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## MORALS AND MORAL SENTIMENTS.

If a writer who discusses unsettled questions takes up every gauntlet thrown down to him, polemical writing will absorb much of his energy. Having a power of work which unfortunately does not suffice for executing with anything like due rapidity the task I have undertaken, I have made it a policy to avoid controversy as much as possible, even at the cost of being seriously misunderstood. Hence it happened that when, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for July, 1869, Mr. Richard Hutton published, under the title of "A Questionable Parentage for Morals," a criticism upon a doctrine of mine, I decided to let his misrepresentations remain unnoticed until, in the course of my work, I arrived at the stage where, by a full exposition of this doctrine, they would be set aside. It did not occur to me that, in the meantime, these erroneous statements, accepted as true statements, would be repeated by other writers, and my views commented upon as untenable. This, however, has happened. In more periodicals than one, I have seen it asserted that Mr. Hutton has effectually disposed of my hypothesis. Supposing that this hypothesis has been rightly expressed by Mr. Hutton, Sir John Lubbock, in his "Origin of Civilisation," &c., has been led to express a partial dissent; which I think he would not have expressed had my own exposition been before him. Mr. Mivart, too, in his recent "Genesis of Species," has been similarly betrayed into misapprehensions. And now Sir Alexander Grant, following the same lead, has conveyed to the readers of the *Fortnightly Review* another of these conceptions, which is but very partially true. Thus I find myself compelled to say as much as will serve to prevent further spread of the mischief.

If a general doctrine concerning a highly-involved class of phenomena could be adequately presented in a single paragraph of a letter,

the writing of books would be superfluous. In the brief exposition of certain ethical doctrines held by me, which is given in Professor Bain's "Mental and Moral Science," it is stated that they are—

"as yet nowhere fully expressed. They form part of the more general doctrine of Evolution which he is engaged in working out; and they are at present to be gathered only from scattered passages. It is true that, in his first work, 'Social Statics,' he presented what he then regarded as a tolerably complete view of one division of Morals. But, without abandoning this view, he now regards it as inadequate—more especially in respect of its basis."

Mr. Hutton, however, taking the bare enunciation of one part of this basis, deals with it critically; and, in the absence of any exposition of it by me, sets forth what he supposes to be my grounds for it, and proceeds to show that they are unsatisfactory.

If, in his anxiety to suppress what he doubtless regards as a pernicious doctrine, Mr. Hutton could not wait until I had explained myself, it might have been expected that he would use whatever information was to be had for rightly construing it. So far from seeking out such information, however, he has, in a way for which I cannot account, ignored the information immediately before him.

The title which Mr. Hutton has chosen for his criticism is, "A Questionable Parentage for Morals." Now he has ample means of knowing that I allege a primary basis of Morals, quite independent of that which he describes and rejects. I do not refer merely to the fact that, having, when he reviewed "Social Statics,"<sup>1</sup> expressed his very decided dissent from this primary basis, he must have been aware that I allege it; for he may say that in the long interval which has elapsed he had forgotten all about it. But I refer to the distinct enunciation of this primary basis in that letter to Mr. Mill from which he quotes. In a preceding paragraph of the letter, I have explained that, while I accept utilitarianism in the abstract, I do not accept that current utilitarianism which recognises for the guidance of conduct nothing beyond empirical generalisations; and I have contended that—

"Morality, properly so called—the science of right conduct—has for its object to determine *how* and *why* certain modes of conduct are detrimental, and certain other modes beneficial. These good and bad results cannot be accidental but must be necessary consequences of the constitution of things; and I conceive it to be the business of Moral Science to deduce, from the laws of life and the conditions of existence, what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deductions are to be recognised as laws of conduct; and are to be conformed to irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness or misery."

