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ETHICS OF EVOLUTION

JOHN C. KIMBALL,

BROOKLYN ETHICAL ASSOCIATION.



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The Ethics of Evolution,

A Lecture given before The Cambridge Confer-
ences and The Brooklyn Ethical Association

BY

JOHN C. KIMBALL,

Author of The Evolution of Arms and Armor, Zoology and Evolution, Natural Factors in American Civilization, Moral Questions in Politics, From Natural to Christian Selection, The Old and New Under Evolution, Immortal Youth, The World's Coming Better Social Condition As Indicated By Evolutionary Principles, &c.

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KEYNOTE.

AND I should define good conduct as the conduct voluntarily adopted which has been found by the accumulated experiences of mankind, consolidated into intuitions and transmitted by heredity, to be most conducive to the welfare of the individual and of the race, and say its rightness has come from its being in harmony with natural laws ; and bad conduct as that which has been found in the same way to be conducive to the ill-being of the individual and of the race, and as getting its wrongness from its being in violation of natural laws.

Briefly stated, ethics is humanity's hygiene.

—KIMBALL.

EDITORIAL.

THE present lecture on the Ethics of Evolution is one of a course on The Evolution of Ethics delivered before the Brooklyn Ethical Association in the years 1896 and 1897. Some of these lectures were also given at the Cambridge Conferences at "The Studio House" of Mrs. Ole Bull in Cambridge, Mass., of which conferences the late Dr. Lewis G. Janes was then director, having been previously President of The Brooklyn Ethical Association for several terms. The full list of these lectures is as follows :—

ORIGIN OF ETHICAL IDEAS,

Dr. Lewis G. Janes, M. A.

ETHICAL IDEAS OF THE HINDUS,

Swami Saradananda of India.

ETHICS OF ZOROASTER AND THE PARSIS,

Mr. Jehanghile Dossabhoy Cola, of Bombay, India.

ETHICS OF BUDDHISM,

Anagarika H. Dharmapala, of Colombo, Ceylon.

ETHICS OF THE CHINESE SAGES,

Prof. F. Huberty James, Imperial University, Peking.

ETHICS OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.

Prof. Jas. H. Hyslop, Columbia University, New York.

Editorial.

ETHICS OF THE STOICS AND EPICUREANS,
Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright, of New York.

ETHICS OF THE HEBREWS,
Rabbi Joseph Silverman of New York.

ETHICS OF THE MOHAMMEDANS,
Mr. Z. Sidney Sampson, of New York.

ETHICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,
Prof. Crawford Howell Toy, D. D., of Harvard University.

ETHICS OF THE GERMAN SCHOOLS,
Miss Anna Boynton Thompson, of Boston.

UTILITARIAN ETHICS,
Dr. Robert G. Eccles of Brooklyn, and
Prof. Benjamin Underwood, of Quincy, Ill.

ETHICS OF EVOLUTION,
Rev. John C. Kimball, of Sharon, Mass., and
M. Mangassarini of New York.

This series of lectures was proposed and arranged chiefly by our former esteemed President, Mr. Z. Sidney Sampson, whose death in 1897, followed by some changes in the Association, has been one of the causes which have helped to delay the publication.

Most of the lectures of the series as above catalogued are now in plates ready for printing, and all of these lectures will be ultimately included in one large volume which is soon to be issued, and some one or more lectures will also be printed in smaller special volumes according as their special importance or popularity may warrant.

The present lecture of Mr. Kimball on the Ethics of Evolution has been thought to be specially deserving of a place in our series on the Evolution of Ethics, on account of the extreme clearness and simplicity in his exposition of the basic principles of the rationalistic,

Editorial.

naturalistic or evolutionary schools of thought, and also by reason of the effective way in which he has solved to his satisfaction, both as a Christian and an Evolutionist, some of the chief "problems" or moral "paradoxes" in the "Ethics of Evolution." This lecture is the first of the series to be printed in individual form, and but a small edition is now issued, by special request, but a larger edition will follow later.

It was our intention to print this lecture together with Dr. Janes' lecture on The Evolution of Ethics and Prof. Underwood's lecture on Utilitarian Ethics, the three together to form one little volume which would give a good epitome of the Naturalistic, Rationalistic or Evolutionary school of Ethics, but this purpose we shall have to leave for fulfillment in a later edition.

The other lectures which will soon be issued in individual volumes are as follows :

THE ETHICS OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS;

by Prof. Hyslop.

THE ETHICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,

by Prof. Toy,

AND THE ETHICS OF THE CHINESE SAGES,

by the late Prof. F. Huberty James,

whose capture and death in Peking on June 20, 1900, after a most important service rendered to the Chinese and the foreigners, was one of the most tragic events of the siege.

C. M. H.

271 Ninth St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

August 20, 1902.

PREFACE.

This lecture was originally given before The Cambridge Conferences under the presidency of Dr. Lewis G. Janes; then was read before The Brooklyn Ethical Association, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and it is now printed by the kindness of Mr. Charles M. Higgins, a member of said Association.

A few changes have been made in its allusions and illustrations to bring it up to present date, but otherwise it retains its first form as one of a series on the general subject of Ethics.

J. C. K.

Unitarian Parsonage, Sharon, Mass.,

June 30, 1902.

The Ethics of Evolution.

BY JOHN C. KIMBALL.

The subject of this paper is distinctively the Ethics of Evolution, not the Evolution of Ethics—in other words, is the kind of ethics to which man is logically brought by the process of evolution, and not the process itself by which the results are brought about. Nevertheless, as there are differences of view among evolutionists with regard to the exact nature of the process, and as the results reached depend for their certainty somewhat on the view taken of how they are reached, I want, as a preliminary, to review the process part of the matter, and to state what is special in my own conception of its nature.

First, while accepting in general the revised utilitarian theory that ethics is the outcome under evolution of the accumulated experiences of our race with regard to what is fittest in conduct, consolidated into intuitions and transmitted from generation to generation by heredity, the theory so brilliantly set forth by Mr. Spencer and his disciples, I cannot go with them in the prominence they give to pleasure and pain as the chief things for which these experiences have been useful, or in holding, as they state it, that “acts are good or bad according as their aggregate effects increase men’s happiness or increase their misery.”

Utilitarianism is not necessarily confined to utility for happiness. To get at nature's form of it we must get at what nature wants things to be useful for, that is, at what nature in evolution is trying to bring about. What is it? Plainly, not pleasure alone, or pleasure even in the form of happiness, but growth, fuller and finer life, an ever better state of things alike in the universe at large and in its individual parts. As Longfellow has truly put it:

" Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way,
But to act that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day."

And the word utility, therefore, fairly includes everything which goes to promote this object. Pleasure is only one of these things, is a means and not an end, the guide and not the goal, the feather with which nature tips the arrow of conduct to send it the straighter to its mark, and not the mark itself. And even allowing it is an infallible guide, even allowing, what is undoubtedly true, that all good conduct tends in the end to happiness, and all bad conduct to misery, it surely is a mistake to put the means of a thing in the place of its end as constituting its distinctive character.

