ON

MR. SPENCER'S

DATA OF ETHICS.

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AUTHOR OF

"ON MR. SPENCER'S FORMULA OF EVOLUTION," & "ON MR. SPENCER'S UNIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE."

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PREFACE.

THIS volume completes the critical examination of Mr. Spencer's system of Philosophy already pursued through two previous volumes entitled respectively "On Mr. Spencer's Formula of Evolution," and "On Mr. Spencer's Unification of Knowledge." The entire task has been undertaken by a student for the use of students. It cannot be of much use to the general reader, as it presumes and indeed requires a very intimate knowledge of Mr. Spencer's works. For those who do not wish to enter into detailed examination perhaps Chapter I. of the "Unification of Knowledge" will afford a good epitome of the line of criticism; and this may be followed, if desired, by a perusal of the "Formula of Evolution." It is believed that the most serious piece of criticism against Mr. Spencer's system will be found in the examination of his re-constructive Biology in Chapter V. of the "Unification," and in the examination of the origin of organic molecules com-

mencing at page 30 of the "Formula of Evolution." Evidently of the highest importance in a system of philosophy conceived in the manner in which Mr. Spencer presents it, this point of transition between the inorganic and the organic with its dependent histories is of the very deepest fundamental interest, and upon the question whether it is well or badly treated depends the practical value of his philosophy as applied to human concerns.

In our opinion, whatever of worth there is in Mr. Spencer's works (and there is very much), derives its value from *a posteriori* grounds and not from its *a priori* reliance upon first principles, nor from its place in a deductive system of cosmic philosophy. It has not fallen to our lot, nor has it been our object, to appraise the separate or incidental value of Mr. Spencer's works. Our view has been limited to the single object of examining them in the mode in which he presents them, as forming a connected system of philosophy. We have done so because he sets forth his works to us in this light, and evidently if they can be so accepted, it would be a gift to humanity of the highest value, for it would lend cogency to every past and confer a guidance to all future ages, forming a crowning glory to the intellectual achievements of the human race.

It is therefore to this point that we address our exami-

nation, and in no unfriendly spirit; for the object Mr. Spencer had in view was one which appealed to every sentiment and every intellectual aspiration within us. But we feel bound to say how sadly we have been disappointed. We have found the object of our admiration to be like Nebuchadnezzar's dream god, a thing apparently perfect and complete in configuration but like the image compounded of iron and clay and precious stones inevitably falling to pieces under the strain of sustained criticisms.

Mr. Spencer's philosophic conception was indeed imposing, and before its magnificent proportions many have bowed down in sincere respect. But his cosmical scheme when carefully examined proved to be constructed of terms which had no fixed and definite meaning, which were in fact merely symbols of symbolic conceptions, conceptions themselves symbolic because they were not understood—and the moment we began to put them to use as having definite values they landed us forthwith in alternative contradictions! Then to effect cosmical evolution, which is a process of imperceptible objective change, what was necessary, but to adopt a system of imperceptible word changes, so that the imperceptible word changes accompanying the imperceptible objective changes should lead us in the end to the completed results, and the process of evolution should thus be made comprehensible! In this manner over

the spaces of an enormous work have we been skilfully led by a master of language till we find ourselves in imagination following out mentally the actual processes of the universe. But after all it has only been a process, in our own minds, of the skilful substitution of words!

Errors to be successful must be big and bold. Fallacies of reasoning are detected on a medium scale, but when they are "writ large" it is difficult to detect them. Trains of syllogisms are sometimes more effective because they are vast than because they are true. Let them be imposing in their language and grand in their proportions, we naturally bow down to power, even if it is only power of largeness. When dealing with Mr. Spencer's reasonings we feel a certain awe as if we were contradicting the forces of the universe—seemingly allied to him. We feel conscious of an impertinence in treating of such great matters, dealt with in such a mighty sweep—disdainful of precision and consistency. The transformations and evolutions of reasoning in Mr. Spencer's works are no less wonderful than his treatment of words. The mind is swept along by an indiscernable but mighty flow, and sometimes after mysterious disappearances of consecutiveness between volumes or chapters, we find ourselves landed in a satisfied but bewildered manner at a conclusion about which we cannot but wonder however we arrived there.

By such terms as equilibration, including the theory of the moving equilibrium; by such terms as polarity plastic and coercive; and by plausible similarities between modes of process, we are deluded into supposing we understand the constructive progress of nature and are made to feel happy and proud of our knowledge. A great self satisfaction attends the student who believes himself rightly to understand the universe. We are pleased with our teacher, and are still more pleased with ourselves.

Bnt the real difficulty appears when the necessity for exposition arises. If one undertakes to explain, if one has to condense and solidify for the purpose of teaching, if one wishes to make others understand, and share the knowledge one has attained, then indeed our difficulties commence. What seemed so grand and alluring to look at will not stand the ordinary handling of scientific language and logical statement as between man and man. The illusion vanishes, the system has gone. In these remarks we speak only of Mr. Spencer's cosmical system. Of the general value of this work as a philosopher we express no opinion. In the estimation of competent thinkers it is very great. Fiske, Youmans, Carveth Read, Ribot, Maudsley, Clifford, Sully, Grant Allen, Gopinay, and others are all working on Spencerian lines, but we do not understand that they accept the cosmical explanation of Mr. Spencer. He marks not the

age of complete accomplishment but the age of transition. He has not grasped the solution of problems, but he has shewn the direction of future studies. He has failed in his grand endeavour, but he has shown what to aim at and has pointed the way. Much of his detailed work has been good and effective, and therefore one feels some compunction in writing of him so severely. Nevertheless a man of such eminence must not be held sacred from criticism, but on the contrary, just by reason of his eminence and consequent influence, must his work be well examined before it is accepted and approved. This is the task we have set ourselves and which may now be considered as complete. We have approached the study without any prepossessions, and we have endeavoured, while being very strict, to be perfectly fair and honest in our presentations of Mr. Spencer's theories. Naturally the work has been long and tedious, and where so many contradictory and indistinct expressions of opinion are given it has been necessary to deal largely in quotations. This has been done in justice both to ourselves and to our author. If we have succeeded in bringing out the main lines of thought for the future use of students we shall have accomplished our end. It is only by very strict thinking and discussion that truth is finally evolved.

A few words must be added as to the teleological

implications which a *Westminster* reviewer has discovered in our previous works, and has regarded as vitiating the whole of their reasoning. The subject of teleology is a very interesting and puzzling one, and is bound to receive careful attention from the student of nature. It requires much consideration as to what is meant by the term. There may be a natural teleology apart from a supernatural teleology. We have no very clear conceptions upon this point ourselves as yet, but are at present engaged upon the study of the question. Intention and design are exemplified in human actions, means to an end are adopted by many animals; the "Moving Equilibrium" theory, and the "Happy Accident" theory alike seem inadequate to account for the origin of natural teleology or even for all variations of species; and the study of biological developments suggests to us the presence and activity of a subjective factor related to physical factors by some law to which may be due the origin of some of the biological variations. Mr. Spencer's theory of biological variations as internal forces generated by external forces, and thus acting as a counterbalance in opposition to an inimical force, or in harmony with a favourable force, having for its object the protection or sustentation of the organism, is an altogether different theory from the agnostic "Happy Accident" hypothesis of the naturalist school. It implies the origin of bio-

logical variations as means adapted to ends in the preservation of the organism or species, and if this is not found workable on the physical equilibration hypothesis, some extension of theory is required to account for the origin of biological variations in which teleological implications are involved, although this theory may be truly naturalistic and in perfect harmony with an orderly development in the manner of evolution. If we cannot predicate an anthropomorphic teleological mind at the beginning of things, nevertheless a teleology appears to be involved in biological developments and requires a naturalistic explanation.

M. Lionel Dauriac* enquires how it comes about that, while accepting the theory of Evolution, we write a book of 476 pages against its most illustrious exponent, and asks us to explain our acceptance of the doctrine as a whole. It is quite true, as he states, that we repudiate a materialistic explanation, and it is on this ground that we join issue with Mr. Spencer, inasmuch as, notwithstanding Mr. Spencer's own formal repudiation, all the formulas of explanation upon which he attempts the reconstruction of the universe are materialistic. The factors of chemistry, and the laws of physics, together with the laws of equilibration and polarity, are all purely materialistic in character. By the aid of these

* "Revue Philosophique," Dec. 1883.

factors and these laws alone we do not think it possible to understand and explain the history of cosmical evolution. Do we then accept a spiritual evolution to which the materialistic has been altogether subordinate? No. We do not understand the operations of the subjective apart from the material organism. It seems to us that there are material factors, and factors which are subjective, and what is wanted is the law of their correlation. When we say that we accept Evolution, we mean that we accept the theory of an orderly progress from a state of indefinite, incoherent simplicity to a state of definite coherent complexity. We discern two sets or kinds of factors, the materialistic and the subjective, but we are unable sufficiently to understand them and their laws of correlation to lay down a formula of interaction of such a nature as to explain the orderly development which we recognise.

This is a difficulty which has not been overlooked by Mr. Spencer. He would escape it in two ways. Firstly by a mysticism, through which after the definite meaning he has given to his terms has been found to fail in actual work he changes all his fundamental terms into "symbolic conceptions." Why? Because they have no meaning; and if you give them a meaning the conclusions from them land the student in irreconcilable contradictions. Out of this mysticism no progress is possible. Secondly by means of the "double

aspect" theory. According to this theory everything is both material and subjective, as you choose to regard it, and may be explained and accounted for in laws of the relations of either set of factors. It is true that phenomena may be so described, but it is not true that they can be so explained. There is an undoubted concomitance between the bodily act and the conscious feeling, but the real question is this,—Does the conscious feeling wholly depend upon the physical series of events and has itself no effects on the physical series? Is it produced without producing? Is it something occurring in connexion with certain motions in the nerves of the organism and therefore dependent upon and wholly produced by the physical factors in their interrelation, according to the known chemical and physical laws of the factors? If it is so determined, and does not determine as part in a chain of causation it cannot be said to interfere with the materialistic explanation. That is complete in itself. The only question left is this:—How comes it about that some portions of the physical series of phenomena have this strange accompaniment of consciousness? A very interesting but comparatively unimportant question. The theory that phenomena have two sides is of no use whatever in the endeavour towards the statement of a cosmical formula of explanation. The result of our studies is to the effect that there are physical factors and subjective factors alike produced and producing. We

aim at the statement of their law of correlation, and in this we would seek the cosmical formula. We however seek it in vain, and we do not think it possible to attain it. In the meantime we look to the development of the subjective factor in life, and more especially in human life, as a fact of the greatest interest, the more so that we discern in that development an orderly progress in a well marked manner; and it is our task to understand the laws of that orderly development. This study has to be undertaken along with the study of material Evolution; and although we may not fully understand our problem, there is much that we can understand and much to make our views large and sympathetic and our minds expansive in working out the great questions that are set before us.

The study of Ethics from the Evolutionist's point of view assumes an altogether different phase from the old methods of inquiry and rests upon an altogether different basis. Its ground of authority is seen to rest in the very nature of humanity and does not come to him as an imposed law. Confidence is first shaken and then fully restored. From the new point of view the merit of all preceding systems is seen, and how they all fall into harmony in a wonderful manner in the concensus of mutual support and enforce ethical law by an united authority.

The chief merit of Mr. Spencer's "Data of Ethics" is that it puts the study upon an entirely new basis in grafting it upon the study of the larger science of Biology. Heretofore the study has been isolated, and supposed to be complete within its own borders. Henceforth no professor or student will be considered competent to express opinions without being well grounded in the study of Biological and Psychological evolution. Ethics, along with Sociology, must be studied as part of the greater movement.

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CHAPTER I.

Ethics and the Unification of Knowledge.

The Philosophical View.

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Page xiii, lines 1 and 13, for "actors" read "factors."

Page ii, line 18, for "he bridges over" read "he is supposed to bridge over."

Page 38, line 27, at the end, delete "in the."

Page 43, heading, for "The Philosophical View" read The Biological View."

Page 47, line 27, for "Ethics" read "of Ethics."

Page 51, line 7, for "ætheticism" read "æstheticism."

Page 74, line 14, for "eges" read "egos."

Page 88, line 28, for "pervented" read "prevented."

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CHAPTER I.

Ethics and the Unification of Knowledge.

The Philosophical View.

ALWAYS a very complex problem, the study of ethics, in Mr. Spencer's works, becomes in some respects still more complex from the necessity he is under of affiliating it in some way upon the cosmical process. Conceiving all knowledge to be capable of unification as a system of causation, so that when the relations of the original factors are understood, all histories are merely corollaries from these ultimate truths, Mr. Spencer feels bound, in the first place, to show that each particular science falls into its due place in the logical scheme. Consequently, one of the main ideas permeating the "Data of Ethics" is this view of ethics as interpretable only by an adequate knowledge of the cosmical process in which it forms a feature.

Indeed, the proposition is laid down at the outset that parts can only be properly understood through a knowledge of the wholes of which they form part.*

* Data of Ethics, pp. 5 and 6.

Upon this Mr. Spencer reasons that since ethics deals with purposed conduct, that kind of conduct can only be understood through a scientific knowledge of conduct in general, which again forms part of the study of action in general, bringing us at once to the cosmical process upon the understanding of which, therefore, depends the understanding of our special subject.

This philosophic relation of Ethics to the cosmical process is referred to in the preface as being, in fact, the main object Mr. Spencer had in view in his elaborate series of volumes, and is more explicitly stated in Chapter IV. of the work under review, in which Mr. Spencer considering "The Ways of Judging Conduct," justifies the course he thus pursues. Here it is pointed out that in the systems of all preceding authors the idea of causation has been insufficiently recognised or has even been altogether ignored—an assertion which is thereupon justified by a review of the Theological, Political, Intuitional, and Utilitarian schools of moral philosophers. Mr. Spencer thereupon proceeds (¶ 22) "Thus, then, is justified the allegation made at the outset, that, irrespective of their distinctive characters and their special tendencies, all the current methods of ethics have one general defect—they neglect ultimate causal connexions. Of course, I do not mean that they wholly ignore the natural consequences of actions; but I mean that they recognise them only incidentally. They do not erect into a method the ascertaining of necessary relations between causes and effects, and deducing rules of conduct from formulated statements of them.

"Every science begins by accumulating observations, and presently generalises these empirically; but only

when it reaches the stage at which its empirical generalisations are included in a rational generalisation does it become developed science. Astronomy has already passed through its successive stages; first, collections of facts, then inductions from them, and lastly deductive interpretations of these, as corollaries from a universal principle of action among masses in space. Accounts of structures and tabulations of strata, grouped and compared, have led gradually to the assigning of various classes of geological changes to igneous and aqueous actions; and it is now tacitly admitted that geology becomes a science proper, only as fast as such changes are explained in terms of those natural processes which have arisen in the cooling and solidifying Earth, exposed to the Sun's heat and the action of the Moon upon its ocean. The science of life has been, and is still, exhibiting a like series of steps; the evolution of organic forms at large is being affiliated on physical actions in operation from the beginning; and the vital phenomena each organism presents, are coming to be understood as connected sets of changes, in parts formed of matters that are affected by certain forces, and disengage other forces. So is it with mind. Early ideas concerning thought and feeling ignored everything like cause, save in recognising those effects of habit which were forced on men's attention and expressed in proverbs; but there are growing up interpretations of thought and feeling as correlates of the actions and reactions of a nervous structure, that is influenced by outer changes and works in the body adapted changes, the implication being that psychology becomes a science, as fast as these relations of phenomena are explained as consequences of ultimate principles.

Sociology, too, represented down to recent times only by stray ideas about social organisation, scattered through the masses of worthless gossip furnished us by historians, is coming to be recognised by some as also a science; and such adumbrations of it as have from time to time appeared in the shape of empirical generalisations, are now beginning to assume the character of generalisations made coherent by derivation from causes lying in human nature placed under given conditions. Clearly then, *ethics, which is a science dealing with the conduct of associated human beings*, regarded under one of its aspects, has to undergo a like transformation, and, at present undeveloped, can be considered a developed science only when it has undergone this transformation.

