to the enemy.

Schopenhauer, basing everything on incontrovertible facts of consciousness, the starting point of all our knowledge and the final court of appeal to which we must refer to test the truth of anything, proves that we justly suffer in this life for some "original sin" committed in the transcendental

world, that remorse of conscience necessarily implies transcendental freedom of the will, that the world with all its miseries is the result of the assertion of our will, that the only way of salvation is that of renunciation and self-denial, that the obstacle to this is the "principle of individuation," that sympathy is the source of all virtue, and that the origin of sympathy can only be explained by the fact that the underlying essence of all is the same. According to this it is impossible to commit the blasphemy of attributing the evil in the world to a beneficent God, or the injustice of blaming parents for the physical or other disadvantages that fall to the lot of their children, or the absurdity of basing responsibility on an assumption which is belied by experience. The conviction that everything that happens is unavoidably determined by fate is also the greatest consolation, for disappointments do not trouble us half so much as the thought of the means by which they might have been averted.

That the great religions of the world are pessimistic in Schopenhauer's sense is beyond question. According to the Jewish religion, however, which he regards as the only exception, the punishment of Adam and Eve

for their disobedience was a curse on their posterity as well as on themselves. Such a philosophy, being directly opposed to the gigantic force of egoism in the individual, and still more to that embodied in the state, is not likely to find general favour, and the state takes good care to exclude it from the universities. The attempt to introduce it as the principle of Christian Ethics, with which it is practically identical, leads to strange inconsistencies between profession and practice. Herbert Spencer pointed out that the English persecuted the Jews on account of their religion, while their own was, in all essentials, pure Judaism. Now and then some clergyman appeals to the English people not to abandon the Bible, as it has been the source of their greatness. It is certain that the purely Christian part of the Bible would not lead to grandeur and prosperity in this life, but the reverse, as may be seen in the case of Burma, which is, in actual practice, the most Christian country in the world. German and Austrian officers are compelled to march with their men to church in order to learn the doctrine of forgiveness, but are forthwith expelled from the army if they refuse to fight a duel on religious grounds.

The German Protestants, while calling themselves Christians, object to the "Weltanschauung" of the R. C. Church, which would apply some check to the boundless egoism of the individual and of the state. This Church has, nevertheless, by enforcing the celibacy of its clergy, entrenched itself on an impregnable rock and saved Christianity from downfall, because it can consistently preach the doctrine of renunciation taught by Christ. The opponents of monachism, who think that a man's proper place is in the world, ignore the fact that no man can maintain himself in the world except at the expense of others, and forget that they themselves are trampling down and crushing the weaker in the struggle for existence. Before condemning a principle in human nature which has manifested itself from time immemorial, and which still continues to do so in Protestant sects, in spite of opposition and persecution, they would do well to investigate and account for the fact that in one country alone one million and a quarter of the married people have no children. If the state adopts the "salus populi" as the "suprema lex," it cannot object to the Socialists when they say that their demand for a due share in

the happiness of this world should not be deferred to a problematical existence in the "azzurro."

Again, those that believe in a Divine inspiration of heroes will find it difficult to explain how the God that manifested Himself in Christ could be the same that actuated Joshua, Cromwell, or Napoleon. When Cromwell "sought the Lord night and day in prayer" not to put him on some unpleasant work, it is evident that he was simply deifying his own will. The idea of annihilation of personality contained in Buddhism and in Schopenhauer's philosophy is an insuperable objection to most people, because the last thing they will part with is the dear old personality, even when they expatiate with delight on the cosmic consciousness and the ultimate identity of all. As such people want to be black and white at the same time, it is hopeless to reason with them. Finally, it remains to get rid of the objection that the theory of evolution is incompatible with the idea of total transformation, or "rebirth." How absurd, superficial, and unsupported by facts is the Darwinian theory of natural selection, and how beautifully the apparent evolution in nature is explained by Schopen-

hauer, will be evident to anybody that studies the latter. Here only a meagre outline of the argument can be given.

Kant proved that objects are composed of a manifestation, or appearance, which is dependent on our mode of perception, and of a thing-in-itself, which is beyond the range of our cognition. Schopenhauer, reversing the method pursued by all previous philosophers, took the will, which we find by introspection in our own self-consciousness, as the key to the solution of the rest of the world, arguing that what is the essence in man must be the same, but in a descending grade of objectivation, in everything else. Underlying the manifestation in space and time is, for each species, a specific act of the will, which constitutes the Platonic idea. This idea, which the artist tries to represent, is eternal and unchangeable, although multiplied in individuals by the conditions of time, space, and causality, which have their origin in the individual. It is the force of nature in the inorganic kingdom, the vital force in the vegetable, and the will in animals and in man.

All that science can determine is the law in accordance with which each of these

reveals itself at a particular time and in a particular space, according to outward circumstances, which are the determining cause. It is, accordingly, a contradiction to say that one idea can be the cause or the result of another, and that man can be traced back to some original force, which would reduce him to a mere form or phantom. Since it is the one and the same will that shows itself in all, its unity must be recognisable in an inner relationship of all its manifestations. Therefore, there is an unmistakable analogy throughout, and the lower forms must contain the trace, the foreshadowing, and the disposition to the next higher.