Compare conduct in this respect with the eating and drinking of food. These acts are pleasant, and the pleasure of them is beyond question the immediate motive which prompts them; and normally, food is good or bad according as it is agreeable or disagreeable to the taste. But nature's object in having us eat and drink is not the pleasure of eating and drinking, but growth, health, efficiency for work; and her supreme test as to whether food and drink are good or bad is whether they build us up as men and women and enable us the better to do our work in the world.

So with what is the food and drink of humanity's larger body. The hedonist is right in saying that its goodness and pleasantness must in the long run go together—is re-stating only the old Scripture doctrine that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness." But its goodness does not consist in its pleasantness, but in its being morally nutritious, and so promotive of the doer's inner health and strength. Mr. Spencer himself has places in which he recognizes this to be the real criterion, as where he says, "Evolution becomes highest when the conduct simultaneously achieves the greatest totality of life in self, in offspring, and in fellow men."

There is one word in our language which expresses grandly all these ends, a word which includes happiness, yet is beset with none of its objectionable implications, the word "welfare." And I should define good conduct as the conduct voluntarily adopted which has been found by the accumulated experiences of mankind, consolidated into intuitions and transmitted by heredity, to be most conducive to the welfare of the individual and of the race, and say its rightness has come from its being in harmony with natural laws; and bad conduct as that which has been found in the same way to be conducive to the ill-being of the individual and of the race, and as getting its wrongness from its being in violation of natural laws.

Briefly stated, ethics is humanity's hygiene.

But while utility is thus the test objectively of all conduct as to its goodness or badness, whatever its source may be, it seems to me, yet farther, that to give any form of it subjectively an ethical character, its motive, purpose, cost of effort, ought to be made more prominent than they have been thus far by evolutionists.

I cannot indeed go with those who would make the motive everything in determining the moral value of an act, for the world is full of cases in which the most outrageous deeds have had behind them motives which in themselves were sincerely good. It is not only hell down below, but some of the darkest, direst hells up here on earth which are paved with good intentions. It was a good intention which introduced slavery into America, kindled the fires of Smithfield, ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew, beheaded Sir Henry Vane, burned Joan of Arc, crucified Jesus Christ, and, indeed, if the Bible account is to be trusted, it was a good intention which at first introduced into the world "sin and all our woe."

But, on the other hand, if outward utility is made the sole test, some of the grandest deeds humanity has ever risen to—liberty's ten thousand defeated battle-fields, religion's long list of martyrs whose blood never became the seed of any church, reforms which perished in dungeon cells, and the vast army of seekers after scientific truth who found only error or failure—all these will have to be set down as ethically bad; while at the same time not a few deeds whose prompting was the meanest and sometimes the wickedest motives, but which unexpectedly turned out well, as, for instance, the stealing of negroes from Africa, England's persecution of our Puritan ancestors, the slaveholders' rebellion, Joseph's being sold by his brethren into Egypt, and even the old serpent's tempting of Adam and Eve into sin, must be regarded as good conduct. Last summer a dog on the St. Lawrence River leaped bravely into the water and rescued from drowning a child that had fallen from the wharf. Of course everybody praised and petted and daintily fed him for the act; and the next day, wanting more of such

treatment, and no child falling in to afford him the means of meriting it, the hedonistically philosophic animal deliberately pushed a nice little girl overboard and again plunged in for her rescue, evidently very much puzzled at the apparent inconsistency of ethics, when, on bringing her ashore, instead of caresses he received kicks. And if outward acts alone are to be considered, who shall say the dog did not have some reason for his disappointment, the deed itself in each case being the same.

Evidently, the only way of avoiding such inconsistency is to recognize both factors, the motive and the result, as contributing to render conduct ethical; and it is a recognition which has the fullest sanction of evolution. For all motives, whether they lead outwardly to failure or to success, have a reflex action inwardly on their subject, which must be taken into the account. If they are mean and bad, no matter how helpful to the world's welfare their outcome may be, they make the man himself mean and bad; if noble and good, no matter how utter their outward failure, they give him within a nobler and better soul. And this inner growth transmitted by heredity and consolidated into character becomes in after generations as truly a part of the world's ethical possessions as anything which results outwardly from conduct.

Instead of its being true, therefore, that "some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall," the truth is that goodness, though often mistaken in its action and leading in some things to harm, never wholly fails; and evil, though sometimes acting rightly and leading to some forms of benefit, never wholly succeeds. Though out of Spanish lust for gold came the discovery and exploration of this new world, all the same out of it came Spain's own decay. The cruelty which wrenched from Indian hands "the pearl of the Antilles" secreted in its own blood the

acid which all these later years has been dissolving it in the conqueror's very grasp. The valor of Naseby and Marston Moor, of Yorktown and Appomattox Court House, was the reflex action of liberty's ten thousand defeated battle-fields; and the martyrs' blood in religion which was never the seed of any church became the seed not less surely of the whole coming man.

"The aim, if reached or not, makes grand the life."

Again, as regards the altruistic element in ethics, I can but think that evolutionists, in taking a fully developed egoism as its starting point, have mistaken the process of its origin, and thereby have made for themselves a very needless difficulty. We all remember Pope's famous lines:

"Self love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake,
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still and still another spreads.
Friend, parent, neighbor first it will embrace,
His country next, and next the human race."

But ontologically it is vastly more probable that the real order was exactly the other way, the wider circle coming first, or, rather, it is probable that evolution followed here the same order as everywhere else, differentiated the various forms of love altogether out of one original homogeneity of feeling in which they all existed only as undeveloped possibilities, just as in astronomy nature did not make the planets, the satellites, and the sun all complete and then unite them in the solar system, but started them as one common nebulous mist, and evolved at the same time the system and its members. The ego and the alter are thus not father and child, but twin brothers,—

"Self love and social at one birth began,"—

it being philosophically just as impossible to develop the one without the other as in magnetism to get a north pole without getting equally a south pole. In the lower forms of life the two are only partially differentiated even now, their communities having a common gregarious self in which the individual selves are hardly more distinct than are those of its cells in an animal body. Years ago, before I had learned my wider ethical relations, and so, though ordained to be a fisher of men, used occasionally in the summer to indulge in being a fisher of fish, I have been in a line of boats off the Beverly shore half a mile long, pulling in mackerel as fast as the hook could be thrown, when suddenly, though the water remained full of them, they would cease biting with me and at the same time with every boat in the line. Then after half an hour or so, just as my ministerial conscience was regaining its sway, and about to send me home to my proper vocation, my hook would be seized, and instantly I would hear the captives flapping into boats the whole length of the line, evidently as much the result of one impulse as if they had been a single fish. Wordsworth with his close observation of nature noticed the same trait long ago in a herd of cattle:

"The cattle are grazing, their heads never raising,
There are forty feeding as one."