"A preparation in the simpler sciences is pre-supposed. Ethics has a physical aspect, since it treats of human activities, which, in common with all expenditures of energy, conform to the law of the persistence of energy; moral principles must conform to physical necessities. It has a biological aspect, since it concerns certain effects, inner and outer, individual and social, of the vital changes going on in the highest type of animal. It has a psychological aspect, for its subject matter is an aggregate of actions that are prompted by feelings and guided by intelligence. And it has a sociological aspect, for these actions, some of them directly, and all of them indirectly, affect associated beings.

"What is the implication? Belonging under one aspect to each of these sciences—physical, biological, psychological, sociological—it can find its ultimate interpretations only in those fundamental truths which are common to all of them. Already we have concluded in a general way that conduct at large, including

the conduct Ethics deals with, is to be fully understood only as an aspect of evolving life; and now we are brought to this conclusion in a more special way.

"Here, then, we have to enter on the consideration of moral phenomena as phenomena of evolution; being forced to do this by finding that they form a part of the aggregate of phenomena which evolution has wrought out. If the entire visible universe has been evolved—if the solar system as a whole, the earth as part of it, the life in general which the earth bears, as well as that of each individual organism—if the mental phenomena displayed by all creatures, up to the highest, in common with the phenomena presented by aggregates of these highest—if one and all conform to the laws of evolution; then the necessary implication is that those phenomena of conduct in these highest creatures with which morality is concerned, also conform."*

In this passage Mr. Spencer propounds morality or ethics as a matter for scientific study, only to be understood or explained as part of general conduct when it is capable of explanation deductively from antecedent causes. The distinction recognised between conduct called moral and conduct regarded as immoral is only to be understood when, after a historical survey of human actions and of the actions of organisms in general, we not only perceive its immediately antecedent causes, but, going behind them, recognise the ultimate necessity of their occurrence in the very nature of the universe. This reveals the special features of Mr. Spencer's method in the treatment of his subject as distinguished from that followed by Mr. Leslie Stephen in his "Science of Ethics," a distinction which we may

* Data of Ethics, p. 61.

conveniently mark by terming them respectively the Philosophic and the Scientific methods. The former term we use in the sense assigned to it in the definition given by Mr. Spencer in "First Principles."*

A philosophy is complete when the mind has been able to form for itself such an appraisement of the relations and conditions of factors at a period sufficiently remote to ante-date any great amount of complexity as will enable us deductively to frame a history of developments which may correspond with the actual history of sequences in the concrete universe. If this appraisement of a remote cosmos characterised by comparative simplicity nevertheless admits the existence of many factors whose differences are not accounted for, philosophy is so far formally incomplete: but as the determination of these points lies beyond the powers of human reason, philosophy may justly be regarded as practically complete if it unifies from this point of view all the knowledge with which the human mind is conversant. If we are able to include all the sciences in one coherent whole nothing more can be expected of philosophy—beyond that lies the realm of speculation and the Unknowable.

The scope of the Sciences is not so ambitious. Their aim is limited within a much narrower purview. They seek merely to ascertain the laws which subsume special classes of phenomena. They recognise causation and their inductions are valid to the extent of the classes of facts expressed in any particular law. But each science or class of facts is severally and separately worked upon even though the progress of

* See "On Mr. Spencer's Unification of Knowledge," Chap. I., ¶ 1, and Chap. III, ¶ 4.

study is ever disclosing the mutual dependence of the various sciences.

It is very evident that there must be great imperfections in our scheme of knowledge so long as there remain great blanks between the sciences. But this is a natural condition of the progress of thought. On the other hand a complete philosophic system such as that referred to above, and at which Mr. Spencer aims, would throw a flood of light upon each particular department if the mutual relation of all problems could be deduced from ascertained relations of the original factors. But it is also clear that if we think we have framed such a philosophy without having really succeeded in so doing, or at any rate without having succeeded in making others understand or accept it, then the supposed philosophy becomes a confusing element in the exposition of a scientific problem. In the work under review the philosophical attempt is very regrettable for it spoils the exposition of a scientific treatment, surpassing all former expositions, since it dims the clearness of the argument, and hinders the force of its practical application.

Such is our judgment of Mr. Spencer's "Data of Ethics." It contains at once an excellent scientific treatment of the subject and a weak attempt to affiliate it upon an impotent philosophy. To the philosophical or cosmical aspect of the work we will confine ourselves in the present chapter, so that we shall hereafter be free to devote our attention to the more solid scientific treatment of the questions at issue which it presents.

The students of Mr. Spencer's previous volumes will have observed that although he states the problem of evolution as a deductive one, he has yet regarded

evolution in a different aspect in the working out of each specific problem. Thus it is very noteworthy that throughout the Biological, Psychological, and Sociological expositions, Mr. Spencer has regarded the establishment of the fact of evolution by the accretion of insensible changes as equivalent to an actual affiliation of the sciences upon the theory of evolution, utterly regardless of his own rigid requirement that these changes should be explained and accounted for by the general deductions of cosmical evolution. The histories of organisms, for instance, exhibit gradual development, and therefore are supposed to conform to the definition of evolution at large. But if these changes are not intellectually discerned as the result of antecedent conditions and traceable to the relations of the ultimate factors recognised by the philosophy, then the affiliation of the science upon evolution in general is not made good. While the form and outside show are present, the organic connexion is not exhibited. But it is a characteristic of Mr. Spencer's mode of exposition, that when the latter fails, the former takes its place. Hence the gradual development of conduct is evolution of conduct, but it is an evolution of which we want an explanation. We seek it in Biology, but find that Biology also is a gradual increment of insensible changes of which again we seek in vain for an explanation.

The effect of this mode of presenting evolution or the unification of knowledge is heightened by the seemingly systematic manner of its exposition. Development is shown to be universally characterised by progress in three forms—namely, from a simple, indefinite, incoherent state to a complex, definite, and coherent state:

and the wonderful scope which the universe affords, both in time and space, for historically exhibiting these traits, overwhelms the mind with a sense of the universality of evolution, in spite of the fact that all the time the very point of the question is missed in the absence of any explanation. We recognise the gradual development, but where is the deductive connexion? Where is the promised system of corollaries from original factors which shall account for the historical development?

Thus, when in the "Data of Ethics" we find a reference to the Biology, the Psychology, and the Sociology as parts of an established philosophical system we are apt to suppose that the views as to ethics which Mr. Spencer expresses derive their authority from an antecedent apprehension of the cosmical process; whereas this is not really the case: and although it is essential to the study that ethics should be viewed as dependent upon the sciences named, yet such a connexion is not shown as one of logical order; we are only told that Ethics exhibits similar traits in its order of development.

But in addition to this foisting of the sciences upon philosophy by means of general similarities of history, the student will find that whatever inner deductive warrant is set forth is badly conceived in the appraisement of the original factors—Matter, Motion, and Force—terms to which no definite conceptions can be attached. And should any one be so rash as to attach to them such definite meanings as would render their logical use possible, then the deductive process which would have to be undertaken to render them into corollaries corresponding to concrete histories would very shortly bring

him to confusion. Should he, again, confine himself to the definite chemical factors existent in the primordial nebulæ, then his deductive attempt would bring him to the impassable gulf at the commencement of life. And, moreover, should he import the factor of sentiency into some simple chemical aggregates, and should he be able to set forth some gradual development of mind in correlation with gradual changes of physical organism, then again in the absence of any knowledge as to the relations of the two he would find himself unable to work out the deductive process and fail in the system of *à priori* explanations which philosophy requires. For philosophy, according to Mr. Spencer, demands a deductive process commencing with the apprehension of the relations subsisting between the factors of the universe at some particular stage, which deductive process shall be a counterpart of the actual histories of the universe.

Such deductive explanations Mr. Spencer does attempt—mainly in the Biology—the most important as to results, and the most badly reasoned of all his works. It is attempted firstly in a very concrete manner, by a consideration of the properties of the chemical substances which form the bases of organisms, and of the properties of the surrounding agencies—light, heat, air, water, etc. To the inter-relation of these are applied the laws of mechanics, such as movement in the direction of least resistance, etc., and by their instrumentality at last are organisms supposed to be evolved which have, somehow, a concomitant of consciousness which is nevertheless not a factor in any action of an organism. In such a history however, it is found necessary to admit genesis, reproduction, and heredity, and these,

since they cannot be explained, are accepted without explanation.

It is true that Polarity is called in to assist the endeavour, but it is a polarity which is the obedient servant of the author, and does as it is bid, firstly in being so amenable to changed conditions as to alter conformably with them, and again in being so rigid in its acquired form as to coerce molecules into definite construction. It is alternately so pliable and so fixed as, hand over hand, to enable the author to scale the highest summits of Biology. It is also true that Equilibration is called in: but then every change in the organic and the inorganic world turns out to be an equilibration, so that the word becomes devoid of meaning.

A more special study has to be given to Mr. Spencer's theory of the moving equilibrium with which he identifies the existence of an organism, and by means of which he bridges over the chasm between it and the inorganic. The idea is derived from a consideration of the spinning top, the solar system, and the steam engine, more particularly if the latter is self-feeding! These are moving equilibria, and if their motions are disturbed by some external object they will generate forces in opposition to the environment. This purely mechanical conception is then rendered into an abstract form by the substitution of the idea of related *forces*, as constituting a moving equilibrium, and is found to fit the abstract conception of an organism, so that the solar system and the organism can both be identified as moving equilibria. Next, by loosely characterising the behaviour of the solar system in its relation to its environment, real or hypothetical, as consisting of changes due to the laws of a moving equilibrium, Mr.

Spencer seeks to show that the adaptations of an organism in response to changed external conditions are likewise due to the same laws, so that organisms and their histories are supposed to be explainable or accounted for both in their origin and in their development in the same manner as the moving equilibria of the physical world. Thereupon we are supposed to understand both why organisms generate forces to counterbalance inimical external forces, and why they generate forces (adaptations) for securing and absorbing forces of the environment (food) favourable to their continued existence. It is only what all moving equilibria do. This biological theory we have discussed at great length elsewhere,* and we then came to the conclusion that it was only a mockery of a rational explanation. We also found that the facts of Genesis and the Law of Heredity were wholly inexplicable by means of a study of physics or by means of a study of the nature and laws of the moving equilibrium. So that altogether we found the main requirements of a philosophical explanation of biological facts very far from being complied with.

As part of the deductive system which our philosophy requires, we have now to consider the origin and development of purposed actions—the subject-matter, namely, of our present study which is to lead us up to the ultimate study of Ethics proper.

Resuming the consideration of the problem at the point where we left off in our reference to the explanations of biology, we have first to review the arguments which would explain the origin of purposed actions in the nature and laws of the moving equili-

* On Mr. Spencer's "Unification of Knowledge," Chap. V.

brium. For if the actions of organisms are thus explainable, so must be the purposed actions or purposed conduct of organisms, and Mr. Spencer himself expressly includes them in the biological definition. And indeed it is doubtful whether "purpose" is not covertly introduced in the very definition of life as "the continuous adaptation of inner relations to outer relations."

The question is a very nice one, and brings us at once to the obscure confines of the organic and the inorganic worlds. How, for instance, from the laws of the moving equilibrium, as derived from the study of the solar system, are we to regard the movements of an infusorium? "An infusorium swims randomly about, determined in its course not by a perceived object to be pursued or escaped, but, apparently, by varying stimuli in its medium; and its acts unadjusted in any appreciable way to ends, lead it now into contact with some nutritive substance which it absorbs, and now into the neighbourhood of some creature by which it is swallowed and digested. . . . The conduct is constituted of actions so little adjusted to ends, that life continues only as long as the accidents of the environment are favourable."*

This is one of Mr. Spencer's transitional passages. The infusorium is a moving equilibrium. Consequently it rearranges its forces for self-preservation in opposition to inimical forces of the environment, and in harmony with favoring forces of the environment. The special adjustment it displays is motion. But this is not communicated motion of a mechanical description, such as the kick given to a foot-ball. Nor, appa-

* Data of Ethics, p. 10.

rently, are we to regard its motions as due to a series of mechanical motions of the molecules of the environment. The action of the environment is expressed as being a stimulus. Does this mean a chemical action? Or does it refer to the action of heat and light? If so it means that the attractions and repulsions of atoms and the motions of ether and of molecules, account for the movements of the infusorium. There is certainly no "purpose" in such a theory. But then the question arises, how do we apply the theory of the moving equilibrium to such an assemblage of atoms thus acted upon to account for the fact that the assemblage of atoms endeavours to prolong its existence by defence and absorption or by absorption only? If it be said that it does not do so, and that its movements have no food object, but are simply the effect of chemical and mechanical action, then it is not an animal displaying life, inasmuch as it does not adapt means to an end —motions to the end of sustenance. If it be regarded as a moving equilibrium in this sense, it is one of the same sort as the solar system, and not one of the sort known as animals. Nevertheless, Mr. Spencer regards it as displaying life, yet very little adjusted to ends; but again he regards its actions as determined by external stimuli, without, however, explaining his meaning.

If we are to regard the motions of the infusorium as displaying life, it must be by regarding them as adaptations of inner relations to outer relations—the outer relations being food; but if its actions are merely chemically and mechanically determined, then its conduct is not adapted to or balanced against the action of any external relations, but is the submissive

consequent thereof. But if its conduct is altogether determined by external relations we seem to be landed in a paradox. The only escape is by the obvious inference that the definition of life advanced by Mr. Spencer always implies an adaptation or adjustment or action having the definite twofold object in view of sustenance and self-protection employed *against* the inimical forces of the environment. Life adaptations are always for the accomplishment of the end of self-preservation, either by the procuring of food, or by defence against enemies—self-preservation primarily and afterwards the continuation of the race. Therefore, if we regard the movements of the infusoria as included in the definition of life we must regard them as having in view the sustenance of the creatures. They are acts adapted to ends. Are they then to be regarded as purposed actions? Life adaptations seem to be distinguished from the changes wrought by external forces upon a physical moving equilibrium in the fact, namely, that they act towards a definite end, and therefore come into the class of purposed actions. We cannot do more than indicate the difficulty. If we say these actions are not purposed we allow that there may be purposed adaptation of means to ends by chemistry and mechanics. If we say that chemistry and mechanics do this, then we have to revise our meaning of chemistry and mechanics, and that in a much more thorough manner than Mr. Spencer has done in his treatment of the moving equilibrium.

That there are biological adjustments which do not manifest purpose we experience every day in the thickening of the skin and the changes wrought by climate or daily avocation, although it is true these adjustments

may receive a scientific explanation independently of their being adaptations of means to ends. We also find that there are reflex actions of organisms which take place in response to external stimuli without any conscious purpose, such as breathing, digesting, &c. We are also acquainted with the fact that purposed actions become by long habit automatic. Indeed we have more experience of purposed actions becoming automatic than of automatic or reflex actions becoming purposed.

Can there then be purpose without consciousness? There are adaptations in the vegetable world as well as in the animal, and of these we do not predicate conscious design. Nor can we, on the theory of life as the adaptation of a moving equilibrium to its environment, admit that these changes are due to mere happy accidents of origin and survival, for we are required to account for them as necessary results of their existence as moving equilibria. Yet if so the adjustments are so complex, so marvellous in their relations to the insect world and the animal world generally in view of their preservation and the propagation of their species, that purpose or means adapted to ends is the apparent characteristic. Means adapted to ends is denied in the "Happy Accident" theory, and is sought to be explained by the "Moving Equilibrium" theory. Yet when we come to consider the abstract conception of a moving equilibrium derived from our solar system we can discern no endeavour towards self-sustenance and self defence. No adaptations are there made to secure either of these objects. There is no purpose manifested, and no adjustment made in view of ends to be secured. On the other hand, there are many adaptations in the

animal and vegetable worlds which are not consciously purposed. Since, however, ours is a critical task and not a reconstructive work we need do no more than point out that purposed actions in particular, and biological adaptations as a whole, are not explainable by regarding organisms as aggregates of the chemical elements acted upon by physical forces and constituting merely physical moving equilibria, of which the laws are similar to those derived from a consideration of moving equilibria like the solar system. Such a theory does not admit of purposed action.