Nor is this the only enunciation of what I conceive to be the primary basis of morals, contained in this same letter. A subsequent

(1) See *Prospective Review* for January, 1852.

paragraph, separated by four lines only from that which Mr. Hutton extracts, commences thus:—

“Progressing civilisation, which is of necessity a succession of compromises between old and new, requires a perpetual re-adjustment of the compromise between the ideal and the practicable in social arrangements: to which end, both elements of the compromise must be kept in view. If it is true that pure rectitude prescribes a system of things far too good for men as they are, it is not less true that mere expediency does not of itself tend to establish a system of things any better than that which exists. While absolute morality owes to expediency the checks which prevent it from rushing into Utopian absurdities, expediency is indebted to absolute morality for all stimulus to improvement. Granted that we are chiefly interested in ascertaining what is *relatively right*, it still follows that we must first consider what is *absolutely right*; since the one conception presupposes the other.”

I do not see how there could well be a more emphatic assertion that there exists a primary basis of morals independent of, and in a sense antecedent to, that which is furnished by experiences of utility; and, consequently, independent of, and in a sense antecedent to, those moral sentiments which I conceive to be generated by such experiences. Yet no one could gather from Mr. Hutton's article that I assert this; or would even find reasons for a faint suspicion that I do so. From the reference made to my further views, he would infer my acceptance of that empirical utilitarianism which I have expressly repudiated. And the title which Mr. Hutton gives to his paper clearly asserts, by implication, that I recognise no “parentage for morals” beyond that of the accumulation and organisation of the effects of experience. I cannot believe that Mr. Hutton intended to convey this erroneous impression. He was, I suppose, too much absorbed in contemplating the proposition he combats to observe, or, at least, to attach any weight to, the propositions which accompany it. But I regret that he did not perceive the mischief he was likely to do me by spreading this one-sided statement.

I pass now to the particular question at issue—not the “parentage for morals,” but the parentage of moral sentiments. In his version of my view on this more special doctrine, Mr. Hutton has similarly, I regret to say, neglected the data which would have helped him to draw an approximately true outline of it. It cannot well be that the existence of such data was unknown to him. They are contained in the “Principles of Psychology;” and Mr. Hutton reviewed that work when it was first published.<sup>1</sup> In the chapter on The Feelings, which occurs near the end of that work, there is sketched out a process of genesis by no means like that which Mr. Hutton indicates; and had he turned to that chapter he would have seen that his description of the genesis of the moral sentiments out of

(1) His criticism will be found in the *National Review* for January, 1856, under the title “Atheism.”

organised experiences is not such a one as I should have given. Let me quote a passage from that chapter.

“Not only are those emotions which form the immediate stimuli to actions thus explicable, but the like explanation applies to the emotions that leave the subject of them comparatively passive: as, for instance, the emotion produced by beautiful scenery. The gradually increasing complexity in the groups of sensations and ideas co-ordinated, ends in the co-ordination of those vast aggregations of them which a grand landscape excites and suggests. The infant taken into the midst of mountains is totally unaffected by them; but is delighted with the small group of attributes and relations presented in a toy. The child can appreciate, and be pleased with, the more complicated relations of household objects and localities, the garden, the field, and the street. But it is only in youth and mature age, when individual things and small assemblages of them have become familiar and automatically cognizable, that those immense assemblages which landscapes present can be adequately grasped, and the highly aggregated states of consciousness produced by them, experienced. Then, however, the various minor groups of states, that have been in earlier days severally produced by trees, by fields, by streams, by cascades, by rocks, by precipices, by mountains, by clouds, are aroused together. Along with the sensations immediately received, there are partially excited the myriads of sensations that have been in times past received from objects such as those presented; further, there are partially excited the various incidental feelings that were experienced on all these countless past occasions; and there are probably also excited certain deeper, but now vague, combinations of states, that were organised in the race during barbarous times, when its pleasurable activities were chiefly among the woods and waters. And out of all these excitations, some of them actual, but most of them nascent, is composed the emotion which a fine landscape produces in us.”