Haeckel somewhere describes a creature named the flimmer-ball, whose parts some of the time swim about as independently as a shoal of minnows, but which, when frightened, unite again and move as one organic mass. Bees in a swarm are but a single body. And among human beings the same all-embracing tribal self is to be seen in the sway of fashion, in all boyhood's simultaneously bringing out its marbles with the first warm days of spring, and in the uniformity with which Easter

bonnets appear as a part of Easter religion on the heads of all women, and summer hats disappear about the tenth of September, as by a common inner breeze, from the heads of all men. Especially is it seen in all panics, as at the battle of Chancellorsville, when the whole Eleventh Army Corps, with eyes bulging and hair on end, came rushing back pell mell on the very bayonets of the corps behind them, a vast shoal of human beings turned into a gigantic flimmer-ball in which all individual selves reverted to the common animal self out of which they had been evolved.

With this homogeneity of the ego and alter to start with, corresponding with what in paleontology is called "a prophetic type," it is easy to see that as it differentiated into distinct individuals, each individual must have inherited and developed in itself some share of what was in the original common stock, regard for self and regard for the whole, so that the command of Jesus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," that is, as being thy larger self, is not a mere arbitrary precept, but an ethic of evolution which has behind it the foundation principle of all society.

It is a process which is still going on, integration, the third great stage of evolution, being the phase of it which is now most in evidence; and as in astronomy when the separating planets were organized into the solar system, the gravity which had made them originally one nebulous mass was not lost, but became the force which is now holding them organically together and keeping them forever acting on each other, so by the same beautiful law, as fast as the units of our race are integrated in their social system, the regard for the common homogeneous self which they had at first, becomes the affection which holds them in altruistic relations, and makes each of them

still interested in the welfare of the whole, so that as Pope says :

“ There's not a blessing individuals find
But somehow leans and harkens to mankind.”

Again, as regards the origin of that mysterious feeling in ethics which is ordinarily denoted by the little word “ought,” or, when we want to talk Kant, by the big words, “categorical imperative,” it seems to me that evolutionists, in trying to derive it from the inherited teachings of those in authority, from the dread of punishment, from the reasoning that to get rights ourselves we must give them to others, and the like, have justly exposed their efforts to the criticisms of unbelievers, and have failed to use one of the most fundamental and far-reaching of their own principles, the natural tendency of things to vary ; a principle set forth so clearly by Mr. Darwin in his great work on the Origin of Species, and one which exists not only in all forms of outward life, but in all parts of our inward being. Oughtness, obligation, is indeed, as all the intuitional opponents of ethical evolution insist, a new species of feeling ; but there is no reason to suppose that it did not originate, like all other new species of things, simply as a variation by minute changes from an older and more primitive species. It was probably at first the simple compulsion to get food and to do the other immediate visible things which were found by experience to be necessary for the continuance of life ; then in the course of ages, it varied with men, into the abstract feeling of compulsion to do whatever the inherited experiences of the race had shown to be essential for its welfare, those that had the variations and acted upon them surviving and leaving descendants, those that had them not, inevitably dying out. Must,—that is the missing link in the chain between appetite and oughtness ; duty—that

the Messiah which came to men, as Jesus did, that they might have life and have it more abundantly. A rudimentary indication of its humble origin still remains in the very words of the beatitude which is its highest expression, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And thus, instead of the moral law's being dragged down by evolution, as Mr. Balfour sneers, from the sublimity of the starry heavens to the ingenuity of the protective blotches on a beetle's wing, is not its real grandeur increased by its being made by it, like gravity,—rather, like Deity, a power which holds both the starry heavens and the humblest dust all in one comprehensive grasp?

Beyond oughtness, and as a crown to all the other factors concerned in ethical evolution, I have to recognize that of free will, not free will of the illusive nature that many evolutionists have made it, that is, freedom to will what one pleases, what pleases being as fixed in its action as what forces, nor yet free will as itself a cause and originator of force,—I cannot follow Mr. Martineau in that conception,—but free will as a self-determining faculty, able to choose which among pleasing things shall be its motive, and a director of causes and forces,—the free will which makes with heredity and environment the three great factors of all conduct. I know well the difficulties such a free will involves as regards law and motive and the chain of cause and effect, and that the exact process of its origin under evolution has never been explained. But it is no harder to deal with in this respect than life, or self-consciousness, or any of man's higher spiritual faculties,—is simply one round more of a ladder, each of which, though taking us into a world which is outside of all previous science, is found ultimately to take us to one

which is inside of a yet larger science. It is what we are as directly conscious of as we are of existence itself; and the recognition of its reality is the only thing which can save evolution from the charge of a fraud at the very foundation of man's moral nature, the only thing which can give ethics its supremely distinctive character over all other conduct, or make it otherwise than a very delicate kind of mechanism, the only thing out of which it can get honestly its feelings of responsibility, remorse and self-approval. So I say with Emerson :

" For he who worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man."

Passing now from these special points in the process of ethical evolution, to the results of the process, the first thing to be noticed is that ethical evolution does not exclude those results which have been arrived at by other systems, but includes alike them and their explanations,—differing in this respect from all other systems. The others are like the medical student at an emergency hospital where a good deal of rivalry existed to see which of the young men, when a call came to them for the ambulance, would get to the injured man first and bring him in. Having a very slow horse, this student was for a long while the last at the accident, and returning so often empty wagoned, he was a good deal jeered at by his comrades for his ill success. By and by a change occurred by which he got a fresh young horse, and the very next day came in ahead of all the rest with four wounded men. The question at once arose of how he had done it. " Oh," said he, gleefully, " I drove full speed with my new horse to the one knocked-down man I was called to, and in galloping back I knocked down

myself three more men and brought them along also." That is exactly what ethics hitherto has done,—in getting to its operating room any one of the world's four great systems, the theological, the legal, the intuitional and the utilitarian, it has had to knock down each of the other three and has brought in their shattered remains also.

Ethical evolution on the other hand is like the well-known Irish soldier with the group of prisoners he one day captured and brought into camp. Instead of knocking down either theology, law, utility or intuitionalism, it has captured them all without a bruise or a blow, as he did, by simply "surrounding them."

It is this which is the distinguishing mark of all great truths, their reconciling and including on a higher plane what lower down were only antagonistic half truths; and I know of nothing in the history of human thought which has done this so completely and beautifully, and with such a wealth of far-reaching suggestions as Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics*. Somebody has called it his weakest book. But to my mind it is his strongest and most original, not excepting even his *Psychology*,—the Columbus discovery of a new continent on the globe of truth. Its hedonism is only the mistake of supposing its new world to be the old Indias, not affecting seriously its real grandeur. And, if he had written nothing else, this alone would have made him what I believe the future will write him, the leading mind of the nineteenth century.