Stated in the abstract, the problem is how to explain the origin of purpose in a moving equilibrium—commencing from the solar system and proceeding to a self-feeding engine and pursuing our investigation to the abstract moving equilibrium of forces in which external inimical or favourable forces generate internal forces as a counterbalance, either of opposition or harmony of adjustment. Thus stated, the problem is purely of a dynamic nature, and would give an understanding of purpose as a dynamic relation of aggregates of forces. This is the true Spencerian view to take of the problem and its mode of settlement, but it is one to which Mr. Spencer does not apply himself. In the absence of such a study Mr. Spencer forsakes the true line of explanation required by his philosophy.

But we think if we proceed more deeply into this study we shall find purpose connected with consciousness. The question arises, must all purpose be conscious purpose? Purpose implies the direction of action, it implies an interval of time, it implies the accomplishment of a result. In these respects it differs from chemical and mechanical action. We have to ask what

place consciousness finds in the constitution and action of a moving equilibrium. Evidently it has no place in the solar system, for physicists can make their calculations without taking it into consideration as a factor. Yet the ideal or abstract moving equilibrium, by whose aid we are endeavouring to understand the actions of organisms, is derived from the consideration of the solar system as a moving equilibrium. But reducing the problem from the abstract to the concrete study of an organism, we have to ask what place consciousness holds in a moving equilibrium of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, hydrogen, etc., in relation with an environment of heat, light, etc. We find that it is in the main a factor in all those classes of actions which we term purposed—that in so far as actions depart from the chemical and mechanical, that in so far as aggregates manifest the characteristics of life—namely, the adaptation of inner relations to outer relations—the nearer do they approach the most complete adaptation of means to the ends of complete living, and the more do they manifest conscious purpose.

The theory has been propounded that consciousness is the result of complexity in the combination of the chemical elements, a complexity which can be explained on purely physical grounds. Mr. Spencer's biology is partly worked so as to prove this theory. But it is evident that no more can be got out of a deductive theory than is contained in the original factors. It is useless to say that we do not sufficiently know all the properties of the original factors, because that is to abandon this particular theory, and to acknowledge its inadequacy. The admission necessitates an attempt to re-state the original forces of the factors. If this can be

done it is equivalent to propounding a new theory, which again must be judged by its deductive efficacy.

The theory that complexity of nervous structure—a structure produced by chemical and mechanical combination—suffices to explain memory, reflection, judgment, choice, and purpose, has been treated by Dr. Bain and Professor Clifford at considerable length, and has been criticised in our former works in great detail.*

The theory that organisms are the result of chemical and mechanical combinations, and that consciousness is a concomitant of some processes in the continuous existence of such physical combinations, throws all the burthen of explanation just as fully upon the line of physical causation as if there were no such concomitant of consciousness whatsoever. The determining causes are wholly physical, and the chain of sequence is complete within the lines of chemical and mechanical relations. The fact that independent and concomitant consciousness accompanies some of the actions in question is an interesting circumstance, but although consciousness is produced as an effect, it never on this theory produces any effects itself.

The attempt to amend the conceptions of the original chemical factors (the sixty or seventy so-called elements,) and of the physical factors (heat, light, etc.,) by the association with them of mind, feeling, etc., has at various times produced vague theories. More particularly of later years Professor Clifford's theory of mind-stuff has attracted a great deal of attention. But, singular to say, Professor Clifford only endeavoured to work out his theory in some vague semi-mechanical, semi-subjective kind of way. It was not of such a sort that, given a

* On Mr. Spencer's "Unification of Knowledge." p. 231, *et seq.*; and see Dr. Bain's reply in "Mind," No. xxxi.

nebula such as we supposed to be the predecessor of the solar system, we should be able to deduce from it the existing universe. The proper statement of such a problem would be a statement of the relations not merely of mind-stuff, but of mind-oxygen, mind-nitrogen, etc. The conception would have to be of such a nature as to express the mind-factor, mental side, or subjective aspect of oxygen, as related to the mind-factor of nitrogen, etc., and how they variously affected the conduct of the doubly-constituted atoms or of the more complex molecules into which they formed themselves. But this is a mere indication of the larger task of estimating the whole of the elementary substances, and estimating the value and the action of their relative mind-factors. From this would have to be determined the law of growth by which increasing complexity evolved the continually increasing power of the mind-factor in determining actions. Upon this might rest a rational basis for a definition of life of such sort that the organic could be recognised as arising out of the inorganic. And since the organic, in its latest and highest development, is mainly distinguished by purposed actions, purposed actions might be deemed to have evolved in a natural way out of actions which were not purposed. But such a theory is not capable of definite statement, and our philosophic object in endeavouring to account for the origin of purposed action out of non-purposed action is as far off as ever.

It might be as well here for the full satisfaction of the student, to consider how far the origin of purposed action is taken account of by Mr. Darwin, or is to be accounted for by his methods. There is a wide distinction between Mr. Spencer's treatment of Biology

and that of Mr. Darwin. Mr. Spencer aims at a complete logical deductive system, and endeavours to show how in the very nature of things, everything that is, must have been what it is. Mr. Darwin's endeavour is not so ambitious. He confines his studies to the field of biology, and to past histories of living creatures, as preserved for us in the geological record. His is a purely scientific work, not tresspassing beyond the generalisation of the facts with which he deals. These are large and immensely important; so much so, that they cover the whole history of living things: but his explanations only go a certain way. They are not fundamental, and we are only led backwards in time to the original twilight and ultimate darkness. His theory is strictly causational. The explanation of existing organisms is to be found in the relations of antecedent factors. Part of these we understand, and part of them we do not understand. We do not understand the wherefore of genesis and heredity, but we know them to be facts, and they form the basis for large explanations. For if organisms are modifiable, ever-increasing changes of structure and function can be produced and reproduced. The increment of induced changes in various directions may in succeeding generations be such as to obliterate all semblance of relationship to the original ancestor. What are the laws of these changes it is Mr. Darwin's great achievement to have explained. The struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest, the adaptation to new environments by the use and disuse of parts, the changes induced by change of climate and food, or by the action of new organisms in the environment, all these considerations open out to the astonished and admiring

gaze of man vast and interesting histories of changes such as a discerning mind like Mr. Grant Allen revels in in his rambles through the English fields.

The question arises how far Mr. Darwin's theories can be extended philosophically, so as to explain what he accepts unexplained, viz.: genesis, heredity, the origin of organisms out of the inorganic, the gradual development of consciousness, the increase of feeling and intelligence, and the advent of purposed conduct directed to the achievement of definite and deferred ends? For all these points he leaves undealt with as not coming within his scientific province. Evidently his theories are not fitted to explain what they take for granted. They cannot explain what they are founded upon. The origin of organisms is unexplained: propagation of the species is accepted as an unexplained fact, so are heredity and the presence of consciousness. Purposed actions are not accounted for in Mr. Darwin's works.

But there is one point to which we wish to call attention as regards the different method in which the changes of species are treated by Mr. Spencer and Mr. Darwin. The former regards all changes as necessitated by the laws of the moving equilibrium, so that a change of climate of such a nature as to deprive an organism of the requisite moisture for continued existence through a long period of time, would absolutely necessitate some device on its part to counterbalance the external force of drought. It would be a consequent in the very nature of things that the plant should become thick and succulent like the cactus, or that the animal should form for itself a reservoir for the storage of water.

Mr. Darwin's theory is very different. He advances the fact that organisms, and more particularly those of the lower and simpler forms constantly produce "sports." These are not chance accidents in the false metaphysical sense of being uncaused, but are termed accidents as being produced by some external or internal incident in the growth of the embryo, which causes it to deviate in some point from the structure of the parent. This "sport" may be to the advantage or to the detriment of the new organism. If it should be the latter, it soon perishes: but if it should assist the organism to a fuller life, then it will live longer and better, and its progeny will in like manner survive to the detriment of its fellows of the unimproved type. The accretion of changes produced in this way, now in one direction, and now in another, together with the influences elsewhere indicated, might do and no doubt has done much in the development of species.

To this cause of change we give in no disrespectful spirit, the name of the "Happy Accident Theory" as opposed to Mr. Spencer's "Moving Equilibrium Theory," and would ask what it may and may not account for. It may account for much within the limits of Mr. Darwin's enquiry, but does it at all account for those fundamental facts which he takes for granted—genesis, heredity and consciousness, or the origin of the organic out of the inorganic. Could some inorganic aggregate, produced by the relations of certain chemical compounds under the action of light, heat, &c., accidentally take to generation by fission or otherwise, and then by a succession of sports eventuate in sexual generation? Could such a chemical combination accidentally become conscious, and by a

succession of sports organise its consciousness into purpose? Into these regions we think we cannot carry the Happy Accident Theory—the theory of sports. This is a valid and justifiable theory within the limits of biology, though even here the estimate of its results may be exaggerated; but beyond it and behind those limits it is of no use. The very admission of it is a confession of ignorance and incapacity to apprehend the exact line of causation; but so long as we are satisfied that the accident or the sport which gives rise to a variety, occurs within the scope of factors which we are able to recognise, the incapacity to account for the special cause of a special sport does not affect the general theory. But if any one should rashly extend the application of the theory so as to explain the otherwise unaccountable presence of a new factor, or advance it as an explanation of a line of sequences not logically deducible from all that is included in the mental appraisement of the original factors by which the system of sequences is to be unified, then he makes a very great mistake indeed.

It is to guard against such a mistake that we take notice of the proper limits to the applicability of Mr. Darwin's theory. Indeed we think it is too commonly supposed that Mr. Darwin's theory is of the universalistic scope of Mr. Spencer's theories; his work however is purely of a scientific character relating to the province of Biology.

It will have been noticed that in the preceding argument we have not dealt with the philosophical problem of the theory of knowledge. We have simply taken the study of the cosmos in the historical order, finding the inorganic as antecedent to the organic, the

unconscious to the conscious, a historical order which cannot be disputed whatever theory of knowledge may be held.

We conclude therefore that in so far as the Data of Ethics is an attempt to explain purposed actions and their ethical quality upon a philosophical method of the kind propounded by Mr. Spencer, namely, as included in a proper understanding of the cosmical process, and of the histories of the universe consequent upon a knowledge of the relations of its original factors—so far Mr. Spencer's work must be considered a failure. That there is much of real scientific value in the work under review, and much original insight and true apprehension of process, we hold to be true; but this scientific value is much obscured by the vague cosmical references which pervade an otherwise admirable study. As stated at the outset of the chapter, we consider the attempt to affiliate purposed actions upon the general lines of the cosmical process to mar the effect of the work in its scientific aspect. The fault is all the greater since Mr. Spencer rests the full stress of his theories, not so much upon their limited scientific value, as upon the soundness of the philosophic basis. For twenty years or more he has been working from this basis, and in the course of his marvellous work has had ever in view as his crowning achievement the establishment of Ethics upon a cosmical basis through a cosmical process of which it should be the glorious outcome. Ethics should be shown to be dominant and imperative through the voice of the expanding universe. Yet, except as showing Ethics to be a part of the study of Biology, the general laws of the development of which are known, but which in its factors and their relations and origin is utterly

unknown, he has not succeeded. He might, with the exception indicated, just as well have written his "Data of Ethics" first as last.

CHAPTER II.

The Scientific View of the Evolution of Ethics.

Modern thought since the publication of the "Origin of Species," has been more and more forced into the recognition of ethics, (together with all other forms of human conduct) as the result of a process of natural growth. The factors out of which this growth arose are lost in the obscurities of our ignorance, and many of the processes upon which it has depended also surpass existing human powers of explanation. Science has to take for granted the unexplained existence of organisms. For her purposes she is obliged to begin by assuming certain primitive organisms of some simple structure and functions. She is also obliged to admit, although she does not understand, the facts of reproduction and of heredity. Nor can she refuse to acknowledge a place in the history of development, along with the factors of chemistry and of physics, to a subjective factor called feeling, consciousness, mind, or however else it may be best expressed. All these unexplainable but fundamental verities of existence she has to assume. It is because these are unexplained that science falls short of becoming a philosophy. But within the range of their operation science can tell us much, and the Darwinian doctrines have displayed before our eyes the wonderful histories of change and growth through the preceding cycles of the world's

existence. Little doubt now remains in the minds of thoughtful men as to the truth of biological development. The theory rests upon such a wide induction of facts extending over so many branches of science and over such remote periods of time, and withal as by a stroke of magic it has so arranged all sorts of odd incomprehensible facts into definite places in a well ordered organic history, that the mind can no longer withhold its subjection to so imperial and cogent a scientific conception.

Although the philosophical laws of biological development are as we have seen beyond our reach, and although our theory of the accidental origin of variations is rather lame, still there is much that can be expressed in the formal statements called the Laws of Biological Development, which throws light upon those processes of change and growth that have led up from simple organic forms to the highest manifestation of life in the human race. Mr. Spencer defines life as "the continuous adjustment of inner relations to outer relations." This Mr. Spencer regards not merely as a definition but as a law. Its philosophical justification is sought in vain, but it may be accepted as a correct scientific statement—not only of the non-conscious adaptations of organisms to changes of the environment, (such as the thickening of the fur to resist arctic cold, or protective change of colour to imitate physical surroundings,) but also of the conscious adaptations by which higher animals perform particular actions or undergo changes of habit.

As Mr. Spencer points out, the acceptance of this law implies not merely an entire harmony between the existence of an organism and its environment, but it also

implies various degrees of life. The greater the number and variety of correspondences established between an organism and the immensities of the external world—immensities displayed not only in the multiplicities of individual objects, but also in the grandeur of their collective interrelations—the greater the degree of life. Much stress is laid by Mr. Spencer upon this Quantitative character of Life. Much more, indeed, than upon mere continuity, although the latter is to a certain extent essential to the former. Subordinate to this notion, advance in degree of life is found to proceed from a simple, incoherent, and indefinite life to a more and more definite, coherent and complex set of relations with the environment.

But side by side with this development, and indeed in a manner to be likened to that of a geometrical progression, the subjective factor has advanced in relative importance. In its more rudimentary development, Mr. Spencer finds pain to be the concomitant of those states of the physical organism which tend to its destruction, and pleasure to be the concomitant of those states which tend to its promotion. Thus hunger is a pain indicative of the absence of those supplies of energy to be obtained from the environment, which are requisite for the continuance of the organism's activity, while the pleasure of feeding is concomitant with the due supply of the energy necessary for the continuance of organic function. Pleasure and pain, therefore, become motives, and the attainment of the one and the avoidance of the other work together for the continuance of life. Pleasures and pains are relative to the organism—according to the physiological constitution and structure of the organism so are its pleasures and its pains.

The concomitant of some of the structures and functions of the organism has been not merely sentiency but perception. Mind has developed from the distinguishment, identification, and recognition of modes of sentiency. These functions and structures have been accompanied by pleasure and pain, and have formed the basis of the pleasures of intellectual activity in their multiform variety. From their very nature in relation to the environment they have increased wonderfully the quantitative development of life.

With the increase of mind has proceeded the recognition of the part played in the organic universe by feeling. This recognition of the existence of feeling—of the susceptibilities of external organisms to pleasure and pain—has formed the basis of a large part of the adaptations of organisms in relation to their organic environment. Adaptations revealing this recognition are to be seen not only more manifestly in the actions of man and the animals, but also in the functions of plants, strange as this may seem.

With this increase of general intelligence has proceeded an increase of rational knowledge of the causal relationships of phenomena: and with the increase of the knowledge of human motives has proceeded an increased knowledge of the sequences of actions. Thus larger rational judgments of the consequences of actions have been attained.

Following upon the increased recognition of pleasure and pain as motives, and upon the increased amount of rational judgment as to the sequences of actions, has come the adaptation of conduct to the pains and pleasures of others. Those adaptations have, however, been relative to the particular constitution of the Ego,

and relative also to the constitution of the environing Egos.