It is, I think, amply manifest that the processes here indicated are not to be taken as intellectual processes—not as processes in which recognised relations between pleasures and their antecedents, or intelligent adaptations of means to ends, form the dominant elements. The state of mind produced by an aggregate of picturesque objects is not one resolvable into propositions. The sentiment does not contain within itself any consciousness of causes and consequences of happiness. The vague recollections of other beautiful scenes and other delightful days which it dimly rouses, are not aroused because of any rational co-ordinations of ideas that have been formed in bygone days. Mr. Hutton, however, has assumed that in the genesis of moral feelings as due to inherited experiences of the pleasures and pains arising from certain modes of conduct, I am speaking of reasoned-out experiences—experiences consciously accumulated and generalised. He altogether overlooks the fact that the genesis of emotions is distinguished from the genesis of ideas in this: that whereas the ideas are composed of elements that are simple, definitely related, and (in the case of general ideas) constantly related, emotions are composed of enormously complex aggregates of elements which are never twice alike, and that stand in relations which are never twice alike. The difference in the resulting modes of consciousness is this:—In the genesis of an idea the successive

experiences, be they of sounds, colours, touches, tastes, or be they of the special objects that combine many of these into groups, have so much in common that each, when it occurs, can be definitely thought of as like those which preceded it. But in the genesis of an emotion the successive experiences so far differ that each of them, when it occurs, suggests past experiences which are not specifically similar, but have only a general similarity; and, at the same time, it suggests benefits or evils in past experience which likewise are various in their special natures, though they have a certain community of general nature. Hence it results that the consciousness aroused is a multitudinous, confused consciousness, in which, along with a certain kind of combination among the impressions received from without, there is a vague cloud of ideal combinations akin to them, and a vague mass of ideal feelings of pleasure or pain that were associated with these. We have abundant proof that feelings grow up without reference to recognised causes and consequences, and without the possessor of them being able to say why they have grown up; though analysis, nevertheless, shows that they have been formed out of connected experiences. The familiar fact to which, I suppose, almost every one can testify, that a kind of jam which was, during childhood, repeatedly taken after medicine, may become by simple association of sensations so nauseous that it cannot be tolerated in after-life, illustrates clearly enough the way in which repugnances may be established by habitual association of feelings, without any idea of causal connection; or rather, in spite of the knowledge that there is no causal connection. Similarly with pleasurable emotions. The cawing of a rook is not in itself an agreeable sound—musically considered, it is very much the contrary. Yet the cawing of rooks usually produces in people very pleasurable feelings—feelings which most of them suppose to result from the quality of the sound itself. Only the few who are given to self-analysis are aware that the cawing of rooks is agreeable to them because it has been connected with countless of their greatest gratifications—with the gathering of wild flowers in childhood; with Saturday-afternoon excursions in school-boy days; with midsummer holidays in the country, when books were thrown aside and lessons were replaced by games and adventures in the fields; with fresh, sunny mornings in after-years, when a walking excursion was an immense relief from toil. As it is, this sound, though not causally related to all these multitudinous and varied past delights, but only often associated with them, can no more be heard without rousing a dim consciousness of these delights, than the voice of an old friend unexpectedly coming into the house can be heard without suddenly raising a wave of that feeling that has resulted from the pleasures of past companionship. If we are to understand the genesis of emotions, either in the individual or in the