Equally, evolution includes and justifies the various practical ethics of all nations, races and ages. Take the great central ones now held by all civilized people as the highest to which the human mind has come,—temperance, chastity, honesty, veracity, benevolence, self-sacrifice,

good citizenship, reverence and the like,—evolution does not with its moving into its ethical house propose to store them all away, like old furniture, into the garret of the past, and put brand new ones in their place, any more than the nebular hypothesis proposes to change the stars, or geology to re-make the strata of the earth. It recognizes that like the stars and the earth they may in the course of ages be modified and have new relations, but it will be with no shock, no interregnum of virtue and duty. All evolution is in its very nature conservative. It points out how everything which is has a tap-root reaching down the eons into the world's primal dust,—shows how its future will have to come, not by any fiat of religion, or science, or legislation, but as the slow outgrowth of the present and the past. And, pre-eminently, it does so with regard to our age's great central virtues and duties,—traces them from their far-off beginnings, shows that though often poorly kept, they have survived, according to its own principles, only because in their struggle for existence they have been found the fittest for men to live by, and emphasizes that by its own definition of ethics as that conduct which is most conducive to human welfare, they are the ethics of evolution.

Look at the history of one of them which many persons have thought to be the most incapable of originating and flourishing and being sanctioned under the doctrine of utility, that of self-sacrifice. How, it is asked, can a kind of conduct which consists in the individual's giving up his own life, and a nation's giving up the lives of its noblest and best citizens, be conducive, in this world at any rate, to either individual or social welfare ?

Well, to get at its root we must go back far beyond humanity into that homogeneousness of tribal life and

care, out of which egoism and altruism have alike come. When a flock of grasshoppers out on the prairie meets a line of burning grass, its foremost ranks do not turn back, as a single grasshopper would, but unhesitatingly plunge in, and the rest do the same, and so on, each perishing till the fire is extinguished and a bridge formed over which the main body, or, perhaps, as the only ones left, the rear ranks, pass on. It looks at first like a magnificent example of self-sacrifice away down in the lower parts of the animal kingdom, something which could not originate in any evolutionized love of life, or in anything but a Heaven-implanted altruism. But really the swarm is only one large, loosely-jointed body, a part of which dies to save the other part, and is precisely what every individual animal does with the cells of which it is made up when it wants to rush through fire, is precisely what the most selfish person does when about to fall,—flings out his hands to get bruised rather than have his whole body harmed,—is done from the love of their common life. And when this common life with its common love develops, as it does in man, into individual lives with their individual wills and selves, how natural it is that the instinctive impulse to their common preservation, sacrificing a part to save the whole, should develop with them into that grand voluntary altruism which can sing that

“Whether on the scaffold high,
Or in the battle’s van
The noblest place for man to die
Is where he dies for man.”

How inevitable is it also, that those tribes of animals and those nations of men which have the most of such individuals ready to sacrifice themselves in battle and in danger for the common good, should survive, while those

which have them not, or have the fewest of them, must inevitably in the struggle for existence be overwhelmed and perish, the evolutionary fulfillment of Jesus' words, "he that findeth his life, shall lose it,"—lose it in the dying out of his tribe; "and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it again,"—find it in the larger life of his nation and his race. And who shall say that the fagots around the martyr's stake are any the less ethical because they are thus only at the upper end of a long line of fires at whose other extreme a flock of grasshoppers died; or that the cross on which Jesus hung, "towering o'er the wrecks of time," loses any of its moral grandeur because its foot rests in the ashes of earth's unnumbered animal myriads that gave their little undivided shares of life in order that the world's great whole might live; or that Mr. Kidd is not most profoundly mistaken when he declares in his "Social Evolution," that there is nothing in nature which can prompt a man to sacrifice his present good for the good of posterity, and that we must go to a heavenly religion to get what is thus rooted at the beginning in every phase of earthly life and without which no earthly life could ever be?

But, while the ethics of evolution thus includes the highest existing ethics and those of the highest races, it includes, also, just as certainly, those of the lowest character, alike in the present and the past, and of the lowest races, even the most savage and uncivilized ones. And how is it possible for any set of things grouped under the same name to be more utterly different from each other than many of these are? Look at a few specimens. The Ashantee girl who, when she wants to be very dressy, ties a twig to her back hair,—puts on this and nothing more,—is morally shocked at the English

girl who is so ashamed of her natural charms that she covers them up with yards of cloth. A man with only one wife is despised for his selfishness by the Mokololo women exactly as an old bachelor without any wife is by all self-respecting Christian women. Filial duty among the Fijians is performed by a son's tenderly burying his old mother alive. Honesty is practised among the tribes of the Philippine Islands by their keeping a careful debit and credit account of each other's cut-off heads—tribes that some of our statesmen to-day are anxious to make our fellow American citizens. A Mayoruma man's great objection to becoming a Christian was that if killed in battle he was liable to be buried and eaten up by worms, instead of being broiled and consumed by human beings. An Asiatic chief in his last sickness, being urged by a missionary to forgive his enemies as a preparation for dying, answered with the most self-righteous complacency that he hadn't any,—he had already killed them all. And generally the graces and good deeds by which a savage expects to be saved are the number of lives he has taken, the extent to which he has hated his foes, the amount of property he has stolen, and the success with which he has lied.

It is a difference which no other ethical system has been able to explain, except as the work of an evil spirit or of man's inherent depravity, but which under evolution becomes perfectly explicable as the prompting of his inherent goodness, each form of it being the kind of ethics which the people producing it have found to be in their circumstances and for their stage of development most conducive to their preservation and welfare.

Look at one of its apparently worst manifestations, that of children's putting their parents to death as soon as they arrive at old age, so different from the civilized

one of caring for them then as the most delightful of duties. It has been explained as the prompting of a religious belief that as people die, mature and strong, or old and weak, so in the future they will always be. But its origin is really ethical. Among tribes liable at any moment to be attacked by foes, and always living on the narrowest margin of food, the old are a burden whose keeping or removal makes all the difference between extinction or survival. Those tribes which kept them alive were starved and defeated; those which killed them became strong and victorious. The killing proved to be the conduct most conducive to the common welfare; and just as the Russian mother in her sleigh pursued by wolves, flung to them a part of her children to save the rest, so these poor savages, pursued by the wolves of famine and war, threw over from their life-carriage those who had come to their second childhood, rather than see their whole tribe perish. Friends, let us thank God we are living in a social state where such things are no longer needed; but let us not talk of total depravity, and of no ethics at all among those,—our own ancestors probably doing the same thing,—who by such acts have brought us safely through the wilds of time to our civilized home. Their deeds are but side blossoms on that one great tree of sacrifice, flowering with so many yellow and crimson petals, on whose topmost bough is the blossom that all Christendom honors to-day as ethics' highest reach.

It is this necessary relativity of conduct to a people's social condition which explains the degradation of their life which civilization so often carries to the barbarous races. Because the higher ethics are good for Christian lands, it does not follow that they are necessarily good for some far off isle of the sea just emerging from

savagery, or from some nearer new state out West like prize-ring Nevada, just sinking back into brutality. The story is told of an old farmer who having a two-year-old colt he wished to train so as not to shy at every unexpected sight and sound, mounted him one morning and ordered his young son to hide behind the fence at the end of the lane and "boo" at him as he came along. Down the lane they went, the animal with his ears erect and his head alert, ready with the first appearance of a foe to take the alarm; and at the appointed place out rushed the boy flinging up his hat and at the top of his voice shouting "Boo-oo!" Instantly up in the air went the colt's heels and flat on the ground went his rider's body. "You young rascal, you!" exclaimed the irate old man, picking himself up and shaking his fist at the boy, "what did you frighten that horse for?" "Why, father", replied the young hopeful, "you told me to run out and say "boo." "Well" answered the sire cooling down, but still somewhat severely, "it was altogether too big a boo for such a small horse." So with the exalted Christian morality that our young missionaries have shouted to the world's old heathen tribes mounted on their half-tamed social state, it has been "altogether too big a boo for such a small horse," and the result has been, as in the Sandwich Islands, their prostration physically and morally to the earth.