The knowledge of the existence of sentiency in external organisms may be turned to the account of the Ego by inflicting pain, so as to coerce other sentient organisms to its own selfish objects; or, again, by conferring pleasure, so as to subserve the same end. Thus cruelty may be a natural pleasure in certain early stages of development, as a concomitant of necessities of existence, and may remain by inheritance long after the necessities have passed away. But with the increase of life has occurred the increase of sympathy. It is a law of nature that after the pleasures of the ego are satisfied they are augmented by the contemplation of similar enjoyments of others. But this again is relative. The gourmand likes the society of gourmands, and cares not for the company of the æsthetic or the ascetic. The man of taste revels in the society of kindred natures and despises the pleasures of the base. But the family relation has been the main source of all sweet and manly sympathies: and it has been the gradually widening scope of social organisations which has spread more and more the feeling of human sympathy. The course of history exhibits to us a constant growth, not merely in passively refraining from the infliction of pain, but also in the active endeavour to promote the happiness of our fellow creatures.

This is a general statement of the scientific view of purposed conduct. Its laws are derived from a study of its growth. The growth is one exhibiting several distinguishable features. There has been the ordinary biological "struggle for existence," and "survival of the fittest." There have been adaptations necessitated by

the action of the environment, and there have been chance variations within the lines of causation which, benefitting the individual or some particular race, have given them such an advantage in the battle of life as to secure for their descendants a preponderating possession of the good things of the world. There has been the increase of intelligence, the increase in the organisation of society, the increase of rational judgments of phenomena and human actions. There has been increased knowledge of the determination of actions by motives. There has been increase of sympathy.

But what is the ethical virtue of this historical study is not very clear. The history of human developments is a matter of natural history and no more. And even if we proceed as we might do, to study more in detail the history of the development of notions of right and wrong and of the various changeful applications of those terms, we are still within the limits of a natural history—we are still holding the merely scientific or observant attitude. It is true such study may be essential to our future history: but the mere study of what has been, and the consequent pre-vision of what will be, establishes no rule of right. To prophecy the determining courses of future human conduct does not furnish an ethical imperative to the individual. "If so it will be," he may say, "so let it be, it is no affair of mine. The obligation rests with nature and not with me." Whence then the new "regulative system," the want of which fills Mr. Spencer with alarm? Where shall we look for the new gospel which shall restrain and vivify the moral conduct of future generations in place of the supernatural systems which are supposed to be tottering to their fall?

And if we go beyond this and find that this natural history of man is governed by general laws of adaptation and development we shall still have to question the ethical discernment and ethical authority in special junctures, when what is—is judged not to be what it ought to be; when, in fact, adaptations or biological facts, or equilibrations produced by evolution, are judged not to be ethically good equilibrations.

However, Mr. Spencer holds that rules of right conduct can be established on a scientific basis, and it is our task to examine his treatment of the problem.

"Though this first division of the work terminating the Synthetic Philosophy, cannot, of course, contain the specific conclusions to be set forth in the entire work; yet it implies them in such wise that, definitely to formulate them requires nothing beyond logical dededuction.

"I am the more anxious to indicate in outline if I cannot complete this final work, because the establishment of rules of right conduct on a scientific basis is a pressing need. Now that moral injunctions are losing the authority given by their supposed sacred origin, the secularization of morals is becoming imperative. Few things can happen more disastrous than the decay and death of a regulative system, no longer fit, before another and fitter regulative system has grown up to replace it. Most of those who reject the current creeds, appear to assume that the controlling agency furnished by it may be safely thrown aside, and the vacancy left unfilled by any other controlling agency. Meanwhile, those who defend the current creeds allege that in the absence of the guidance it yields, no guidance can exist; divine commandments

they think the only possible guides. Thus between these extreme opponents there is a certain community. The one holds that the gap left by disappearance of the code of supernatural ethics, need not be filled by a code of natural ethics; and the other holds that it cannot be so filled. Both contemplate a vacuum which the one wishes and the other fears. As the change which promises or threatens to bring about this state, desired or dreaded, is rapidly progressing, those who believe that the vacuum can be filled, are called on to do something in pursuance of their belief."*

It is clear, from the above passage, that Mr. Spencer seeks not merely a knowledge of the laws of past developments, which have landed us in our present position with regard to moral obligation in general and the varied social regulations extant in different societies, but he seeks in addition to strengthen and establish on a new basis the authority of all such obligations. What Mr, Spencer hopes for is a practical end. He seeks the art of good living. As there are sciences of chemistry, metallurgy, electricity, etc., and arts consequent upon them, so he looks for Rules of Life which shall benefit humanity, consequent upon the Science of Humanity. But it is a question whether the Moral Imperative can be regarded as the result of science. However, if not the result, yet science may be able to discern that the Moral Imperative is so firmly established in human nature, that it may be able to proclaim loudly its empire in the heart and over the actions of man; while at the same time Science may be able to guide it to wiser and better judgments.

The task we have before us is to pursue Mr. Spencer's

* Introduction to "Data of Ethics," p. 3.

course of thought, undertaken in this spirit, through the succeeding chapters of his work. Neglecting minor criticisms and passing over much valuable teaching, our business is to follow the main course of his reasoning and examine the chief grounds for such authority and guidance which he finally presents to us as the outcome of his study.

CHAPTER III.

The Biological View of Ethics.

We shall best arrive at an adequate estimate of Mr. Spencer's ethical system by studying first what he terms the biological view of ethics. But to do this properly requires a survey not only of Chapter VI., which bears this title, but also of the following chapter, which deals with the psychological view. We hold that Mr. Spencer, in this division of his subject into separate stages, makes a false arrangement of his studies. For as on the one hand he endeavours to include the study of biology as a branch of physics, on the other hand he treats it as incapable of comprehensive developmental study apart from the factors of feeling and mind. These divisions are marked features of the form into which Mr. Spencer has thrown his study of human conduct, but they do not correspond with his actual treatment of the subject. The course of thought cannot be fitted into the formal outline.

It is found that the understanding of biology is as dependent upon a knowledge of psychology as it is upon a knowledge of physics. The sequence of dependent stages as set forth does not hold good. The conduct of animal and perhaps vegetable organisms is not explicable as the action of mere physical aggregates, and is little understood without the admission of a subjective factor of feeling or mind. It is all very well for Mr. Spencer to argue, as he does in Chapter V., on the "Physical View," that since all conduct is objectively physical action it may be separately studied from the physical point of view; but since the actions of organisms are not to be explained within the limits of physical laws this is a very useless reminder, and Mr. Spencer himself makes nothing of the study since he cannot work out the line of causation in terms of the physical factors only. On the other hand we find that our author has not proceeded three pages into the biological view before he introduces the subjective factors of Pleasure and Pain, which he eventually establishes not merely as the accompaniments of life-sustaining and life-diminishing acts, but even as the causes of further actions which shall at the same time tend to secure Pleasure and avoid Pain, and thus sustain the organism in a continuance of existence. Only for three pages can the purely biological view of animal organisms as physical moving equilibria be maintained; and then with section 32 comes the introduction of subjective factors—factors which are treated not merely as the concomitants of physical processes conducted wholly within and according to the laws of physical sequence, but as actual factors interfering with and affecting the line of causation. It is true Mr. Spencer recognises and deals with

the difficulty which obviously arises as to the separability of the psychological view from a biological view which admits the factors of Pleasure and Pain. But the distinction he makes, while justifiable, does not deal with the fundamental difficulty. Psychology treats, roughly speaking, of mentality; it comprises a study of the establishment of sets of inner relations, (*i.e.*, associations of thought, relations of ideas, relations of sequences, the powers of remembrance, of discrimination and identification,) with sets of external relations, namely, the actual existences of which the inner relations are the representatives. The establishment of such inner relations corresponding to outer relations and their widening growth, must have a marked influence upon human conduct so that it may very well be separated for convenience of study from the earlier forms of organic conduct, in which such action is little recognisable. But how to form the connective law is the difficulty. Moreover, it is one thing to establish the fact of evolution, and another thing to explain it. We ourselves admit the fact, indeed, but search in vain for the explanation.

Are we to look for the origin of Pleasure and Pain in those laws of the moving equilibrium which necessitate the generation of internal forces equal and in opposition to external inimical forces? If so, Pleasure and Pain must be regarded as forces—as factors—in the in the organism, and we must regard the subjective as generated by external physical factors operating upon internal physical factors, and we must regard these subjective factors not merely as concomitant, but as producing physical effects by way of reaction.

So far as it goes there may be a physical view of pur-

posed conduct, and so far as it goes there may be a psychological view, but between the two the biological view is a mere disorderly mixture, borrowing its terms first on one hand and then on the other, and assigning its determining causes first to the physical moving equilibrium theory, and then again to the anticipation of Pleasure and Pain. But the biological law which should co-ordinate these two sets of laws is not formulated, and hence we find more or less gliding, or more or less sudden transition from one set of terms or laws to the other, a defect which is concealed in some measure by the formal divisions of the chapters. But if the course of thought is carefully followed it is found that the actual treatment does not properly fit in. There is an unmistakeable transition from the purely physical set of factors to the purely subjective, and there is no co-ordinated biological law at all. The chapter is a transitional one, it is true, but only in the sense of gradually leaving off the employment of one set of terms, and the gradual employment of another set of terms in the treatment of the same phenomena.

Mr. Spencer argues well in Chapter V. as to the concomitance of pleasure-giving acts with life-sustaining acts, and of pain-giving acts with decrease of life; but which is prior in the chain of causation? Or, to repeat the old difficulty, is the subjective factor present in the line of causation at all? Is it merely a concomitant of the physical line of events?

Mr. Spencer proposes to deal with feelings and functions in their mutual dependence, * and so admits the subjective as a factor. Thus there are feelings which are sensations and serve partly as guides and partly as stimuli towards actions for the sustenance and preserva-

* Data of Ethics, p. 78.

tion of life. And there are feelings which are classed as emotions which also act in a very potent way as guides and stimuli, such as fear and joy. Hence, in treating of conduct under its biological aspect we are compelled to consider that inter-action of feelings and functions which is essential to animal life in all its more developed forms.*

Following upon this we are taught that Pleasure is a feeling which we seek to bring into consciousness, and Pain a feeling which we seek to keep out of consciousness. This certainly accords to the subjective factor a commanding position in the physical action of organisms; it also implies a foresight of the results of actions, and a certain degree of advance in psychology but throws no light upon the lower stages of biological action. Mr. Spencer says, however, that "fit connections between acts and results must establish themselves in living things even before consciousness arises." This is followed by an interesting study of the proposition that "after the rise of consciousness these connections can change in no other way than to become better established," and that "whenever sentiency makes its appearance as an accompaniment, its forms must be such that in the one case the produced feeling is of a kind that will be sought—Pleasure, and in the other case is of a kind that will be shunned—Pain." "It is an inevitable deduction from the hypothesis of evolution that races of sentient creatures could have come into existence under no other conditions" than that "pains are the correlatives of actions injurious to the organism, while pleasures are the correlatives of actions conducive to its welfare."

All this may be admitted, granted the existence of the

* Ibid, p. 78.

subjective factor; but at what stage does it commence to have such a potent influence upon the development of organisms, and whence came it at all? Mr. Spencer says, "fit connections between acts and results must establish themselves in living things even before consciousness arises." "At the very outset life is maintained by persistence in acts which conduce to it, and desistance from acts which impede it." It would seem that if life can be maintained by means of unconscious persistence in beneficial acts and unconscious desistance from injurious acts, such a process might continue in more complex organisms without the assistance of consciousness, and that the continuance and development of life could be explained in terms of the same factors and processes which originated life, and regulated and propagated the existence of races in the lowest forms of organisms. Mr. Spencer clearly holds that such races of organisms were originated and maintained by the action of physical laws before sentiency became a factor in their sustaining or generative actions. What need then for sentiency in the subsequent development? Mr. Spencer's argument is good, that, granted the concomitance of Pleasure and Pain with life-sustaining and life-diminishing acts respectively, the attainment of the one and the avoidance of the other acts on the increase of life; but he says that, previous to the advent of sentiency, life was sustained in much the same way. There is this difference in it, however, that only where the requisite acts were performed or avoided in pre-sentient organisms did such organisms continue to exist, and that these acts were not consciously performed, but only happened in the course of physical sequence;

whereas in the case of sentient creatures Pleasure is consciously sought, and Pain is intentionally avoided. But it seems to us that when acts are determined by the anticipation of Pleasure or Pain, we enter upon the domain of psychology, and when they are determined by physical factors without consciousness we remain in the province of physics, so that there is no intermediate science of Biology at all. And by this we mean, not that for convenience we may not so arrange our classes of study, but that there are no laws of physics which will account for the development of organisms, and there are no biological processes which do not imply the action of a subjective factor; and that there is no true biological law which properly expresses the correlation of the two. Mr. Spencer starts with a Biology from which the subjective is completely absent, and ends with a Psychology of the highest description: but he fails to express the biological law which accounts for the growth of the one out of the other, or expresses the law of their correlation in a concomitant growth.

How then can we arrive at any ethical rule by the study of Biology? In this way. An organism is a moving equilibrium: it is a law of moving equilibria that they counterbalance by means of new adjustments antagonistic forces in the environment, and absorb forces from the environment favourable to their continuance. Their continued existence depends upon such continuous absorption and adjustment. But as environment varies, so do adjustments; and thus there is a wonderful variety of different moving equilibria, which form important parts of one another's environment. The suitable structures and

functions which have thus been evolved are therefore relative to the environment, and the inherited structure and functions forming a moving equilibrium are fitted for particular environments and no other. There is no absolute moving equilibrium; all are relative. "That which was defined as a moving equilibrium, we define biologically as a balance of functions. The implication of such a balance is that the several functions in their kinds, amounts, and combinations, are adjusted to the several activities which maintain and constitute complete life; and to be so adjusted is to have reached the goal towards which the evolution of conduct continually tends." But completeness of life means primarily the completeness of life in each individual organism as regards its continued existence, and the full satisfaction of all its functions during the period of its existence. The biologically good is all that conduces to this end, and the biologically bad is all that detracts from it. The biologically good and bad are therefore relative to the consensus of functions which constitute an animal or other organism. The biologically good and bad are therefore individual. That which is good for the individual is the right conduct, and that which is bad for it is wrong conduct. It is therefore right for the big fishes to eat the little ones, for the bird to prey upon the insect; it is a fit satisfaction for the functions of the lion to devour the antelope, for one tribe to slay or drive out another tribe in order to possess itself of more fertile plains and more delightful countries. And so, as long as the functions delight in egoism, and there is no counterforce of sympathy included among them, it is right to tyrannise, to subject others to the service or passions of the dominant organisms. They subserve

the biological law—they are conducive to complete relative life. The biological law does not recognise the lives of others until sympathy has become part of the functions of the organism.

The question here arises, how far the ethical law is to be determined by the biological law, for if the biological law is dominant, and the ethical dependant, the latter can only be explained and justified by the former. But we at once see that the two things are not identical and co-extensive. We recognise the difference between the biologically efficient and the ethically good and bad. The law of Biology refers to the actions of each individual in regard to itself alone, whatever the functions, etc., which constitute that self. It relates to its good alone, irrespective of the good of others, unless, and until, sympathy with others has become part of the functions of the individual.

But Mr. Spencer seeks to make the biological view of conduct identical with the ethical by introducing the conception of quantitative life. In this case an organism has more life the greater the number of correspondences it has with the environment. And since the environment is constituted of two classes of objects, the objective and the subjective—the purely physical and the organisms possessing feeling—so the correspondences established in the individual are of two kinds, the psychological and the emotional. In the former class are comprised all the objects and relations of the inorganic world, the great laws and intricacies of nature and her past history, including the history of organisms and of man. In the latter are included all the feeling, living creatures around us, with their pleasures, hopes, and pains, and all the characters, noble and beautiful,

delicate or brutal, passionate or aspiring, who have ever trod the stage of history, or wrought or thought for us in antecedent ages. In fact all the patient work and mighty achievements of science, and all the emotional relations of men have afforded scope for the quantitative increase of life; and in proportion to the increase so it is suggested that life became ethical. The biological law is the continuous adjustment of organisms to environment, and the increase of adjustment is the increase of life.