race, we must take account of this all-important process. Mr. Hutton, however, apparently overlooking it, and not having reminded himself, by referring to the "Principles of Psychology," that I insist upon it, represents my hypothesis to be that a certain sentiment results from the consolidation of intellectual conclusions! He speaks of me as believing that "what seems to us now the 'necessary' intuitions and *à priori* assumptions of human nature, are likely to prove, when scientifically analysed, nothing but a similar conglomeration of our ancestors' *best observations and most useful empirical rules.*" He supposes me to think that men having, in past times, come to *see* that truthfulness was useful, "the habit of approving truth-speaking and fidelity to engagements, which was first based on this ground of utility, became so rooted, that the utilitarian ground of it was forgotten, and *we* find ourselves springing to the belief in truth-speaking and fidelity to engagements from an inherited tendency." Similarly throughout, Mr. Hutton has so used the word "utility," and so interpreted it on my behalf, as to make me appear to mean that moral sentiment is formed out of *conscious generalisations* respecting what is beneficial and what detrimental. Were such my hypothesis, his criticisms would be very much to the point; but as such is not my hypothesis, they fall to the ground. The experiences of utility I refer to are those which become registered, not as distinctly recognised connections between certain kinds of acts and certain kinds of remote results, but those which become registered in the shape of associations between groups of feelings that have often recurred together, though the relation between them has not been consciously generalized—associations the origin of which may be as little perceived as is the origin of the pleasure given by the sounds of a rookery; but which, nevertheless, have arisen in the course of daily converse with things, and serve as incentives or deterrents.

In the paragraph which Mr. Hutton has extracted from my letter to Mr. Mill, I have indicated an analogy between those effects of emotional experiences out of which I believe moral sentiments have been developed, and those effects of intellectual experiences out of which I believe space-intuitions have been developed. Rightly considering that the first of these hypotheses cannot stand if the last is disproved, Mr. Hutton has directed part of his attack against this last. But would it not have been well if he had referred to the "Principles of Psychology," where this last hypothesis is set forth at length, before criticising it? Would it not have been well to have given an abstract of my own description of the process, instead of substituting what he *supposes* my description must be? Any one who turns to the "Principles of Psychology" (first edition, pp. 218-245), and reads the two chapters, The Perception of Body as presenting Statical Attributes, and The Perception of Space, will

find that Mr. Hutton's account of my view on this matter has given him no notion of the view as it is expressed by me ; and will, perhaps, be less inclined to smile than he was when he read Mr. Hutton's account. I cannot here do more than thus imply the invalidity of such part of Mr. Hutton's argument as proceeds upon this incorrect representation. The pages that would be required for properly explaining the doctrine that space-intuitions result from organised experiences may be better used for explaining this analogous doctrine at present before us. This I will now endeavour to do ; not indirectly by correcting misapprehensions, but directly by an exposition which shall be as brief as the extremely involved nature of the process allows.

An infant in arms, that is old enough to gaze at objects around with some vague recognition, smiles in response to the laughing face and soft caressing voice of its mother. Let there come some one who, with an angry face, speaks to it in loud, harsh tones. The smile disappears, the features contract into an expression of pain, and, beginning to cry, it turns away its head and makes such movements of escape as are possible. What is the meaning of these facts? Why does not the frown make it smile, and the mother's laugh make it weep? There is but one answer. Already in its developing brain there is coming into play the structure through which one cluster of visual and auditory impressions excites pleasurable feelings, and the structure through which another cluster of visual and auditory impressions excites painful feelings. The infant knows no more about the relation existing between a ferocious expression of face, and the evils that may follow the perception of it, than the young bird just out of its nest knows of the possible pain and death which may be inflicted by a man coming towards it ; and as certainly in the one case as in the other, the alarm felt is due to a partially-established nervous structure. Why does this partially-established nervous structure betray its presence thus early in the human being? Simply because, in the past experiences of the human race, smiles and gentle tones in those around have been the habitual accompaniments of pleasurable feelings ; while pains of many kinds, immediate and more or less remote, have been continually associated with the impressions received from knit brows and set teeth and grating voice. Much deeper down than the history of the human race must we go to find the beginnings of these connections. The appearances and sounds which excite in the infant a vague dread, indicate danger ; and do so because they are the physiological accompaniments of destructive action—some of them common to man and inferior mammals, and consequently understood by inferior mammals, as every puppy shows us. What we call the natural language of anger, is due to a partial contraction of those muscles which actual combat would call into play ; and all

marks of irritation, down to that passing shade over the brow which accompanies slight annoyance, are incipient stages of these same contractions. Conversely with the natural language of pleasure, and of that state of mind which we call amicable feeling: this, too, has a physiological interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