On the other hand, we have in our modern civilization not a few ethical principles and ethical practices which are the outcome of evolution and entirely appropriate to a savage and half-civilized state, but whose requisite environment the world has outgrown, and that are as harmful and incongruous now as those of civilization are to savagery. Just as in the human body there are rudimentary organs like the coecal sac of the intestines,

the thyroid gland of the throat, the muscles of the scalp, the frontal sinus of the brain, and the air passages between the mouth and the ear, which are the shrivelled and often harmful remnants of devices that were large and valuable in the animals from which the human body came, so in humanity's social body we have the same phenomena, ethics which in our animal and savage ancestry were all right, but which in its civilized state have only the place and are doing only the mischief of rudimentary organs. A while ago one of the Dime Museums over in Boston had on exhibition an orang-outang named Joe, that his captors had dressed up in gentlemen's clothes, and taught to eat with a knife and fork, drink out of a glass, hold receptions, and even write on a card. But his anatomy and brain and all his own natural actions were those still of a wild man of the woods. Well, what are the ethics of our newspapers, our congresses, our pugilistic encounters, our tariff laws and our Bradley-Martin balls but moral Joe Outangs,—practices evolved in the woods and well enough there, but which are now only dressed up in civilized clothes, taught the outside rules of etiquette, and enabled to hold receptions, wield a pen, write articles and sometimes sermons, and that are fit only to be shown in Dime Museums?

Nor is the contrast that of ludicrousness alone. All savages in the midst of their ferocity have some regard for children as conducive to the tribal welfare; and one day out in Borneo, a Dyak warrior was seen running through a captured village, holding tenderly under one arm a little infant, and grasping under the other the gory head of its slain father. We are horrified at the thought of such an act in a savage; but what is all our civilization as yet but the mingling of the ethics which on the one side holds orphan children in its asylum arms,

and on the other builds battle ships and raises vast armies with which to grasp in war the gory heads by the hundred thousand of the children's slain fathers,—what all our Jingo statesmen but would be Dyak savages?

It is this which is the real ethical character of all modern war, a mixing up of methods and virtues which were once vital elements in the world's great struggle for existence, but which it has now largely outgrown, with the finer and often directly antagonistic ones that are the special feature of our own later time.

Look at our recent war with Spain as a good illustration of their incompatibility. We began it professedly in the interests of altruism and philanthropy,—when it broke out were sending food by the hundred thousand dollars' worth to Cuba's starving reconcentrados. What was the war's first act? To blockade Cuban ports so that neither our own nor any other vessels could get to their relief, thus carrying on Spain's work of starvation in a more horrible form than she herself had ever thought of. What was the relation of our country's undoubted courage, gallantry and heroism towards Spain all through the struggle? That of a strong, well-fed, modern-armed man, ruthlessly trampling down a weak, underfed, crutches-armed cripple. What are the ethics of the two miserable wars which are now being waged by the world's two leading nations? Those of imperialism and "criminal aggression," to extend liberty and republicanism; those of starving women to make their husbands want peace; those of water-cure tortures to help on the enemy's veracity; those of a treachery in capturing the Filipino leader that an Iroquois Indian would have been ashamed of, accompanied with a denunciation of the Filipino people as having no sense of honor, that a knight of chivalry might have felt.

Who can wonder that the nations urging such moral standards are themselves becoming demoralized?

The fact is, war is a rudimentary organ in the body of our modern civilization,—our thirty-feet-thirteen-inch cannon, with all their hugeness, but the vermiform appendix to the ethics of evolution; and however useful such an organ may have been in digesting the crude moral food of our wilder state, it is not strange that its presence now should result in cases of national appendicitis.

With the rudimentary ethics of the past, now antiquated and dying out, Evolution has also what may be called its embryonic, or growing ethics, which, though the very opposite of the other in its own youth, is nevertheless equally the product of a by-gone age. It is a well known fact of biology that each animal, including even man, has in its growth to pass through all the ancestral forms from the ameba up, out of which its race has been evolved. A similar thing takes place in a man's moral growth, his passing through all the various forms of it from that of the savage up, which society has ever known, only here it occurs after his physical birth. It is thus that we have infant ethics, schoolboy ethics, football ethics, politician ethics, sportman ethics and courtship ethics, all mixed in with our civilized Christian ethics, and gradually leading up out of themselves into its higher form.

Many a poor mother does not understand the necessity of these lower stages, and so when she sees her darling boy begin his moral life by telling lies, killing cats, swearing oaths, stealing tarts, fighting other boys, domineering over his little sister, and similar undeveloped ethical performances, she is in despair, fears the gallows is the only moral agency which will ever lift him up,

and wonders how civilized people like herself and his father could ever have given birth to such a savage,—has his actions pointed to, perhaps, by her minister as evidences of his inborn total depravity.

Let her not be alarmed. They are only the inevitable rounds of the moral ladder he is climbing over into his ethical manhood. Give him plenty of good bread and butter and play and parental love, and a modicum of minister and Sunday School, and unless he is a case of arrested development, some of which, alas, the highest evolution does now and then show, she will see him rise out of all which is thus embryonic into an adult ethics which is all that even a mother's prayers have ever asked for.

Then, as accounting for another part of the mixed morality which under evolution we find in the world, is the necessity nature is under, when she wants to make some very great improvement in society,—change it, say, from a military to an industrial state, or from savagery into civilization,—the necessity of tearing up and rendering useless much of what was once her very precious work. If anybody thinks evolution is all plain sailing, either physically or morally,—thinks that nature never has any perplexities and hard problems to solve and to hesitate over, he is woefully mistaken. Some of us passing through Boston a few years ago, while its great subway was being built, had an opportunity to notice the awful havoc that had to be made with the city's past conveniences, and the awful condition of the old streets which resulted,—indeed the Hub people are not yet over feeling sore at what they suffered during the insertion of this new spoke in their wheel. But no engineer tunneling a subway through Boston ever came across so many sacred graveyards, networks of gas pipe and water pipe, involv-

ing now and then a terrible explosion, foundations of old churches, concealed cesspools and venerable Sam Adams monuments, which he had to cut through and push aside, as evolution does every time it opens a way into any new part of its domains.