This may be so; but it is a denial of Ethics as being coeval with Biology; it makes the one simply a late outcome of the other. According to this view, Ethics is something which has supervened upon the process, and which requires a separate analysis. But we have seen that increase of correspondence is of two kinds—it takes place in the direction of intellect, and it takes place in the direction of emotion, whether of sympathy or antipathy. But it is with the latter class of phenomena alone that Ethics is concerned. The increased quantitative life which is identical with the increase of knowledge has no ethical aspect. It is increased relations of an emotional nature only which admit that term. In fact it is to societarian relations alone that it is applicable. Increase of life may proceed in the direction of intellect or recognition of the facts and relations of the external world, and yet the life may never be termed ethical; while on the other hand there may be but little increase of intellect, yet a great increase of ethical relations. Therefore, increased quantitative life, considered as a mode of identifying the biological law with the ethical law, except by way of comprehension in a larger classification, fails in the

end because it is not true that the increase of correspondences need be in the special direction of increase of emotional correspondences: and thus we find that ethics is not to be affiliated upon the main line of biological progress, but with one distinguishable result of it—namely the relation of the individual with its subjective environment—that is to say, Society.

And here it is fit that we should take notice of Mr. Spencer's account of Good and Bad Conduct, given in chapter 3 of the "Data of Ethics." A good knife, gun, or house are such in virtue of their capacity for fulfilling the purposes for which they were designed. A good day or a good season are such as satisfy certain of our desires. A good pointer or a good ox are so in reference to certain of our requirements. A good jump, or good stroke at billiards, are those which accomplish the desired ends. And bad things are those which do not subserve desired ends.

Mr. Spencer then proceeds to study the ethically good and bad, and to discuss the application of these terms to actions as regards the welfare of self, of offspring, and of fellow citizens. Acts are said to be good and bad according as they affect the welfare of self. Here it is indicated that acts are judged according to their degree of biological efficiency. In the next class—namely, acts relating to offspring—a father and mother are again judged according to their efficiency in those capacities, although the egoistic element is present in a subordinate degree. "Most emphatic, however, are the applications of the words good and bad to conduct throughout that third division of it comprising the deeds by which men affect one another. In maintaining their own lives" (biological laws) "and

fostering their offspring, men's adjustments of acts to ends are so apt to hinder the kindred adjustments of other men, that insistance on the needful limitations has to be perpetual; and the mischiefs caused by men's interferences with one another's life-subserving actions are so great, that the interdicts have to be peremptory."

The general meaning of "good" and "bad" as applied to actions, then, has reference to their efficiency. The differences of their meaning are due to the end regarded. The meanings are harmonised, however, when we consider that they are applicable to different degrees in the evolution of conduct; the conduct to which we apply the name good is the relatively more evolved conduct, and "bad is the name we apply to conduct which is relatively less evolved. This involves a reference to the three stages of biological evolution, the individual, the offspring, and society."

"Lastly, we inferred that establishment of an associated state, both makes possible and requires a form of conduct such that life may be completed in each and in his offspring, not only without preventing completion of it in others, but with furtherance of it in others; and we have found that this is the form of conduct most emphatically termed good."* From this Mr. Spencer infers the contemporaneous achievement of the greatest totality of life in self, and this is supposed to vindicate the affiliation Ethics upon Biology.

We have, however, already shown that the enlargement of the relations between the individual and the subjective environment is the special ethical relation, and that the enlargement of the relations between the individual and the objective environment is non-ethical, thus

* Ibid. p. 25.

specialising the ethical interpretation of the enlargement of biological relations. We must also notice that Mr. Spencer's affiliation of biology with ethics relates to a remote ideal future and not to an actual present or a historic past. The biological law is the adaptation of the individual to its own special surroundings, and not the adaptation of its remote and changed descendant to its remote and changed environment. According to the fitness of the individual for supplying itself with food, whether of a vegetable or animal nature, and according to its capacities for, self preservation or defence, so will it be deemed biologically perfect. This is a relative, an individual standard, without reference to the subjective environment except in so far as this subjective environment subserves some internal function of sympathy. But even in this case the ethical relation is subordinate to the biological and is relative to the actual individual and not to a future ideal descendant. Moreover, the biological standard is always individual and singular and is not societarian.

We therefore come to the conclusion that the biological point of view does not furnish us with any ethical theory. The biological law is not individual completeness; it is individual suitability to environment. It is true, individual greatness may be the most complete life; but when that is not possible from the nature of the inherited organism, or from the nature of the surroundings, then the actually best thing, because relatively best, is conformity to the surroundings. The man who cannot adapt the environment to himself will prudently adapt himself to the environment. That is the biological law; whether it be the ethical law is another

question. Abstract quantitative life may not be attainable either intellectually or in relation to the emotional surroundings. Therefore the more skilful adaptation having in view the particular functions of the organisms, (whether they include sympathies with the subjective surroundings, or not), is the biological law—although it may not be regarded as the ethical law.

Quantitative life, viewed biologically, *i.e.*, individually, does not mean an ideal quantitative life, but the most that an individual organism can get. This depends upon the organism's own nature and capacities, and upon the nature of the environment. That some descendents some day may have other natures and other surroundings, is not to the point. The presence of subjective surroundings in the environment affects the individual according to the nature of his own feelings: it affects him in the first place according to his possession or non-possession of sympathy, and in the second place according to his position of command or subserviency.

If Biology takes cognisance of Ethics, it is from a prudential point of view alone. It means a recognition of the penalties of legal enactments or social laws. As a matter of calculation it takes account of the consequences of actions, and the conduct varies accordingly.

And if we are unable to accept the biological view as identical with the fundamentals of Ethics, so we are unable to accept the correlative that the preponderance of pleasurable feelings is indicative of the ethically correct life. For this criterion again is relative to the individual, and prescribes that course of conduct which to him is most largely pleasurable. It is only ethical when

the surrounding conditions are such as to make the personally pleasurable harmonise with what is also pleasurable to the subjective environment—again showing the external or social origin and authority of the ethical imperative.

Before quitting this subject, it would be as well to notice the narrow limitation assigned to the relation of feeling and function in the chapter on the biological view. Pleasure is there described as the correlative of life-sustaining acts, and Pain as the correlative of life-destructive acts; and we are told that under these conditions alone sentient creatures could evolve. This would apparently limit the range of the evolution of feeling to those classes of actions which are essential to the mere continuance of existence. If the growth of feeling is co-extensive with the growth of actions essential to existence, then Pleasure and Pain should be limited to the feelings involved in the supply of food, the escape from enemies, the pursuit of prey, &c. If to these should be added the larger, but as yet unexplained, view of Biology, which makes the individual a part only of a greater moving equilibrium—namely the species to which he belongs—then there will be an extension of feeling (that is, of Pleasure and Pain) to the acts requisite for the propagation of the race and the care of off-spring. But to these two classes of functions, human pleasures and pains are not limited. Beyond what may be termed the essential growth of feeling, there has been a super-growth of feeling concomitant with every extension of the correspondences between the inner relations and the outer relations. In the converse of the organism with its environment there has grown up a vast extension of knowledge as to

external facts; and in the classification and reasoning upon these there has supervened a vast interest, which has been pleasurable quite apart from any life-sustaining necessity. So in the arts of life there has arisen a pleasure in the exercise of ingenuity and skill of manufacture, far above the requisites for bodily preservation. In the spread of æstheticism and the appreciation of the beautiful in Painting, Statuary, Architecture and Decoration generally, there has been manifested an amount of taste or feeling, utterly beyond any value it may have as "life-sustaining." Poetry, Music, Literature, along with all the other highest manifestations of civilization, are not the outcome of the necessities of existence, but a work super-imposed upon the poor and bare adaptations which are sufficient for simple existence. The same may be said of all those fine sympathies of man for man, of man for noble ideals of humanity, and even of the more homely love and good feeling of simple natures. Our friendships, our admirations, all that makes man something over and above the mere brute animals, is due to this larger growth of feeling beyond what is essential to the mere continuance of life—and if we should identify Pleasure and Pain merely with the conditions of life-sustaining and life-destructive acts, we should form a very inadequate conception of their place in human life. This of course is on the understanding that the biological law implies only self continuance or race continuance. That this is Mr. Spencer's original view is manifest from the fact that he theoretically derives life from the consideration of the laws of the moving equilibrium. But if we take the larger view, (which, however, is not derivable from the former), that life is correspondence

between inner relations and outer relations, and is to be measured quantitatively by the increase of the number of correspondences, then of course the whole estimation of pleasures and pains is changed.

Under the latter view the organism enters into correspondence with all the individual objects of the environment, and not only has a present regard, but a past and a future interest. The scope of interest in the larger minds embraces long lines of history leading up and down the eras of development. In narrow measures of family or local interest, the social feeling has first risen, but as the framework of tribes or nations becomes knit together, so the social feelings acquire a wider interest. The merely biological interests have become enlarged by means of an internal growth, so as to have regard for other sentient existences. Altruism becomes a part of Egoism. We care for others, not by compulsion, but from natural growth of interest. Into the causes and incidents of this growth it is not necessary to enter. It is a simple fact of human nature that the pains and pleasures of others affect us much, and sometimes very keenly indeed.

Thus we find that the purely biological law, regarded as the adjustment of a moving equilibrium to its environment, derived from and exemplified in the physical moving equilibrium of the solar system, the spinning top, the steam engine, &c., does not afford us much insight into ethical theory, even if the equilibrations have a concomitant of feeling. In any approach from the purely biological towards the ethical, we are thrown for our explanations upon efficient subjective factors—upon the interaction of feeling organisms and sympathetic organisms.

If we attempt to apply the biological law as an explanation of the super-growth of correspondences over and above the actual necessities of continued existence, and as an explanation of the growth of sympathy or altruism, we have to suppose that the external forces have generated in the organism internal forces in opposition or balance therewith. But this theory of the moving equilibrium, difficult to understand and accept in its simplest applications, transcends all powers of human comprehension when it attempts to deal with the subjective relations of organisms, and, it appears to us, entirely fails to account for the growth of sympathy or altruistic feeling.

Altruism in Egoism.

The fact of the existence of altruistic feelings in the texture of the Ego has led to the theory that all altruistic actions, since they arise out of the constitution of the Ego, are really egoistic. This argument is irresistible. A kind, sympathetic man or woman is so by virtue of innate qualities, just as the selfish or the brutal man is. And if the justification of actions were to depend upon the authority of natural egoism the one is as much capable of justification as the other. If Ethics depends for its explanation and justification upon Biology, then, since the view of Biology is limited to the individual and means the suitable adjustment of every moving equilibrium to its special environment, each is capable of equal justification and similar explanation. Egoism may include Altruism or it may not, but in either case the action is equally valid from the point of view of Biology.

If, however, an extension of this view be argued for

on the theory that a rationalistic view of all the requirements of the subjective surroundings involves a certain line of conduct in order to secure a suitable adaptation between the organism and the environment, which shall be the equation of that organism, the best adaptation for the time being—this will be a superior, because a more extended, biological aspect of conduct, and it is not disputed that such a view of life may be more or less acted upon.

But neither the Ego-altruistic view, nor the prudential rationalistic view attains to the true ethical point of view of human conduct; for the altruistic growth in the Ego is not universal, nor of equal development; and the prudential rationalistic motive is purely egoistic and biological, and therefore adverse to the altruistic, even if it exists in the Ego.

The main object of the present argument is to shew that the purely biological explanation of ethical injunctions is insufficient as a means of understanding their imperative character. And yet it is difficult to say this if Biology is to be considered as the law of actions of organisms. It all depends upon the factors which are included in the generalisation. If the factors are simply physical, then the generalisation is insufficient; if the forces included in the moving equilibrium include subjective forces capable of growth into sympathy or Altruism, then the biological laws receive, perhaps, an extension which renders them capable of determining the whole of the phenomena. But if Pleasure and Pain are limited to life-sustaining acts or life-destructive acts, then the influence of the subjective factors is limited to the physical, and the supergrowth of correspondences of inner with outer (which

is necessary to explain the larger growth of feeling) transgresses the narrow limits of the biological law—the law of simple equilibration between the organism and its environment.

It is well now to raise the question what is the object of ethical enquiry. Is it merely scientific determination of the origin, growth, and variations of ethical opinion? Is it a natural history of human conduct, more particularly of that part of it called ethical? Is it an investigation into the natural authority of ethical injunction? Is the object to establish ethical authority, or to show that ethics has no authority, or to enable us to conform to it and administer it intelligently? Generally speaking, is it a scientific enquiry for the information of our minds, or is it investigated for the enforcement of ethical injunctions?

It is to be presumed that we have both ends in view. Knowledge must precede power. Light must go before footsteps. At least, so it must be if intellect is to rule. As a matter of fact, Ethics has not been so much a reasoned out system of conduct as a worked out system to be afterwards reasoned about. Morality has been the interbalance, growth, and counterbalance of subjective and sympathetic individuals. Then it became something to reason about, to modify by reason in the the application to remoter ends and larger bodies of the principles out of which it arose. But the province of reason is not to supersede those principles, nor to weaken their authority, which indeed it could not do, for the forces which produced morality are ever present to sustain it, and, indeed, acquire age after age an increasing force.

CHAPTER IV.

The Sociological View.

We now enter upon the study of Ethics proper. Notwithstanding Mr. Spencer's attempt at the outset of the chapter to identify "right living" with the universal biological principle that "Given its environment and its structure, and there is for each kind of creature a set of actions adapted in their kinds, amounts, and combinations to secure the highest conservation its nature permits," the fact still remains that the ethical imperative is drawn from the social surroundings, and is not derivable from the adaptation to environment, unless the environment be of a subjective character requiring an adaptation to it as such. Mr. Spencer considers that "there is a supposable formula for the activity of each species, which, could it be drawn out, would constitute a system of morality for that species," although "such a system of morality would have little or no reference to the welfare of others than self and offspring." We cannot concede

that the formula of activities for a worm by which it maintains its existence, is a formula of morality; nor can we admit that the longest-lived oyster is the most moral of oysters. Systems of morality which relate to the welfare of self and offspring alone are in the latter instance confessedly of a very limited character, and when entirely confined to self it would seem that we lose all ethical quality whatsoever. We continually find in Mr. Spencer's exposition that, notwithstanding his attempt to affiliate Ethics upon the biological law, it is only in the increased correlation of subjective individuals that Ethics arises, and it is only the modification of the individual by society, and the mental or emotional growths in the individual consequent on the action of the social environment, that constitute the groundwork of Ethics.

It is true that, since society is composed of individuals, the nature and constitution of the units has to be considered in their mutual interaction, and therefore the study must have a biological basis: but when we have to consider the special action of the compound social environment upon the individual, the study is not one which can be properly considered from the purely biological side, nor is it to be comprised within the formula of individual life. With respect to the social environment Mr. Spencer says, "This additional factor in the problem of complete living, is, indeed, so important that the necessitated modifications of conduct have come to form a chief part of the code of conduct. Because the inherited desires, which directly refer to the maintenance of individual life, are fairly adjusted to the requirements, there has been no need to insist on that conformity to them which furthers self-conser-

vation. Conversely, because these desires prompt activities that often conflict with the activities of others, and because the sentiments responding to other's claims are relatively weak, moral codes emphasise those restraints on conduct which the presence of fellow men entails. From the sociological point of view, then, Ethics becomes nothing else than a definite account of the forms of conduct that are fitted to the associated state, in such wise that the lives of each and all may be the greatest possible, alike in length and breadth. But here we are met by a fact which forbids us thus to put in the foreground the welfares of citizens, individually considered, and requires us to put in the foreground the welfare of the society as a whole. The life of the social organism must, as an end, rank above the lives of its units. These two ends are not harmonious at the outset, and though the tendency is towards harmonisation of them, they are still partially conflicting." *

The difficulty alluded to arises from the fact that human society is not one well-ordered whole, but has been from the first, and still is, split up into numerous nations having conflicting interests: from which it follows that there is not a complete homogeneity of duty between man and man when, for instance, a state of warfare exists.

If now we recognise Ethics as the rule of life imposed by Society upon the individual, we shall have to recognise great varieties of rule, according to the nature and objects of the particular Society imposing the rule, according to the state of development at which that Society has arrived, and according to the nature of the environment.

* Data of Ethics, p 133.