Let us pass now from the infant in arms to the children in the nursery. What have the experiences of each one of these been doing in aid of the emotional development we are considering? While its limbs have been growing more agile by exercise, its manipulative skill increasing by practice, its perceptions of objects growing by use quicker, more accurate, more comprehensive; the associations between these two sets of impressions received from those around, and the pleasures and pains received along with them, or after them, have been by frequent repetition made stronger, and their adjustments better. The dim sense of pain and the vague glow of delight which the infant felt, have, in the urchin, severally taken shapes that are more definite. The angry voice of a nursemaid no longer arouses only a formless feeling of dread, but also a specific idea of the slap that may follow. The frown on the face of a bigger brother, along with the primitive, indefinable sense of ill, brings the sense of ills that are definable in thought as kicks, and cuffs, and pullings of hair, and losses of toys. The faces of parents, looking now sunny, now gloomy, have grown to be respectively associated with multitudinous forms of gratification and multitudinous forms of discomfort or privation. Hence these appearances and sounds, which imply amity or enmity in those around, become symbolic of happiness and misery; so that eventually perception of the one set or the other can scarcely occur without raising a wave of pleasurable feeling or of painful feeling. The body of this wave is still substantially of the same nature as it was at first; for though in each of these multitudinous experiences a special set of facial and vocal signs has been connected with a special set of pleasures or pains, yet since these pleasures or pains have been immensely varied in their kinds and combinations, and since the signs that preceded them were in no two cases quite alike, it results that to the last the consciousness produced remains as vague as it is voluminous. The myriads of partially-aroused ideas resulting from past experiences are massed together and superposed, so as to form an aggregate in which nothing is distinct, but which has the character of being pleasurable or painful according to the nature of its original components; the chief difference between this developed feeling and the feeling aroused in the infant being, that on bright or dark

(1) Hereafter I hope to elucidate at length these phenomena of expression. For the present, I can refer only to such further indications as are contained in two essays on *The Physiology of Laughter* and *The Origin and Function of Music*.

background forming the body of it, may now be sketched out in thought the particular pleasures or pains which the particular circumstances suggest as likely.

What must be the working of this process under the conditions of aboriginal life? The emotions given to the young savage by the natural language of love and hate in the members of his tribe, gain first a partial definiteness in respect to his intercourse with his family and playmates; and he learns by experience the utility, in so far as his own ends are concerned, of avoiding courses which call from others manifestations of anger, and taking courses which call from them manifestations of pleasure. Not that he consciously generalises. He does not at that age, probably not at any age, formulate his experiences in the general principle that it is well for him to do things which bring smiles from others, and to avoid doing things which bring frowns. What happens is, that having, in the way shown, inherited this connection between the perception of anger in others and the feeling of dread, and having discovered that particular acts of his bring on this anger, he cannot subsequently think of committing one of these acts without thinking of the resulting anger, and feeling more or less of the resulting dread. He has no thought of the utility or inutility of the act itself: the deterrent is the mainly vague, but partially definite, fear of evil that may follow. So understood, the deterring emotion is one that has grown out of experiences of utility, using that word in its ethical sense; and if we ask why this dreaded anger is called forth from others, we shall habitually find that it is because the forbidden act entails pain somewhere—is negatived by utility. On passing from the domestic injunctions to the injunctions current in the tribe, we see no less clearly how these emotions produced by approbation and reprobation come to be connected in experience with actions that are beneficial to the tribe, and actions that are detrimental to the tribe; and how there consequently grow up incentives to the one class of actions and prejudices against the other class. From early boyhood the young savage hears recounted the daring deeds of his chief—hears them in words of praise, and sees all faces glowing with admiration. From time to time also he listens while some one's cowardice is described in tones of scorn, and with contemptuous metaphors, and sees him meet with derision and insult whenever he appears. That is to say, one of the things that comes to be strongly associated in his mind with smiling faces, which are symbolical of pleasures in general, is courage; and one of the things that comes to be associated in his mind with frowns and other marks of enmity, which form his symbol of unhappiness, is cowardice. These feelings are not formed in him because he has reasoned his way to the truth that courage is useful to the tribe, and, by implication, to himself, or to the truth that cowardice is a cause of