The idea of man, in order to appear in its true significance, must be accompanied by the downward gradation through all the animal forms, and through plants to the inorganic kingdoms, the lower ideas constituting a pyramid of which man is the apex. The will strives towards higher realisation, and uses the lower forces for this purpose, the plant using the force in the soil, the animals that in the plant and one another, while man uses the whole of nature as a product for his requirements. The unity of the will, as thing-in-itself,

in the variety and multiplicity of its manifestations alone explains the inner and outer suitability of all organic productions of nature.

The Darwinian hypothesis that animals are subject to variations in their organs, and that some of these are useful, while others are useless, is contradicted by facts. All the different parts of an animal correspond exactly to its mode of life; no organ disturbs another, but all support one another; no organ remains unused, and no subordinate one would be better suited to a different mode of existence. The *lex parsimoniae naturae*, which allows no superfluous organ, taken in conjunction with the fact that no organ fails which an animal requires for its mode of life, and that all agree in being adapted to a particular element in which its prey is to be found, proves that the mode of life determined the structure from the beginning. The young of horned animals butt with the head before the appearance of the horns, and the young boar, before the growth of the tusks, strikes as if it had them, showing clearly that the organs have been planned with a view to particular conditions.

If the history of the giraffe could be traced back to a time when the accidental possession of

a long neck is supposed to have given it an advantage in the struggle for existence, this freak would have inevitably led to its extinction long before the disappearance of the conditions which had prevailed up to that time. Moreover, the giraffe is not only distinguished from every other animal by its long neck, but in every detail of its structure, and the complete adaptation of the latter to its special mode of life has from the beginning co-existed with the long neck, just as the teeth, the claws, the digestive organs, the joints, the limbs, and the temperament of a carnivorous animal all co-operate in the work of capturing, destroying, and digesting its prey. Not to multiply instances, the absurdity of a natural selection of animals endowed with accidentally useful variations will be manifest when it is attempted to explain how the camel developed a stomach suited for storing water in the desert, the pelican a pouch under its bill for stowing away fish, the cross-bill a beak adapted for picking seeds from under the scales of the fir-cone, the torpedo fish an electric apparatus for paralysing its enemy at a distance, that wherever any living thing appears another comes to devour it, while each is as if calculated and constructed

to the minutest detail for the destruction of another.

The outer suitability is seen in the support and help which the various organisms receive not only from the inorganic kingdom, but from one another. Time does not here come into consideration, since it only concerns the manifestation of the idea, not the latter itself. Accordingly, the species have not only adapted themselves to pre-existing conditions, but the latter must also have taken the latter into consideration; for it is the one and the same will that objectifies itself in the entire world. Thus the soil adapts itself to the nutriment of plants, the plants to that of animals, the animals to one another, and vice versâ. This theory of Schopenhauer's accounts in the most remarkable manner for every natural phenomenon, and explains why missing links between species cannot be found. Darwin could never have arrived at the truth, because his ignorance of philosophy made it impossible for him to see that the law of causality does not apply to the real essence of anything. Wallace showed his superiority to him by remarking, without any aid from philosophy, that man could not be accounted for as a mere

evolution from a lower type. The weakness and insufficiency of the whole theory is already beginning to dawn on even the superficial and one-sided man of science, who can very rarely see anything beyond the walls of his laboratory. There is, therefore, no argument based on experience that can be adduced against the view that negation of the will results in a complete and sudden transformation, whereas observation proves that, in the absence of negation, the character does not change.

It is a common error to test the value of a religion by the worldly prosperity of its adherents, the assumption being that material progress is accompanied by a corresponding moral elevation and a greater degree of happiness. The folly and absurdity of this idea will be evident to anybody that compares the Burmese with the English or any other European nation. The toiling masses of the industrial country, condemned to work by day in the unhealthy atmosphere of mines, factories, and workshops, and to rest by night in the fetid atmosphere of a city slum, undergo a progressive physical and moral deterioration, and become every day louder and louder in the expression of their discontent, as must naturally

be expected ; for they are taught by precept and example that the acquisition of wealth is the highest object of human endeavour. The rich, in the feverish striving for more wealth, for the sake of the happiness expected from it, allow themselves no leisure for intellectual pleasure, and are, in consequence, forced to seek their object by the artificial creation of other wants and enjoyments of a lower kind. It is terrible to contemplate what would be the result if any country could succeed in attaining the object of its ambition, the monopoly of the trade of the world. Let the visionaries who dream of bringing about a millenium, or Kant's "kingdom of motives," seriously consider this aspect of the matter for a moment, and then say whether the real hero of the world is not the ascetic, who, in renouncing it, contributes to its emancipation, together with that of the lower orders of creation, which are involved in the general suffering.

THE END