The rule of a club over the individuals composing it, the rule of a church over its members, the rule of any body of men over its constituent units is founded upon the ethical principle, however trifling or however serious the objects of the particular association may be. Those slight or those important social penalties or commendations which fill up the course of everyday life in business, in the workshop, in social intercourse—the familiar judgments of companions or contemporaries—are all of them ethical valuations of conduct. Slight though some of them may be, they are still enforcements of social opinions. Man is hedged in on all sides by forces limiting his action to certain lines of conduct, and this social pressure is as much the basis of the most forceful ethical commands or prohibitions as of the most ephemeral influences. The only difference consists in the importance of the mode in which the various actions affect the general welfare. But this we shall have occasion to treat of hereafter in greater detail. It is, however, all a matter of the greater or lesser degree in which it affects the welfare of the temporary organisation, the welfare of the family, or the welfare of the permanent community, of which the individual forms a part.

But it is evident that as the stage of development differs, and as nations differ in their environments, so there will be different standards of conduct at different times and places. And therefore, again, there will be different standards of morality for different sets of purposes. This must be acknowledged at once.

Hence arise the questions, What can be the obligation of a relative morality? and—Is there no absolute morality with its imperatives universal in space and in time?

The question as to absolute morality we reserve: meanwhile we confine our considerations to a study of the influence of Society upon individuals. This is disclosed in a study of Sociology.

Living together in a social state necessitates certain negative and, eventually, positive duties.

"Whether the members of a social group do or do not co-operate, certain limitations to their individual activities are necessitated by their association; and after recognising these as arising in the absence of co-operation, we shall be the better prepared to understand how conformity to them is effected when co-operation begins.*

"What shape, then, must the mutual restraints take when co-operation begins? or rather, what, in addition to the primary mutual restraints already specified, are those secondary mutual restraints required to make co-operation possible? * * * * The reply will be made clearer if we take the successive forms of co-operation in the order of ascending complexity. We may distinguish as homogeneous co-operation (1) that in which like efforts are joined for like ends that are simultaneously enjoyed. As co-operation that is not completely homogeneous we may distinguish (2) that in which like efforts are joined for like ends that are not simultaneously enjoyed. A co-operation of which the heterogeneity is more distinct is (3) that in which unlike efforts are joined for like ends. And lastly comes the decidedly heterogeneous co-operation, (4) that in which unlike efforts are joined for unlike ends." †

The social attainment reaches a full development in the last mentioned case.

* Data of Ethics, p 139. † Ibid, p 140.

"Only under voluntary agreement then, no longer tacit and vague, but overt and definite, can co-operation be harmoniously carried on when division of labour becomes established. And, as in the simplest co-operation, where like efforts are joined to secure a common good, the dissatisfaction caused in those who, having expended their labours, do not get their share of the good, prompts them to cease co-operating; as in the more advanced co-operation, achieved by exchanging equal labours of like kind expended at different times, aversion to co-operate is generated if the expected equivalent of labour is not rendered; so in this developed co-operation, the failure of either to surrender to the other that which was avowedly recognized as of like value with the labour or product given, tends to prevent co-operation by exciting discontent with its results. And, evidently while antagonisms thus caused impede the lives of the units, the life of the aggregate is endangered by diminished cohesion."

"But now we have to recognise the fact that complete fulfilment of these conditions, original and derived, is not enough. * * * * If no one did for his fellows anything more than was required by strict performance of contract, private interests would suffer from the absence of attention to public interests. The limit of evolution of conduct is consequently not reached, until, beyond avoidance of direct and indirect injuries to others, there are spontaneous efforts to further the welfare of others."

The point brought out here is the social pressure of the society upon the individual, so as to ensure that the actions of the individual primarily are not inimical to its welfare, and secondarily are subservient to its welfare.

But, of course, since society is composed of individuals, this pressure must not be of such a character as to be destructive of the welfare of the individuals of which the society is composed, for that would militate against its own objects.

It is easy to reason out from this principle what actions would be condemned and what actions would be praised in the various stages of human development. The strongest injunctions would correspond with the fundamental requirements of existence, and would enjoin the sacredness of life within the community. The family relationships would come next in order of authority. The safeguards of property of every description would early receive ethical recognition. Commendation would be accorded to men whose actions were properly limited in these respects. In early stages of development the coward would be condemned, while the warrior who did his share well in the protection of the community would be praised. And so in a variety of ways men's actions would receive praise or blame, according as they conduced to the welfare or to the suffering of the existing community.

CHAPTER V.

The Ethical Imperative.

We have thus seen that the origin and authority of Ethics are to be found in Sociology; but to allow the enquiry to rest here is only half to understand the nature and imperativeness of ethical obligations as to conduct. We consider that Mr. Spencer's ethical theory suffers from his mode of exposition. We should be disposed to approach the question in an inverse order, and instead of seeking for an ethical authority on individual or biological grounds, culminating in an ethical Sociology, to acknowledge at once the sociological origin and authority of the ethical obligation, and to endeavour to understand it in detail by a subordinate study of biological requirements and psychological growths.

The main fact underlying all Ethics is the existence of a society composed of subjective factors, factors possessing feelings and reasoning powers. The fundamental notion in Ethics is the regulation of the mutual conduct of these factors. It is the voice of the million against the voice of the unit which decides the duty of the unit. It is the voice of the individual against the voice of society claiming a modification of opinion. It is the voice of individuals to other individuals specifying general duty. Broadly speaking it is the claim of duties towards other individuals upon the Ego. But it follows from the universality of the claim, that there

is mutuality of claim, and the duties which are demanded have at the same time to be acknowledged. The principle can be easily accepted as theoretically correct, and many general rights and duties can be readily deduced as corollaries, but beyond these general rules ethical problems have rather to be worked out than thought out—in the more important matters by societies during their upward growth, in smaller matters by individuals through multitudinous adjustments and re-adjustments. I do this or that in contravention of some accepted social law. I am condemned, and am made so generally uncomfortable by the social penalties that I am coerced into conformity, or, otherwise, society modifies its opinion in acknowledgment of my right to do as I have done.

But then the question arises, upon what principle should ethical judgments be formed? Since society demands the performance of certain actions, while it prohibits the performance of others, and since its aim is the biological completeness of each of the individuals, what are the principles upon which it determines the restraints and imposes the injunctions so as not to interfere too much with individual liberties? This principle finds very good expression in Mr. Spencer's formula.

The whole problem comes before us when we have to consider the relative claims of egoism and altruism, a problem splendidly worked out by Mr. Spencer, in the chapters entitled "Egoism *versus* Altruism," "Altruism *versus* Egoism," "Trial and Compromise," and "Conciliation." As this is a purely critical work, to be read only in conjunction with the work criticised, we do not feel called upon to give an account of these chapters.

We simply state our acceptance of them bodily, the reservations we would make being merely in regard to certain details of the exposition. We ought to reprint them here in order to make this work complete in its argument, but it is simpler to ask the student to interrupt his reading of this criticism by a reperusal of the chapters referred to.

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Having read Mr. Spencer's treatment of the problem, the question remains, is the ethical imperative merely an external one, dictated by a prudential consideration of the requirements of the social environment? The answer must be a negative one; there is an internal moral authority which gives to actions their ethical glory, their poetic delicacy, their qualitative appreciation, insomuch that there are names in past history that stand ever in the forefront of the memories of men, hallowed and ennobled in their imaginations for all time, on account of the ethical glory of their lives and the manner in which their example appeals to the wide sympathies within us. From the same internal fount springs the detestation of foul and cruel actions, the hatred of unjust and tyrannical deeds, and the abhorrence of the men and women who commit them. The same internal sentiment covers the individual himself with shame and remorse for unworthy actions committed, from which an ever-present memory suffers no release.

The natural history of the growth of this internal authority is the history of the action of the subjective environment upon the subjective individual. The understanding of this growth is the province of Psychology

in the two forms of emotional evolution and intellectual evolution as presented by Mr. Spencer in chapter vii of the "Data of Ethics,"—the enlargement of the number of sympathies with the subjective environment—past, present, and future—and the enlargement of the number of correspondences with the objective environment in space, and time, and generality. We are more particularly concerned with that branch of it which deals with the growth of the emotions. The purely biological view relates to the individual, and its own personal existence. But the care of offspring, arising from some incomprehensible necessity for the continuance of the species, and accompanied by a recognition of their subjective character, produces actions, having regard to their effects upon the subjectivity of the offspring, of a regulative, coercive, or deterrent character. Moreover, by some not understood law, the sympathies which undoubtedly exist between organisms, have led to the recognition of the pains of others as egoistic pains, and of the pleasures of others as egoistic pleasures. Thus altruism from the very first became *to a certain extent* a form of egoism, and the action of the Ego in its subjective environment was of a regulative character amongst its offspring. An extension and modification of this action ensued upon a social environment composed of more distant, or only tribal relationships. Nevertheless psychological evolution made the sympathies gradually include tribal and national, and eventually humanitarian recognitions. The growth of Ethics, and the growth of ethical feeling, are thus seen to be a natural growth, and not merely the solution of an intellectual problem. The justification for the ethical feeling is that it exists. The justification for any code of morality is that is exists.

But the amendment of the code of morality derives its justification from changing conditions. The changefulness of the latter does not detract from but attests the essential nature of the former. It is the court of appeal for the retention of existing codes, and for the judgment of imminent changes. We cannot, therefore turn round and say—as we may be tempted to do when we find the relativity of morals and its origin in external obligation —"Ethics is only an intellectual puzzle, only a social contract, into which I may enter or not as I please." If a man assumes a hostile attitude to society, he wrongs his nature as a man; and if a philosopher or selfish man of the world cuts off human sympathy for the purpose of living a merely prudential life he becomes something less than a man, he misses the full function and joy of life. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that there are men who have so maimed their emotional nature as to lead tolerably satisfactory lives within the narrow limits of selfish desires. To them ethical obligation is external only, and the internal obligation is a minimum. Such may be the case. There are men who do actions in contradiction of the voice of society, and who do not repent. Society has to deal with these men as best it can. The ethical problem is only of interest to those who feel the obligation, or to the philosopher who studies the human nature of which it is a characteristic.

Viewed as a practical question, no philosophical theory will carry the force of conviction to a bestial, brutal, sordid, selfish man. These require the material punishments of the administrators of the law, personal force, and social coercion. And even then there remain large criminal classes in every community. The study

of the ethical problem is for those who recognise ethical obligation and seek guidance or to guide. The internal ethical obligation is not to be reasoned into a man. It must be grown into the child. This is to be done by love-enkindling actions and demeanour, a just and considerate course of conduct, well judged according to ethical principles. And herein lies the utility of the study. Example and injunctions in daily exigencies form the groundwork of such influence as can be exerted by education. A discriminating judgment of contemporary actions and of past histories tends to develop a proper discrimination of the qualities of actions.

But below and accompanying all this must be recognised—as Mr. Spencer so fully recognises—the registration, as he terms it, of emotions and mental capacities in the inherited constitutions of organisms. That which is the lesson of one age has become the inborn faculty of a succeeding one. There are natural tendencies inherited by individuals from their ancestors, and the perpetual social improvement tends to the gradual production of individuals more and more suitable to the social state by the possession of sympathies for others, and the internal feeling of moral obligation. Furthermore, these individuals are born and reared under the influence of a social state ever more and more permeated by the recognition of the good of society as rightly overruling the destinies of the individual.

The ethical imperative then must be regarded as an internal growth in a subjective individual brought about in psychological evolution in the continuous advance both of the increase of the sympathetic correspondences and of the intellectual correspondences with the subjective environment, and in the hereditary transmission

of the same, and their perpetuation and modification by means of education and training induced by the current social pressure, special and general; which social pressure is itself undergoing constant but gradual change in its incidence and tendency. The ethical imperative therefore is partly internal in so far as each individual is actuated by societarian sympathies and emotional regards for humanitarian ideals, or in so far as he possesses numerous special and personal kindly relations with his environment. But in-so-far as a man is destitute of these sympathetic possessions, so far is he free from the obligations of the internal ethical imperative, and so much does he approach to the lower evolutionary states of the inanimate object, or of the beast of the forest, the insensate fish which stares into vacuity in the tanks of an aquarium, or a self-feeding engine which is only a little less developed form of a moving equilibrium. For such as these there only remains the external prudential obligation of conformity to social pressure in its several forms of law, custom, or public opinion, or the variously expressed displeasure or commendations of neighbours whereto it would be wise to conform. This to them is the only ethical imperative.

To neither class does any reasoned-out theory of absolute morality yield any force of obligation or insight into the details of duty. And here it will be convenient to enquire whether Mr. Spencer himself attaches to absolute morality, any power as an ethical imperative. Absolute morality in Mr. Spencer's treatment is merely a conception of ideal conduct in an ideal state of society. We must conceive a state of society in the highest degree complex, composed of individuals following all the various occupations necessitated by the

sub-division of labour from the lowest to the highest, in which each individual may yet perform his or her functions in such a manner as to insure the highest degree of personal happiness, and at the same time promote the highest happiness of the society as a whole.

Such an ideal state would comprise individuals of all ages, from infancy to extreme old age, and could not possibly exclude invalids and the maimed, for we cannot suppose that moving equilibria will be able to develop internal forces so as to preserve them intact from the effects of storms, explosions, and other natural occurences, and as it is part of the moving equilibrium theory to suppose that organisms are only temporary equilibrations on the way towards a final equilibration in a state of rest, it is necessary to suppose that they will always be subject to disease and death. It is therefore probable that the society would comprise many sufferers from organic diseases, and it is difficult to imagine any state of society which would be entirely free from mental disorders in various degrees of defect, or excess, or aberration. Nevertheless we are asked to conceive a state of perfect balance amongst a society composed of heterogeneous individuals in various stages of equilibration, and we are told that a proper and complete conception of this character would furnish us with a code of absolute morality. But it is quite clear that Mr. Spencer's utopian hypothesis is the outcome of hope springing from large human sympathies rather than a realisable future, affording an ethical imperative.

Thus it is supposed that actual standards of morality are extremely imperfect, and form but faint foreshadowings of a future ideal, or in any case, that there is an absolute morality which rules throughout all ages, and is the

authority for the approximations of each age. But if we sufficiently realise the fundamental notion of Biology as that of the most complete adjustment of the organism to its environment, including incidentally the adjustment of the environment to the organism we must acknowledge that the most perfect morality is the best adjustment of the individual to his environment in the society to which he belongs. Thus the most perfect morality is the best relative adjustment, and not the nearest conformity to an ideal standard suited to a perfect state of society. The biological rule is more fundamental than any other, the societarian view following; and its ideal of morality is perfection of actual adjustment amongst the individuals of existing societies so as to insure the greatest happiness of each and all. Thus as there are higher lives and lower lives, there are higher moralities and lower moralities, but they are justified by their quantitative relative perfection, and not according to their approach to absolute morality, and they do not derive their ethical obligation from the latter source.

It is due to the growth of psychological views that man is troubled with the burthen of so many ideals. Far be it from us to detract from noble aims, but it is necessary to note the origin and nature of moral ideals, and to assign them their proper place. They arise from the growing sympathies of the race, and its ever-widening intelligence; more especially do they arise in the minds of thinkers and students of humanity in regard to the continuous aggregations of tribes and nations of men in entering on the practical problem, how they shall live together without unduly trespassing upon one another's rights of life and enjoyment. These necessarily had to form for themselves practical

ideals, but ideals of some sort—ideals of greater or less degree of imperativeness in proportion as they affected the essentials of a pleasurable existence, or as they affected interactions of lesser consequence. The growth of individual sympathies continually afforded wider scope in the judgment of personal actions, and the spread of intelligence insured the acceptance of more general laws of regulative requirements on the part of the society. The authoritativeness of some of the laws so recognised seemed eventually to be in the nature of things, and to be independent and absolute in its imperativeness. Those laws which were seen to be essential to the very existence of society were regarded as eternal and true independently of society. But this is at once seen to be a false notion, and only a peculiar manner of representing the most essential laws of relative morality. No men, no morals! Immorality is a sin, not against eternal principles of right, but against the practical working principles co-eval with human society.

To set up a perfect morality, an ideal code, which may possibly exist in an ideal state of society, but which is scarcely likely ever to be realised as a rule of present conduct, is to set up not only an impracticable, but a false standard, since the only true standard is the relative sociological one founded upon the historical principle of adjustment.