evil. In adult life he may perhaps see this; but he certainly does not see it at the time when bravery is thus associated in his consciousness with all that is good, and cowardice with all that is bad. Similarly there are produced in him feelings of inclination or repugnance towards other lines of conduct that have become established or interdicted, because they are beneficial or injurious to the tribe; though neither the young nor the adults know why they have become established or interdicted. Instance the praiseworthiness of wife-stealing, and the viciousness of marrying within the tribe.

We may now ascend a stage to an order of incentives and restraints derived from these. The primitive belief is that every dead man becomes a demon, who remains somewhere at hand, may at any moment return, may give aid or do mischief, and is continually propitiated. Hence among other agents whose approbation or reprobation are contemplated by the savage as consequences of his conduct, are the spirits of his ancestors. When a child he is told of their deeds, now in triumphant tones, now in whispers of horror; and the instilled belief that they may inflict some vaguely-imagined but fearful evil, or give some great help, becomes a powerful incentive or deterrent. Especially does this happen when the narrative is of a chief, distinguished for his strength, his ferocity, his persistence in that revenge which the experiences of the savage make him regard as beneficial and virtuous. The consciousness that such a chief, dreaded by neighbouring tribes, and dreaded, too, by members of his own tribe, may reappear and punish those who have disregarded his injunctions, becomes a powerful motive. But it is clear, in the first place, that the imagined anger and the imagined satisfaction of this deified chief are simply transfigured forms of the anger and satisfaction displayed by those around; and that the feelings accompanying such imaginations have the same original root in the experiences which have associated an average of painful results with the manifestation of another's anger, and an average of pleasurable results with the manifestation of another's satisfaction. And it is clear, in the second place, that the actions thus forbidden and encouraged must be mostly actions that are respectively detrimental and beneficial to the tribe; since the successful chief is usually a better judge than the rest, and has the preservation of the tribe at heart. Hence experiences of utility, consciously or unconsciously organised, underlie his injunctions; and the sentiments which prompt obedience are, though very indirectly and without the knowledge of those who feel them, referable to experiences of utility.

This transfigured form of restraint, differing at first but little from the original form, admits of immense development. Accumulating traditions, growing in grandeur as they are repeated from generation to generation, make more and more superhuman the early-

recorded hero of the race. His powers of inflicting punishment and giving happiness become ever greater, more multitudinous and varied; so that the dread of divine displeasure, and the desire to obtain divine approbation, acquire a certain largeness and generality. Still the conceptions remain anthropomorphic. The revengeful deity continues to be thought of in terms of human emotions, and continues to be represented as displaying these emotions in human ways. Moreover, the sentiments of right and duty, so far as they have become developed, refer mainly to divine commands and interdicts; and have little reference to the natures of the acts commanded or interdicted. In the intended offering-up of Isaac, in the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, and in the hewing to pieces of Agag, as much as in the countless atrocities committed from religious motives by other early historic races, we see that the morality and immorality of actions, as we understand them, are at first little recognised; and that the feelings, chiefly of dread, which serve in place of them, are feelings felt towards the unseen beings supposed to issue the commands and interdicts.