See how it has been in securing man's physical rectitude. The animal body from which the human one was derived, going as it did on all fours, had the valves of its veins, the ligaments which support its embryo young, and the lenses and muscles of its eyes, all admirably adjusted to its horizontal position. But when nature wanted to set the animal upright and make a man's body out of it, all these arrangements contrived and fixed with such ages of care became wrong in their position, and no longer of any use, the valves in the horizontal veins where they are not needed instead of in the perpendicular one where they are needed, the ligaments at the side of their burden instead of under it, and the optic lenses and muscles usable only by a strain out of their natural position, so that not a few of the weaknesses, sicknesses and imperfections of the human body, including its spectacle-wearing, have arisen inevitably from its being set physically upright.

So when nature set man morally upright, it involved a similar undoing of his old ethics: the checks and supports provided for his animal estate became useless, his appetites and instincts tending one way, his aspirations and intuitions another, while to see duty clearly, he had to get artificial helps. And now, every time a great reform is introduced into society, that is, the giving of it more uprightness, it involves inevitably a disturbance of the old safeguards, a breaking up of the old associations, and the making of it for awhile an ethical, subway-building Boston.

Coming in part under this same head is the confusion of duties which arises in a transition state from the necessity not of suppressing all at once a lower set of principles to make way for a higher set, but of keeping for awhile both of them in active operation. Nature in evolution does not bring one stage of progress sharply to an end before beginning another, but splices them together by letting the old run taperingly on side by side with the enlarging new, till the new is strong enough in itself and in its environment to act alone. While the ethics of the world's past, and especially of its animal past, has been the survival of the fittest and the killing of the unfit, that is of those who relatively were weak and poor and unadapted to their surroundings, the coming human ethics is the preservation of the unfit by the fittest, the ethics that is especially the teaching of Christianity. But to carry out the higher principle all at once would crowd the world with invalids, idiots, criminals, tramps and barbarians, and would undo all that nature for ages at such an enormous cost has been trying to do. So for the present we are acting and are obliged to act in part under each of these two ethical systems, our churches and charitable societies and a few advanced individuals doing all they can to save the weak and poor, and our governments and business institutions and society at large all they can to crowd them, if not out of existence, yet down to an ever lower place; and it is from the need of using both of what are such opposite principles that arise not a few of the great problems of our modern civilization,—our Indian question, our country's Philippine policy, the morality of England's South African War, the imposing of tariffs, how to deal with trusts, and, towering above all else, the world's Chinese problem.

Yet, while evolution thus sanctions the use of both

principles, the proportion in which they shall be used is left to statesmanship and to humanity as their grand opportunity, and its lesson for them is that stress ought to be laid ever more and more on the side of the weak and the poor and physically unfit, those alike among individuals, nations and races,—ought to be in the direction of their survival and of their development each after its own type. By a beautiful law of nature their care lifts the fit up into a higher kind of fitness, that which can be reached in no other way ; and in the world at large, while it will prevent its exclusive possession by the highest race of the highest religion, highest government, highest civilization, it will result in a fitness which is vastly better than that of the best alone,—in a variety of race, religion, government and civilization where, as in the human body, the humblest organs will have their special place and work and will unite with the highest in producing a richer life and completer form than the highest could without their help.

Periodicity, or what Mr. Spencer calls rhythm, is another element which has to be considered in accounting for the ethics of evolution. Nothing in nature moves forward, or by the very constitution of nature can move forward, with even pace. There is first an advance ; then a rest, or perhaps retreat ; then an advance again a little further ; then another rest or retreat and advance, and so on, like the coming and going of the waves on the sea shore in what as a whole is a rising tide. Some of these periods, as with the waves of light, are only the millionth part of a second apart ; some, as with religion and business prosperity, stretch over twenty or thirty years ; and some, as with the evolution of the different forms of life on the earth, are eons in length.

The development of ethics follows this same law of rhythm. Just now the world is in the midst of a retreating wave, is losing apparently much of what we hoped it had permanently gained. Wars are raging far and wide over the earth. Nations which took part in its great Peace Congress are among the first to rush to arms. The world's foremost republic is lapsing into imperialism. The grand principles of liberty, self-government and equality of rights, set forth in our Declaration of Independence, after a hundred years of reverence are being laughed to scorn. Even the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount are denied, that, too, by some of its own preachers. The class distinctions of birth have given place to the class distinctions of wealth. The question with regard to the half civilized nations of the earth is which of the civilized ones in dividing them up shall get the largest slice of their territory. And everywhere the ape and tiger in man, which seemed to be dying out, have sprung up again into new life.

It is a going back which apparently justifies pessimism and is filling many good people with despair,—is some thing which here and there is even ascribed to evolution as its cause. Evolution is its cause, not the doctrine of evolution, however, but evolution itself. It is one of its great laws of progress, is a retreat which is the necessary preparation for another advance, is a going backward of the jumper only that he may leap a higher fence and reach a farther mark. Geology has had its times, one of them especially at the close of what is called the Permian Era, when the whole physical world appeared to have reached its climax, and all its life alike animal and vegetable to be either dying out or sinking to a lower type; and the finite observer looking then over its condition, would equally have despaired of its future. But, as the geologist can now see, it was only one of the stages preceding its

great human era, was a sinking and dying, out of which have come the rising and living of the better and fairer world which is ours to-day. So with this Permian moral era. Peace will spring with new beauty from the fields which are being fertilized with war. America will return with fresh loyalty to its Declaration of Independence, the pulpit with revived ardor to preaching the Sermon on the Mount. The Jingo politician will be assigned to his true place as an ethic fossil. And the door of the East, which cannon can only smash, will be found to open wide to the touch of him who said of old, "I stand at the door and knock."

Then, beyond this, there is under evolution a relativity even of the highest virtues to each other and to their environment which makes them vary with circumstances as to the imperativeness of their use. As Mr. Spencer has well said, "Absolute ethics are possible only in an absolutely perfect social state." Some of them, to be sure, as those of honesty, veracity, justice, fidelity, kindness, self-sacrifice and the like, have been shown by such ages of human experience to be safest for man's welfare as to have in them for all ordinary cases the force of intrinsic rightness, and he must be a very bold man who would dare depart from their dictates.

But the world has found that all rules, even moral rules, have their exceptions, and that all stars, even the starry virtues, differ from one another in the degrees of their brightness. Situations arise now and then in which it is impossible to be faithful to the one without being false to the other. There are conflicts of ethical as well as legislative laws; kings in the realms of duty as well as of state between whose claims occasionally we have to choose. And much as we may condemn the principle in

its Jesuistic shape of doing evil that good may come, we have out of our very love of right to say that when two evils are presented as alternatives, duty prompts, evil though it be, the doing of the least. Veracity is one of the manliest of virtues, lying one of the meanest vices ; yet, if the cherry tree cut down is that of a patriot army's movements, and the issue between a truth and an untruth that of a country's liberty, where is the George Washington fit to be its leader who will not say "I did *not* do it with my little hatchet." When Booth was trying to escape after the murder of Lincoln, was it right to give him food and shelter, that food and shelter which in any ordinary case it would have been a sin to have refused? Who to save his wife and children from outrage does not feel that he ought to deceive and maim, and if need be, kill their assailant? What are all wars, defensive as well as offensive, but a legalized cheating, wounding, pilfering and destroying of the foe, a direct violation right through from opening shot to closing shout, of religion's Golden Rule? And, indeed, what is self-sacrifice itself, the highest virtue, but a deliberate choice between two wrongs, the wrong of allowing one's own life to be destroyed, which, if a man can prevent it, is suicide, or the wrong of seeing one's country, or cause, or fellow creatures, destroyed, which, if he can prevent it, is murder?