Perhaps, however, even from this principle we work round to the same point, for in working out the problem how to secure to each his fair share of happy life, we are obliged to set down certain fundamental laws protecting the individual from injury in the full exercise of his faculties, and we are obliged to impose upon society

as a whole, and upon each individual, certain positive duties of assistance towards individuals, being members of the community. Nevertheless, the ideal set before each generation is that of which it is actually capable, and not a fanciful one which is beyond its powers. And we imagine that some harm is done by the sweeping condemnation of religious and moral idealists in inculcating the sense of sin, and imperfection, and incapability of attainment, which the preaching of such high absolute standards necessitates.

No doubt the inculcation of high ideals kindles youthful enthusiasm, and sustains manly effort. But sometimes the non-attainment of impossible ideals detracts from the effort towards attainable relative perfections, and causes us to under-value and to neglect the good qualities actually extant in ourselves, and in our fellow-creatures. The "unco guid" may repress as much as they may develop, for the idealists have made more sin, and therefore sinners, than is justified by the adaptations of society.

Nevertheless, the psychological conception of an ideal man in an ideal state is a most fascinating one, alike to the philanthropist whose heart broadens out to all humanity, and to the philosopher who aims at absolute perfection of moral or political theory. There are men and women of noble and sweet sympathies who aim at making each his little ideal world around him, and so leaven the general mass and aid the movement towards the great ideal. Poets have sung, and will sing through all ages, of that golden age, and philosophers, consciously or unconsciously, have it for their ruling motive in all their writings. Statesmen in lesser circles of practical scope only work towards it, and the whole

heart of humanity teems with hope for a time when troubles shall cease, and a bearable, if not a happy lot, shall be the meed of all.

The ethical imperative we therefore find to possess a two-fold origin. It has external authority in the imposition of coercive rules of conduct, carrying with them social penalties or rewards, varying in degree according to the essential or trivial manner in which actions affect the lives of other individuals, and again an external one in the sympathetic action of surrounding subjective organisms upon subjective organisms in eliciting and enkindling sympathetic response. It has also an internal authority in the sympathies which, by a law of nature, grow up in the ego towards surrounding eges in the manifestation of its several subjective characteristics.

Thus the ethical imperative is a growth within a man. It is also an education imposed upon him, and it is again an external social pressure accompanied by rewards and punishments. The internal ethical imperative does not exist to all men, and to them must be applied the social pressure in more or less manifest forms of scorn, denunciation, and even scant diet, and the cold frowning walls of jails, and unrewarding labour. Towards this end the legislator works, also in the removal of hindrances to life, and the promotion of education. The philanthropist gently encourages the feeble efflorescences of humanitarian sympathies. Sunday schools and pulpits more or less earnestly impress the moral obligations. Parents call forth the love and sympathy of children, and amongst brothers and sisters and companions the child first learns the lesson of mutual duty and mutual help. Occasionally in the world's history arises a prophet in whom has become

concentrated in a ten-fold degree the humanitarian sentiment, and he speaks in a voice which reverberates down the outspreading avenues of time, calling forth an answering note from the attuned heart chords of the nations.

CHAPTER VI.

Systems of Ethics.

Mr. Spencer very justly claims for his system that it gives a new meaning and authority to all previous systems of Ethics and theories of human action. In his system they all harmonise. Their contradictions disappear on the discovery that they are all parts of one consensus of truth. We will proceed to examine in order some of these earlier theories in their relation to the one now propounded.

The idea that society is a pact or contract, though essentially untrue, since society has been a growth and not a partnership resulting from negociations, is nevertheless true in the sense that men have had to give up individual biological liberties or egoisms in entering upon the social stage. There never was any conscious bargaining, but there have been an infinite number of tacit understandings of societarian and individual adjustments which eventually brought about the well-ordered societies of modern times.

The Intuitional School of Moralists finds the intuitions as to what is right and wrong, and more especially the feeling of right and the feeling of wrong, justified and established in the fact of the growth of feeling in general as the essential of the biological history, and in the historical establishment of the internal growth of moral feelings transmitted from generation to generation. Validity and authority are given to moral principles by

the very fact of their existing strength and their recognised fitness to the social circumstances. The indignation or the admiration naturally felt by man at certain actions is justified *a priori*, and apart from any reasoned opinion of their bearings. Praise and blame are not much, as a matter of fact, affected by reason. Spontaneously and independently passion and enthusiasm are expressed. Without staying to think, comes the unbidden frown and sharp reproof, or even the hasty blow. Without thought come the expression of sorrow and sympathy, the glow of praise, the approving smile, the commendatory word, straight from the heart and sympathies of the like-minded spectator. Reason may argue about details—it may rejudge the spontaneous expressions of the sympathies, it may guide and direct, but it never lends to praise its warmth, or to condemnation its severity. These are purely instinctive, and reason justifies them in the ascertainment of their origin and growth. There is an intuitive conscience which has been developed by evolution. The adjustment of organisms, the growth of feeling, the acquisition of altruistic or sympathetic feeling in an environment of subjective individuals has developed not only social adjustments, but also feelings in individuals, relative to those social adjustments, which compose a conscience or intuition. Never yet could such a conscience or intuition wholly and of itself teach a man moral action. The conscience presupposes for its actualization the presence of its environment. It needs education, encouragement, and instruction. Society is a continuous existence. The child born into a society not only inherits its dispositions, but from the very first receives its prepossessions, is subject to its injunctions, and is trained in its habits. Intuition is only a part of

the truth. Yet although it may be developed by education, and guided by reason, there is no question as to its existence, and as to its affording the zest to praise, the keenness to condemnation, and the poignancy to remorse.

The view which regards Ethics as explicable by Egoism is a very imperfect and ambiguous one. For what is the Ego spoken of, and of what does it consist? The view which makes egoism the rule of life, and which some suppose may afford the ultimate rationale of Ethics, is identical with the biological view which we have already discussed. No doubt egoism is the rule of life taken in its widest sense. No doubt the adjustment of the Ego to society, and of society to the Ego, is the rule of life. But egoism only becomes ethical when it, in order of growth, includes love of offspring, love of family, love of fellow-man, regard for the tribe, the nation, or humanity at large. As egoism loses its narrowness, as it loses its exclusive regard for personal continuance, and finds itself possessed of affections for others and altruistic considerations, so does it become continually less and less egoistic. It is a matter of chopping logic to say that its action is still essentially selfish, if it does good to others, because it is part of its own nature to do good to others, and it does so to satisfy its own egoistic desires. This only proves that egoism is the rule of life, but does not establish it as the rule of Ethics, which is a very different thing. The ethical rule has been found in the course of the enquiry to be, firstly, the body of injunctions which society lays upon the individual; and, secondly, the conscience which a society of subjective individuals

cultivates in each separate Ego, both arising from the growth of altruistic sympathy in the subjective organism of which society is composed. To say that when men act ethically they act from egoism is only to include ethical action in a statement of a more general biological law, and takes the mind off from the special ethical study altogether. Ethical egoism pre-supposes ethical feeling in the Ego, otherwise egoistic morality is obliged to frame for itself a hypothetical society of individuals without feelings, which, of course, puts it out of relation with humanity. Egoism, as a basis of morals, is bound to include altruism, or else it is merely a form of expressing the most general law of Biology.

Egoism however gives, in its highest form, a wide and wise consistency to actions. It pre-supposes a well-ordered mind capable of self-regulation and control. It takes a look all round, and it judges of the eventualities of actions. It sums up its own forces and motives, it takes account of its present and future surroundings and forms a judgment as to the most prudent course of action for securing the fittest life possible for itself and the greatest continuance of such life in the future. A wise and well-judged egoism is very valuable to the community, as well as profitable to the individual. It is not however essentially ethical, and is so only in so far as the individual is properly altruistic. If the egoist is not altruistic, he may become a curse to the society in which he lives, or if on a larger scale—a terrible scourge to humanity at large.

Utilitarianism does not explain ethics, unless the word be accepted as co-extensive with the biological and sociological adjustments which have gone on during the upward growth. No doubt these were all utilities;

and, therefore, utilitarianism is so far true. But since the process has been one of accompanying modified feeling, it is only half an explanation, only one feature of the general explanation. It was no common intellectual appreciation of the axiom "the greatest happiness for the greatest number," which caused the evolution of morals. The axiom was itself an after-thought. It may have great use in these days, as the expression of the outcome in feeling and in philosophic thought of processes of evolution, but it was not the ruling principle which produced the evolution. Accepted thus as the outcome, it may be the criterion and guide for future action in detailed adjustments and modifications of ethical judgments or political action, and may have an authority in modern times which it could not have had primordially. But its scope is limited to the formation of deliberate judgments, and it does not impel spontaneous praise or give any force to spontaneous blame. Its judgments are those of the calm reasoner which may very properly modify the opinions of society at large, and thus tend to form an improved conscience, but it will never make a moral impulse or form the base for an ethical ideal.

In an ethical system founded upon an acceptance of biological and sociological evolution, all these systems of previous philosophers find a due place. Egoism cannot be denied as the rule of life, but it is shown that egoism cannot always remain purely egoistic, but at last includes inevitably an altruistic growth. The progress of society involves altruistic conditions. The intrinsic growth of sympathy and the extrinsic imposition of conditions form in a continuous society, by change in the internal constitution of organisms, and by hereditary

transmission of such changes, not only an intuitional feeling of right and wrong, but also an intuitional conscience of greater or less development. Thus, we admit and explain the law of right and wrong written upon each civilized human heart. Utilitarianism is recognised as the ultimate outcome of philosophical thought; and, while it is but an inadequate expression in the hands of some writers, it may, perhaps, in its wider expansion by later philosophers, become an adequate and suitable expression of the ethical principle, and a guide for re-adjustments in the recognition of the wider ends and larger views of human organisation.

But any one of these views is inadequate by itself to explain and express the largeness of ethical movement. Only when we seize upon the history of the development of subjectivity, only when we understand the gradual progress from gross beginnings, and recognise the grand movement which carries us forward to we know not what hopeful future, can we properly appreciate the ethical position and the ethical authority. But to one who understands the evolution of organisms and of society, all these varying views fall at once into their natural places in a beautiful harmony. The touch of genius in a Darwin or a Spencer, produces out of the apparent chaos a well-ordered and progressive system.

This is the proper place to notice Mr. Leslie Stephen's very valuable and elaborate work upon "The Science of Ethics." That work is wise in conception, sound as to its basis and construction, beautifully proportioned in its mode of treatment, carefully, and, perhaps, too elaborately worked out in detail.

The original conception is wise in that it excludes

metaphysical questions and discussions as to first principles, and limits the range of its considerations to properly-ascertained scientific facts or laws, and to such extensions of scientific surmise as are warranted by the acceptance of the modern doctrine of evolution, expounded by Darwin. The acceptance of this doctrine not only involves the acceptance of historic developments, but justifies, and even necessitates, the acceptance of a supposititious prehistoric development. This hypothetical history, founded on observations of historical order, and of the habits and customs of uncivilised races, is perfectly justifiable. However, the problem, conducted within scientific limits is to consider the groundwork of actual morality (Ch. i.).

Properly to effect this object, it is necessary to study the influence of the emotions as determining conduct. Next, the influence of the reason as determining conduct, and finally, the interaction of the race and the individual (Ch. ii. and iii.).

These preliminaries are succeeded by a study of the moral law as derived from social interests, following upon social necessities, establishing the moral law as natural, and as authoritative (Ch. iv.).

The contents of the moral law are next discussed, in which the virtues of courage, temperance, truth, and the social virtues are considered (Ch. v.).

Altruism, as a growth within the Ego, is necessarily an object of study, and is explained as a natural development of sympathy out of intrinsic subjectivity. Its place in a system of ethics is also set forth. (Ch. vi.).

Upon this follows an exposition of special views upon merit, free-will, effort, and knowledge, as modified

by the acceptance of the doctrine of evolution. Of essential importance to an ethical work is a consideration of the nature of conscience and the variations of its judgments (Ch. viii.).

A discussion of happiness as a criterion succeeds, including a study of utilitarianism, and a consideration of the relations of morality and happiness (Ch. ix. and x.). A concluding chapter sums up a work of nearly 500 closely printed pages.

It is very evident that we cannot undertake the criticism of so large and important a work without having to enter minutely upon points of agreement and difference which would greatly augment the size of our present volume. We need only say that, although there are naturally many minor criticisms to be made, we accept it as an excellent exposition of modern ethical views modified and co-ordinated as necessitated by the recognition of the Darwinian theories. It should be read, we think, in succession to Professor Sidgwick's excellent broad and dispassionate work on "The Methods of Ethics." Mr. Leslie Stephen's study is based upon the same scientific fundamentals as Mr. Spencer's "Data of Ethics," without the confusing cosmical views which are necessitated by Mr. Spencer's position, but which do not by any means tend to strengthen it.

CHAPTER VII.

The Evolution of Free Will.

Two distinct theories may be held by the Evolutionist with respect to volition, both of them being strictly causational, and, therefore, of a scientific, as opposed to a mystical character.

He may hold, in the first place, the double aspect theory pure and simple, according to which all developments of mind are merely dependent concomitants of the development of nerve ramifications, with consequent growths of nerve-cells, ganglions, and the more considerable nerve plexuses, culminating in the growth of a brain. This evolution of a nervous and cerebral system he may hold to be wholly due to the action of molecular and other motions upon a mass of colloid substances of such a constitution as to be fittest, under the action of these external stimuli, to form lines for the transmission of motions and for the discharge of these motions into certain otherwise formed contractile structures called muscles. He will consider that they eventually acquire a power of retaining these motions, so that the effect of all the motions thus caused is not immediate but deferred. And since all motions received are not immediately concerned with the welfare of the organism, he may suppose that separate masses of nervous matter are produced, in which these motions are stored in an organised form, related indirectly rather than directly to the motor apparatus. According to this theory

the whole system of determining causes is purely physical. In the simple organisms the response of muscular action to incident motions is quick, direct, and unhesitating. Such action is called reflex or automatic, and is as unconscious as chemical activity. But when the system becomes more complex, when nerves cross each other, when cells and junctions are formed, and more particularly when the storages of motions are formed, as just referred to; then compoundings and recompoundings of nervous motions take place, and, according to the strength of the various currents, to the facility of discharge, and to various physical local or general conditions, the action becomes slower and more hesitating. Under these circumstances, it is held that the nervous system becomes conscious. A double aspect then arises, and the actions which thereafter take place may be described either in terms of the relations of the various molecular motions in the nervous and cerebral systems, or in terms of feeling; but all the same the latter is merely the secondary aspect of series of changes altogether determined by the motions and structure of the former. On this theory memory is the revived motion of a nerve structure; feeling is a consciousness of interaction between different nerve motions; trains of thought are the reverberations of great varieties of motions throughout the system and brain; consciousness resulting from the mingling of the nerve currents and the consequent conflict and retardation of effects.

The element of mystery here lies in the secondary or subjective aspect, but it is placed strictly without the line of deduction and is a merely unexplained accompaniment of a series of changes otherwise fully accounted for.

A second theory—as strictly causational as the former—recognises the presence of a subjective factor. In some of the quotations from Mr. Spencer's "Psychology," given above, it will have been seen that, at the point of development of nerve junctions when different currents meet in the developed ganglion and in proportion as the system becomes more complex, Mr. Spencer asserts not only the rise of a secondary aspect, but of an additional factor. The element of mystery here is the entrance of this additional factor, capable of taking part as an active agent in the affairs of the organism. But since it is itself the result of experience and the organization of experiences of the physical nervous system, it is strictly of a causational or deductive order, and after its unexplained inception, it has to be studied strictly in the scientific order of development and action. Notwithstanding that it plays a part in the conduct of life, and notwithstanding that its dependence upon physical organization and development is so intimate, and that this development again cannot be understood without it—notwithstanding all this incomprehensibleness of relation and our ignorance of its origin, the Evolutionist maintains the orderly development of organism and actions, including the subjective as resultants of the relations of original factors, although he may be for the time being ignorant of the nature of the processes.