Here it will be said that, as just admitted, these are not the moral sentiments properly so called. This is true. They are simply sentiments that precede and make possible those highest sentiments which do not refer either to personal benefits or evils to be expected from men, or to more remote rewards and punishments. Several comments are, however, called forth by this criticism. One is, that if we glance back at past beliefs and their correlative feelings, as shown in Dante's poem, in the mystery-plays of the middle ages, in St. Bartholomew massacres, in burnings for heresy, we get proof that in comparatively modern times right and wrong meant little else than subordination or insubordination—to a divine ruler primarily, and under him to a human ruler. Another is, that down to our own day this conception largely prevails, and is even embodied in elaborate ethical works—instance the "Essays on the Principles of Morality," by Jonathan Dymond, which recognises no ground of moral obligation save the will of God as expressed in the current creed. And yet a further is, that while in sermons the torments of the damned and the joys of the blessed are set forth as the dominant deterrents and incentives, and while we have prepared for us printed instructions "how to make the best of both worlds," it cannot be denied that the feelings which impel and restrain men are still largely composed of elements like those operative on the savage—the dread, partly vague, partly specific, associated with the idea of reprobation, human and divine, and the sense of satisfaction, partly vague, partly specific, associated with the idea of approbation, human and divine.

But during the growth of that civilisation which has been made possible by these ego-altruistic sentiments, there have been slowly

evolving the altruistic sentiments. Development of these has gone on only as fast as society has advanced to a state in which the activities are mainly peaceful. The root of all the altruistic sentiments is sympathy; and sympathy could become dominant only when the mode of life, instead of being one that habitually inflicted direct pain, became one which conferred direct and indirect benefits; the pains inflicted being mainly incidental and indirect. Adam Smith made a large step towards this truth when he recognised sympathy as giving rise to these superior controlling emotions. His "Theory of Moral Sentiments," however, requires to be supplemented in two ways. The natural process by which sympathy becomes developed into a more and more important element of human nature, has to be explained; and there has also to be explained the process by which sympathy produces the highest and most complex of the altruistic sentiments—that of justice. Respecting the first process, I can here do no more than say that sympathy may be proved, both inductively and deductively, to be the concomitant of gregariousness; the two having all along increased by reciprocal aid. Multiplication has ever tended to force into an association, more or less close, all creatures having kinds of food and supplies of food that permit association; and established psychological laws warrant the inference that some sympathy will inevitably result from habitual manifestations of feelings in presence of one another, and that the gregariousness being augmented by the increase of sympathy, further facilitates the development of sympathy. But there are negative and positive checks upon this development—negative, because sympathy cannot advance faster than intelligence advances, since it presupposes the power of interpreting the natural language of the various feelings, and of mentally representing those feelings; positive, because the immediate needs of self-preservation are often at variance with its promptings, as, for example, during the predatory stages of human progress. For explanations of the second process, I must refer to "The Principles of Psychology" (§ 202, first edition, and § 215, second edition) and to "Social Statics," part ii. chapter v.<sup>1</sup> Asking that in default of space these explanations may be taken for granted, let me here point out in what sense even sympathy, and the sentiments that result from it, are due to experiences of utility. If we suppose all thought of rewards or punishments, immediate or remote, to be left out of consideration, it is clear that any one who hesitates to inflict a pain because of the vivid representation of that pain which rises in his consciousness, is restrained, not by any sense of obligation

(1) I may add that in "Social Statics," chap. xxx., I have indicated, in a general way, the causes of the development of sympathy and the restraints upon its development—confining the discussion, however, to the case of the human race, my subject limiting me to that. The accompanying teleology I now disclaim.

or by any formulated doctrine of utility, but by the painful association established in him. And it is clear that if, after repeated experiences of the moral discomfort he has felt from witnessing the unhappiness indirectly caused by some of his acts, he is led to check himself when again tempted to those acts, the restraint is of like nature. Conversely, with the pleasure-giving acts: repetitions of kind deeds, and experiences of the sympathetic gratifications that follow, tend continually to make stronger the association between such deeds and feelings of happiness.