These are not questions merely of scholastic casuistry, but of actual life, specimens of what every man, consciously or unconsciously, has daily to meet; and the difficulties they involve are not peculiar to the ethics of evolution, but are what all ethics have to deal with. There is no system which can make right in spite of its etymology, otherwise than sometimes a very crooked line; none which can have its higher without having also

its lower law ; none which on a revolving earth can make its moral, any more than its mathematical perpendicular, always lie in the same direction as regards absolute space.

The advantage of evolution over other systems is that it provides at its very core a principle for dealing consistently with such difficulties, and that is the principle which makes the question, which of them is conducive to the highest welfare, the supreme test of their rightness. It is no Greek Grammar which after giving a rule has to give it a long list of exceptions more difficult to learn than the rule itself ; no martinet soldier to enforce routines without regard to results ; no ship's captain with the motto "Obey orders, even if you break owners." It makes every man a part owner in the world's great ship, puts the port of a common well-being before him and says, While you use compass and stars and chart and all the experiences of the past as your help, use also your own brains, use also that force of evolution which is working in you not less than in all the past, and subordinate everything else, subordinate even compass and chart, if need be, to the one grand duty of reaching the port,— would say, were the alternative presented, let the heavens stay up even though justice fall. And what is this after all, wicked as it may sound in the phrases of evolution, but the great Christian doctrine, so precious to us in its Scripture words, that love is the fulfilling of the law, that each man is to judge for himself what is right, and that it is the spirit in which a thing is done, not obedience to its letter, which giveth life ?

In thus making duties relative to each other and dependent on their environment for their imperativeness, the ethics of evolution is of necessity intensely practical.

It would not indeed go to the extent of the Honduras woman Mr. Spencer speaks of, who refused to kill a hen for her sick husband, because, as she said, "her husband might die and then she would lose him and the hen, too"—would not refuse to follow blindly sometimes a generous impulse. But on the whole, it does not believe much in pursuing virtue for its own sake "in scorn of consequence," especially when it is others who are involved in the consequence. Before it can say whether a thing is good, it wants to know what it is good for. Art, poetry, music, religion, beauty in all its forms are not despised by it, for it recognizes that they are all possible ministers to the world's well-being, but when they palpably fail of such use and are only corrupting and degrading, it has no toleration for the reverence of art "for art's sake," or of "beauty as its own excuse for being," but joins with the most rigid iconoclast in its readiness to stamp them out. Deformity, poverty, pain, discord, ugliness in all its forms, likewise, are looked upon by it leniently as transition states and as possible means of discipline to man's higher nature, but never as objects to be sought after for what they are in themselves. Miss Frances Power Cobbe, while visiting a hospital of Incurables in Rome, filled with wretches who had so little in the way of food that they fairly screamed to her for bread, asked an attendant, "Are there no charitable people in Rome to come and see them?" "Oh, yes," the sister replied, "there are the Princess So-and-so, and the Countess Blank-and-blank, saintly ladies, who come once a week." "And don't they provide them with food?" "No, signora, they don't do such things as that for them." "Then in Heaven's name what do they do?" "Oh, they comb their hair," hair filled with filth and vermin; and these great ladies took upon themselves the task not to relieve the sufferers, but as a work of the

greater merit in saving their own souls because of its disgustingness. Evolutionary ethics has no place for such merits. It is very suspicious of any salvation which is to be realized away off in some other world. It believes in direct, outward salvation as the first thing to be sought, the salvation of the sufferers rather than of the saviors. Its method is to get rid of poverty and pain and ugliness, not to idealize them; to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and clean the filthy, not to comb their hair. It is no anchorite, but a strong, well-fed, well-clothed, business-like man, most glad when it can do both things at once, make a dollar for the world and make a dollar for itself. And while in case of need it is ready to sacrifice everything it has, even life itself, for the common good, it believes that when the same thing can be accomplished without self-sacrifice, to do it without is the greater virtue and ought to be chosen.

Again, if evolution takes off something from the rigid peaks of virtue, it adds vastly more to its breadth and depth. Every act which bears on welfare, and not what are called the intrinsic duties alone, is endowed by it with moral significance, the digging of a sewer more so at times than the preaching of a sermon, going to a political meeting than going to a church,—our eating and drinking, as Paul says, what can be done to the glory of God. And it includes logically our conduct to animals as well as to all classes of men, for it recognizes them all as the unfolding of one life-principle, and all as having their well-being as a means and part of the world's well-being. Indeed, there is nothing in the universe so trivial and minute that under such ethics its bettering may not become a duty. Hitherto, as you know, the germ theory of disease has been that human ills are caused by too

active microbes, and that the way to cure men was to kill microbes ; but now, with more recent discoveries, it begins to look as if the cause of diseases is further back,—that it is only sick microbes which make sick men, and that to cure the men we need first to cure the microbes. So with humanity's larger moral body, to make sure of curing all its sicknesses, we must make healthy all its atoms.

“ From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten-thousandth, breaks the chain alike,”

and to have virtue wholly divine, it will have to be like the Deity Himself

“ As perfect in a hair as in a heart.”

Moreover, with all the flexibility of its application and all the indistinctness of its outlines, the ethics of evolution is very far from being, as so many even scholars have feared, without its solid foundation of everlasting principles. The two things are not by any means inconsistent with each other. Everybody knows how it is with the outward rules of hygiene,—that what is one man's meat is proverbially another man's poison, that clothing worn with comfort in summer would to the same individual be fatal in winter, and that the out-of-door, all-weather exercise which makes the strong man stronger, takes away from the poor invalid what little strength he has. Yet who denies from such facts that there are great fundamental hygienic principles, imbedded in our very nature, which, if we are going to live at all, we have got to live by?

It is the same with moral health. Intuitional ethics says its rules exist in the nature of things and are to be acted upon without regard to expediency by all people in all weathers. Evolutionary Ethics avoids the expression

“nature of things” because in it nature does not mean real nature, or things actual things; but it says instead that its laws exist in the constitution of the universe, must have been there from the very start, at least in the germ, otherwise, how could they ever have been evolved; are the laws of human conduct which are in harmony with the laws of the world’s conduct; and that in being flexible to reason and common sense they are only on a par with all other natural laws. “Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re”, is its motto;

“All the forms are fugitive,
All the substances survive,”

is its song. And when it suspends any law, it is, as when those of gravity yield to those of chemistry and those of chemistry to those of vitality, not to make any interregnum of morals, but only to have a mightier law take its place, only because it would not have the letter which killeth supreme over the spirit which giveth life.