Eventually these experiences may be consciously generalised, and there may result a deliberate pursuit of the sympathetic gratifications. There may also come to be distinctly recognised the truths that the remoter results are respectively detrimental and beneficial—that due regard for others is conducive to ultimate personal welfare, and disregard of others to ultimate personal disaster; and then there may become current such summations of experience as “honesty is the best policy.” But so far from regarding these intellectual recognitions of utility as preceding and causing the moral sentiment, I regard the moral sentiment as preceding such recognitions of utility, and making them possible. The pleasures and pains directly resulting in experience from sympathetic and unsympathetic actions, had first to be slowly associated with such actions, and the resulting incentives and deterrents frequently obeyed, before there could arise the perceptions that sympathetic and unsympathetic actions are remotely beneficial or detrimental to the actor; and they had to be obeyed still longer and more generally before there could arise the perceptions that they are socially beneficial or detrimental. When, however, the remote effects, personal and social, have gained general recognition, are expressed in current maxims, and lead to injunctions having the religious sanction, the sentiments that prompt sympathetic actions and check unsympathetic ones are immensely strengthened by their alliances. Approbation and reprobation, divine and human, come to be associated in thought with the sympathetic and unsympathetic actions respectively. The commands of the creed, the legal penalties, and the code of social conduct, unitedly enforce them; and every child as it grows up, daily has impressed on it, by the words and faces and voices of those around, the authority of these highest principles of conduct. And now we may see why there arises a belief in the special sacredness of these highest principles, and a sense of the supreme authority of the altruistic sentiments answering to them. Many of the actions which, in early social states, received the religious sanction and gained public approbation, had the drawback that such sympathies as existed were outraged, and there was hence an imperfect satisfaction. Whereas these altruistic actions, while similarly having the religious sanction and

gaining public approbation, bring a sympathetic consciousness of pleasure given or of pain prevented ; and, beyond this, bring a sympathetic consciousness of human welfare at large, as being furthered by making altruistic actions habitual. Both this special and this general sympathetic consciousness become stronger and wider in proportion as the power of mental representation increases, and the imagination of consequences, immediate and remote, grows more vivid and comprehensive. Until at length these altruistic sentiments begin to call in question the authority of those ego-altruistic sentiments which once ruled unchallenged. They prompt resistance to laws that do not fulfil the conception of justice, encourage men to brave the frowns of their fellows by pursuing a course at variance with customs that are perceived to be socially injurious, and even cause dissent from the current religion ; either to the extent of disbelief in those alleged divine attributes and acts not approved by this supreme moral arbiter, or to the extent of entire rejection of a creed which ascribes such attributes and acts.

Much that is required to make this hypothesis complete must stand over until, at the close of the second volume of "The Principles of Psychology," I have space for a full exposition. What I have said will make it sufficiently clear that two fundamental errors have been made in the interpretation put upon it. Both Utility and Experience have been construed in senses much too narrow. Utility, convenient a word as it is from its comprehensiveness, has very inconvenient and misleading implications. It vividly suggests uses and means and proximate ends, but very faintly suggests the pleasures, positive or negative, which are the ultimate ends, and which, in the ethical meaning of the word, are alone considered ; and, further, it implies conscious recognition of means and ends—implies the deliberate taking of some course to gain a perceived benefit. Experience, too, in its ordinary acceptation, connotes definite perceptions of causes and consequences, as standing in observed relations, and is not taken to include the connections formed in consciousness between states that recur together, when the relation between them, causal or other, is not perceived. It is in their widest senses, however, that I habitually use these words, as will be manifest to every one who reads the "Principles of Psychology ;" and it is in these widest senses that I have used them in the letter to Mr. Mill. I think I have shown above that, when they are so understood, the hypothesis briefly set forth in that letter is by no means so indefensible as is supposed. At any rate, I have shown—what seemed for the present needful to show—that Mr. Hutton's versions of my views must not be accepted as correct.

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