Who shall say that such freedom of choice among principles makes them any the less fundamental? Can there be anything in the metaphysician’s outside-of-the-world nature-of-things more safe and solid on which to base conduct than this inside constitution of the universe? And if the evolutionist is accused of having only the changing winds of expediency to live by, can he not truthfully answer,—

“The winds that o’er my ocean run,
Reach thro’ all heavens beyond the sun;
Thro’ life, thro’ death, thro’ fate, thro’ time,
Grand breaths of God they sweep sublime.”

Equally fixed and certain under evolution are the rewards and punishments of conduct. Instead of being arbitrary, loose and dependent for their enforcement on an external Divine will, its very definition of good conduct

as that which tends to promote welfare, and bad conduct as that which tends to promote harm, puts it under its own laws and makes it its own executor. It agrees with the Bible that "as righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death;" that "whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap," natural good from natural seeds, spiritual fruit from spiritual sowing; and that though justice sometimes is long delayed, yet "sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death," and well-doing, in due time, that is, when it has had time to ripen, its harvest of good.

"It knows the seed lies safe below
The fires which blast and burn,
And that for all in tears we sow,
There waits a glad return."

It has before it, just as truly as religion has, a kingdom of heaven, a kingdom whose beginning, at least, is to be on earth. The striving, self-sacrifice and even the sense of oughtness which it now has, are from their very nature not to last forever, not, at any rate, as the necessities of any one of its fields. What is striven for is to be attained. Private and public welfare are to be so adjusted to each other that self-seeking will do the work of self-sacrifice, egoism of altruism,—

"All true self love and social be the same."

And with each repetition of a duty, tending, as we know it now does, to make its performance easier, how can it be otherwise than that the most difficult ones shall at last become habits, like the beating of the heart and the breathing of the lungs, carried on without effort and without consciousness, a realization, so far at least as they are concerned, of the old Buddhist Nirvana, and of what in Christianity is called "that peace of God which

passeth understanding and which the world can neither give nor take away."

Yet with all this, and all its utilitarianism, practicality and rootedness in the earth, the ethics of evolution is not without its ideality, its mystery, its poetry and its possibilities of infinite progress,—is very far from being a system under which, as Mr. Balfour says, "in becoming perfectly good we shall all become perfectly idiotic." Who has ever measured the length and breadth and height of that human welfare which is its ideal? As with Whittier's waterfall,—

" Somewhere it laughs and sings somewhere
Whirls in mad dance its misty hair:
But who hath raised its veil, or seen
The rainbow skirts of that Undine?"

What opportunities are there for skill, courage, consecration, heroism, all that is noblest in man, to bring up the world, even as it now is, to its highest ethical standard,—unite the nations in peace, level up and level down society's horrible class inequalities, abolish vice and wrong and ignorance, make the "concert of Europe" something else than a symphony of battle guns, fill Turkish hearts with Armenian love, take the last stolen dollar out of man's hand, the last murdered bird off from woman's head, and teach countries that to knock their weaker brethren down on battlefields and rob them of their colonies is no more Christian than for highwaymen to knock travelers down in streets and rob them of their cash.

Then, with each new social state, each larger and complexer environment, something which is sure to come with evolution, how inevitably must there be a larger and and complexer ethics for the promotion of its welfare.

Said a fond mother looking down at her puling, squaling baby, "he is only eleven days old yet, and of course has some failings, but"—turning to the visitor—"I think he gives promise already of being at least a very truthful man." Humanity now, as compared with its mighty future, is little more than eleven days old, but to the fond eyes of evolutionary ethics it gives promise amid all, even of its puling and crying infancy, of a manhood, how large and true. Read Lecky's *History of European Morals* as some hint of the ethical progress, not only in virtues but in ideals of virtue, that we can fairly look for in the eighteen hundred years to come. Scientifically, as well as poetically, does earth have before it

"A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the age of gold"

And beyond earth, who can doubt that ethics with its new spiritual environment will have new heights to climb, new realms to enter upon, and that what here had to include the welfare of every hovel and every savage will have finally to include the welfare of every hell and every soul?

It is in this possibility that the peace of Christianity differs from the Nirvana of Buddhism. As fast as one faculty, one virtue, one part of our nature attains it, the vitality released from the need of struggling for its attainment goes into the unfolding of another, and then another, just as it does now; and thus it becomes possible for the soul to go on climbing up forever the stairway of Jesus' command, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

It is an ethics which in thus throwing its light forward, throws it backward,—gives the whole universe, even its

darkest parts, a moral meaning. When we want to know whether a tree is good or bad, we do not use its roots, or trunk, or limbs or leaves as a criterion, much less its spines and bark, but its fruit; and, if this is sweet and wholesome and what all the other parts have tended to produce, even though it is only a small part of its whole bulk, and appears only after many years of its life, we call the whole tree, including its darkest root and its sharpest spine, a good tree.

Why should we not apply the same principle to our judgment of the Universe, fruiting little by little in a moral man,—recognize it all through from nebulous root to the bark and spine of human cruelty and ignorance and sin as a moral Universe? According to the fundamental principles of evolution, all that will be in it at its highest reach of ethical attainment must have been as a possibility in its original fire mist. Matter is moral, gravity virtuous; the dragons of far off geologic ages

“ That tore each other in their slime ”

were a part of the violent who with their violence were taking the kingdom of heaven. The roots of mercy are in the earthquake; the seeds of love in the thunderbolt. Even sin has its side of saintliness; even wrong its work for right. They are all the stages of an evolving universe, all a part of the things that are working together for good. And justly they must all share in the character of its final outcome—the Satans of nature not less than of Job report at last as sons of God in the court of their common Lord.

Viewed thus, how rich is the subject, not only in philosophic interest but in its satisfaction to one of man's

deepest heart wants. Cold as the word morality is sometimes thought to be, all our hopes, all our happiness, all our safeguards, all the best parts even of love, are bound up with what it represents. Without an ethical element at the world's core, how little could the splendor of its skies, the grandeur of its mountains and seas, the abundance of its physical comforts, and its manifestations of majesty and might make it a really desirable dwelling place for beings like man,—as little so as a magnificent city in which was no provision, outward or inward, for enforcing what is right. And it was the feeling that evolution did away with this element—deprived the world of a lawgiver, and so necessarily of a moral law, which prompted at first religion's opposition to Spencer and Darwin. How baseless the fear! Their teaching has revealed under the broken tables of Sinai the unbreakable tables of the soul, made the Sermon on the Mount a part of the sermon of the universe, and in place of a policeman God armed with a club, walking the world's streets, has unveiled a Divine Principle in the world itself whose wand is simply welfare. Evolution has done many wonderful things intellectually for man. It has lighted up the dark caverns of the earth below and flooded with radiance its vast animal and vegetable kingdoms up above. History has under it a new meaning; society a key which unlocks not a few of its intricacies; religion the only lens which can focus again its broken lights. It has given to psychology the first glimmer of sense it ever had, and revealed in heredity marvels of the mind that render miracles commonplace. But its crowning gift, after all, tried alike by what it is and what it does, is—THE ETHICS OF EVOLUTION.

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