It will therefore be seen that in either case he holds the deterministic theory of volition, and believes all purposed actions to be actions determined by pre-existing causes, whether he regards these causes as the structure and condition of nerve centres, or as feelings and thoughts, or whether he regards them as ascribable to some law of correlation between the two.

Nevertheless, it seems to be incumbent upon all writers dealing with the subject of Ethics to define their position as to the Free Will controversy. It is needless to say that we accept unreservedly the deterministic theory, though it may be necessary to attempt its reconciliation with the consciousness in persons of Free Will.

We here make a distinction between theories of Will and theories of Free Will. What we have just been considering have been theories of will or volition. They are of the deterministic order because in either case the actions are wholly determined by preceding facts. Human and all actions of organisms are held to be merely resultants of pre-existing factors and their relations. This is the theory held by all scientific philosophers, and the one most analogous to what we know of physical science as well as most in conformity with actual experience of human conduct. Another theory—arising no doubt in the mystery of the secondary aspect or in the mystery of the origin of the subjective factor, denies the rigidity of the scientific order, and asserts the presence and activity of a *self-determining factor*, thus placing volitional action beyond the scientific order of the dependent and related successions of cause and effect.

Perhaps, however, we would be more correct in attributing the confidence with which this theory of a self-determining power is sometimes held to another cause. There is in all human beings the consciousness of a power more or less developed to regulate their own actions; and this process of self-regulation is held to be inconsistent with the deterministic theory. There can be no doubt that there is such a consciousness and we think

there can be no doubt also that there is such a power. The superficial evolutionist, indeed, may admit the consciousness, which he may explain as a secondary aspect of conflicting nerve-currents, and laugh in his sleeve at the egotistic vanity of a trustful man proud of his power of Will. But we think a deeper explanation, and one more commensurate with the phenomena, is to be found: and this brings us back to the distinction, as indicated at the outset of this section, between theories of Will or Volition, and theories of Free Will or the power of regulating one's own conduct.

Will, in its scientific sense, is merely volition, *i.e.* the mental state accompanying or immediately preceding action. The nature of the action, good, bad, or indifferent, is immaterial. Technically speaking, all volitions are equal, viewed as such. The volition for the time being is the Will for the time being. The Will of a man is the totality of his volitions during the whole of his lifetime. It is a general or collective term relating to conscious actions, or states of consciousness immediately preceeding actions, and is not the name of an entity.

But if Will is the volition for the time being, irrespective of any qualitative characteristic, then we have to inquire as to the applicability to it of the term "Free." Now this term is antithetical to the two terms "restrained" and "constrained." Thus if a man's actions are hindered or forcefully pervented by the Will of others, that man's actions are not free. But if some of a man's motives are restrained or his actions constrained by the predominance of some other of his motives—as, for instance, when he performs actions which his conscience tells him are wrong—in his Will

not free? The actions are his volitions. If some motives are restrained, and therefore not to be considered free, still the others which have gained the predominance have thereby become his Will; their operation proves their non-restraint or freedom, and the volition or Will is still free. The action is an evidence of freedom. Volition is always free. It is of different kinds, but this does not affect the conclusion that volition proves its own freedom. The Will is always and under all circumstances free.

But although this disposes of the question theoretically, the ordinary man remains unconvinced, and clings to his belief in a Free Will, which is not merely this technical and universal Free Will, but must be interpreted as a power he feels himself to possess of choosing and determining his own actions; and if we say to him, "Undoubtedly you have this power; but your choice, and therefore your volition and consequent action, is still determined in the same manner as if you had not recognized the power," he will demur, and, logically or illogically, he will deny your position, and hold to his consciousness of what he calls his self-determining power over his own actions, which he places out of the line of Determinism, however unmeaning or paradoxical his assertions may be proved to be.

It is this state of consciousness, this clinging to the belief held by many men in their own *power of self-rule* over their own general conduct, and by most men in their own control over some of their activities, that Evolution is bound to account for and explain. Evolutionists do not sufficiently mark off this *practical* part of the question from the *theoretical* part, and thus leave imperfectly explained the consciousness of the so-called

"Free Will." They deem that the explanation of Free Will is included in an explanation of Will, and therefore they only deal incidentally and imperfectly with self-rule. The confusion arises from the term Free Will having two meanings—the theoretic or scientific one, as opposed to Determinism, and the practical one, as implying the power of self-rule, choice, effort, and determination.

That there exists such a power of self-regulation is a fact recognized in every department of social intercourse—in the attribution of praise or blame, in the teachings of the moralist, in the eye of the law, and in the process of education. Every individual is supposed to have a command over his own actions, except such as are purely automatic. It is not supposed that men are responsible for their congenital tastes or abilities; but all members of the community are held responsible for their actions towards other members of the community, and to a certain extent they are judged to be wise or foolish with regard to themselves, on the supposition that they are able to carry out a purposed conduct. And even if in various particulars it is seen that they do not possess such a power, they, or the persons responsible for their earlier education are blamed for their want of this power since it is held to be one of the most characteristic and valuable possessions of humanity. Thus we find the judicious parent, from the very first, endeavours to inculcate in the child habits of command over his temper and his appetites. The youth who has received the lessons of wise counsellers, who has been imbued with the lessons of Christianity, who has drunk in the teachings of the ancient moralists, and framed his ambitions

upon the severe examples of early Greece and Rome, or who has found his sympathies excited by the dreams of modern philanthropy, knows that the foundation of all his personal greatness is in his power of self-command. It is no idle verbiage that of the rhetorician, the preacher, the philosophical novelist, the poet, when they exhort to the cultivation of the powers of the Will in their varied representations of the aspirations and struggles of noble humanity. There is something that calls forth the moralist's sympathies in the poet's appeals to the power of Will, and there is no grander spectacle in all this universe than to witness the battle of the will-power of a man against difficulties and oppositions of all sorts; none the less if the scene of the conflict be in the region of his own heart and mind, rather than in the wider field of the battle of life.

The evolutionist is bound to account for this amongst the other phenomena of human existence. The principles of such an evolution are contained in Mr. Spencer's "Psychology," but the development is not elaborated in detail, and is well worthy of a special study. We have previously roughly indicated the outlines of such a study; and as the special psychological question has been treated in an interesting and suggestive manner by the Rev. T. W. Fowle in the number of the "Nineteenth Century" for March 1881, we will find it convenient to take this article as the text or basis of our own remarks.

The writer's argument appears in brief to be this. In the course of Evolution, man became self-conscious (see p. 392). This consciousness of self led, first of all, to self-preservation, then to self-assertion, and finally to self-pleasing. "When man first uttered the words

or rather felt the impression to which language subsequently gave definite shape and force, '*I will* live in spite of all the forces encompassing my destruction,' then was Free Will created upon the earth."

Note here, that Will is changed to Free Will in the course of a single sentence, and that this "Free Will" is simply human action predominant over external difficulties, which should therefore rather be called Will, and is certainly not the Free Will or self-rule which we have now under consideration. Hence arises a certain amount of confusion, as witness p. 393:—"We ascribe, then, man's consciousness of *Free Will* to the concentration of all his pre-human experiences into one imperative determination to preserve, to assert, and to please himself." Thus, "Free Will," in the mind of the writer, is simply the human Will as opposed to the forces of nature. Nothing is said about the exterior opposing wills of others, though surely he must intend them also to be included in the environment. At the same time we do not know that it makes the particular point under consideration more difficult of study, although these external wills form a considerable part of the objects determining the activities of the self. Yet, as our particular point of study is *self*-rule, this extension of the reference to external forces does not directly affect the argument.

But it will be seen that the Will or Free Will mentioned here, and defined as self-assertion and determination to please one's self, is self-assertion as opposed to environment—a self assertion which, irrespective of the qualities or nature of the motives comprised in that self, determines to work out its own pleasure there and then in spite of all opposition. Such a state is

well illustrated in the first self-assertions of childhood—its so-called *wilfulness*; for as embryology illustrates the stages of biological evolution, so does childhood illustrate the stages of mental and moral evolution. This self-assertion is also illustrated in the conduct of the insane and of the rude, rough, uneducated minds of the masses. Still it is not what is meant by Free Will, but the very reverse; for such persons are said to be slaves to their passions or motives. This is undoubtedly Egoistic *Will*; and therefore theoretically, as before distinguished, it is *free*: but it is not the Free Will, the self-rule we are now in search of. This sort of self-assertion is the determination to please oneself, *irrespective of consequences*. But when it is known that consequences recoil upon self—when the *element of time* is taken into account, and the self is found to be continuous, then there is reflection, and by-and-by succeeds caution, restraint, and the co-ordination of actions to a given end. This is the germ of self-rule which is mistakenly regarded as identical with the self-determination of volition.

The term "self-preservation" has a wide and also a restricted sense. It may simply mean the continuance in existence of the body; or if the self is equivalent to the preservation of the activities comprised in that self, *whatever those activities may be*—lust, hate, benevolence, æsthetic feeling, &c.—then it implies the continuous gratification of those activities. This understanding of self-preservation is dependent on the length of time for which the self is expected to continue. The religious man, believing in a God and a future life, preserves what he esteems his self—*i.e.*, his moral and religious being—even in martyrdom. But if there is no future life,

then the self that has to be preserved is the self as it is, whatever that may happen to be—gross or refined.

There are no better recognised traits of Free Will—*i.e.*, self-rule—than the power of self-denial, self-abnegation, self-sacrifice. These cannot be explained by any definition of Free Will founded on self-assertion and self-preservation merely. Then, again, self-education, the designed alteration of the character, and the intentional acquirement of self-control, can hardly be held to be consistent with simple self-assertion. Self-assertion is the assertion of self as it is. The resolution to alter is the denial of self-preservation as regards the existing self. The adaptation to environment involved in self-abnegation is the opposite to self-assertion.

Are we to suppose that the Free Will predicated of man is an universal possession of all? If it is a *theoretical* question, it must be granted that all men's wills are free. But if it is a practical question as to the strength of the Will as opposed to external forces, and held to be free in proportion to its relative strength of self-assertion, surely Free Will is a variable quality. If, again, it is a practical question as to the power of self-rule, are we to suppose that all men have it in equal degrees? Do the idiot and the maniac possess it, or on the contrary is it possessed unequally by men, and by some not at all?

The writer says, p. 391, "Now, from the moment that self became an object of consciousness, it became also a motive."

This consciousness of self is a consciousness of the totality of the activities, a consciousness of the unity of that totality, a consciousness of the continuance of that totality for a more or less certain future. The

motive consequent upon such recognition must be the longest continuance of that self, the greatest amount of gratification of the activities of that self, the avoidance of pains to that self, and the aggregation of more activities by that self.

The result of that motive would be the co-ordination of actions to attain the final end thus set before the total self, and the subordination of particular motives to their proper places in the co-ordinative scheme. But as the total self is in relation to environment, that environment, physical or societarian, has to be taken into account; and as consequences of actions recoil upon the individual at a later time, the results of actions have to be taken into account. Therefore there is brought into activity a large amount of rational consideration and judgment as to the eventualities of conduct in regard to the 'total self'; and finally it is found that action must take one of two forms: either the environment must be adjusted to the organism—this is a form of Will—or the organism must be adjusted to the environment—this is Free Will or self-rule—*i.e.*, the Free Will as here understood. This is the solution implied in the writer's statement that "from the moment that self became an object of consciousness it became also a motive."

This rational view of self as an aggregate of faculties and motives likely to last a certain length of time, and surrounded by a social environment which has in great measure formed it, and which exercises upon it a continual pressure, brings forward the relation of Free Will to Ethics in the fact that the acquired power of self-rule has to take into account, in-so-far as it exists in the individuals forming the social coercions and

approvals, and in so far as the Ego approaches the normal standard of regulating his own sympathies, which together in an instructed community make up personal responsibility to the ethical law, and supply the ethical as distinguished from the merely altruistic motive.

The evolutionist's definition of life is "the continuous adjustment of inner to outer relation," or of organism to environment. The principles and results of this continuous adjustment, in the modifications of structure and function, and their transmission by heredity in gradually more permanently established forms, is well understood from the writings of Mr. Darwin, Mr. Spencer, and others.

The progress of development in the human race has consisted in the *establishment of correspondences* of a definite and permanent character between organism and environment. Why it should have been possible for such a grand development to take place as that which has actually taken place lies beyond the limits of our subject; but if Evolution is true, the fact remains that the human organism has continually been increasing the number of its correspondences, in accordance with the increasing complexity of its surroundings. Roughly, this establishment of relations with the external world may be classed under two divisions, each containing a great variety of details. Firstly, the class of cognitions, including the knowledge of the physical world, the field, the forest, the stream, the animals, the sky and heavenly bodies, and also the knowledge of men, and their ways in society; secondly, the class of direct relations with other individuals, such as the relations of wife, children, parents, chiefs, involving also property, and inducing the feelings of love, friendship, hate, justice, and other social affections.

The establishment of a correspondence between the organism and the environment, of such a definite character as to be transmitted by heredity, involves the establishment of motives. The stomach without food experiences hunger, a want, and forms a motive. So of the other organs, and so of all other established relations inwoven in the organism. However subtle and refined any established relation may be, but less in proportion to its later order of development, and directly as its necessity to existence, so its force. It experiences a want in respect of its correlate, and this want becomes a motive or incentive to its own gratification.

The kinds of actions, then, may be distinguished as—

The Functional, such as the action of the heart, the intestines, &c. These are wholly involuntary.

The Emotional Involuntary, such as the feelings and desires, and the muscular expression of some of them, as in laughing, crying, &c.

The Emotional Volitional, or actions proceeding from the emotions, and constraining the muscles to the means of their gratification.

Here must be added the Rational Volitional; and if the rational choice of actions and ordering of conduct, in which the emotions and passions play a subordinate part as factors in a general estimate or judgment, can be interpreted as a recognition of "self as an object,' and the establishment of a correspondence therewith, then the "motive of self" as advanced by the essayist may be considered as the highest motive of the Emotional Volitional class. Thus self as an enduring whole becomes established as the predominating object in the mind of the Ego, towards which object or ideal

attainment in continuity, and in expansiveness of relation the motives of the individual turn—co-ordinating to it all the more special motives; and evolving in a higher degree the powers of self-rule.

In this manner Self Rule or Free Will is explained and vindicated as a natural possession of humanity and one of its highest and most characteristic attainments. At the same time it is found to be consistent with a Deterministic scheme and not to require the assistance of an incomprehensible Self Determining Power on the part of the Ego. The Deterministic theory as regards the actions and conduct of an individual is not, however, so narrow in its purview as this. It recognises a great many kinds of conditions as the more or less direct or remote causes of actions. It recognises—

Heredity, by which the physical qualities, and emotional and intellectual tendencies, of the parents, more or less obscurely known on account of intermixture, are transmitted to the offspring. The child is born with a certain inherited constitution, containing potentially within it a course of development through certain physiological changes up to decay and old age. This constitution is one of a definite character, having definite proportions of parts, as of head, chest, abdomen, &c., and definite relations of systems, such as nervous, vascular, muscular, visceral, &c., and partly as a consequence of this the child also possesses mental and moral tendencies which, while very susceptible of influence, are primarily derived by heredity.

Action of Environment.—From the moment of birth, or sooner), the organism comes into relation with very complex conditions, which variously affect its course of development. The suitable or unsuitable

conditions of the mother's health, food, warmth, sleep, &c., influence the development of the child; and thenceforward all through life the conditions of nourishment, diet, climate, exposure, disease, accident, &c., have strong and recognisable effects upon the organism, physical and mental.

General Tuition, or the education by contact with the members of the family, playmates, companions, and the great body of the individuals of the environment with whom the child or youth comes into contact, into the general tone and principles of his age, country, class, or sect, gradually fashioning him into a certain pattern, shaping the general mode of his life, and forming within him certain standards of action, certain codes of obligation, moral or ceremonial, certain customs, fashions, &c., as well as implanting in him the convictions, theological or otherwise, of his time.

Special Tuition.—Tuition affects the whole of the activities of the individual according to the nature of the training, its suitability or unsuitability, its persistence, and the force exerted. The value of a long course of direct education is well understood in all civilised communities, and in modern times is recognised as one of the great means of effecting the general improvement of society, if only it could be thoroughly applied.

The Education of Circumstances affects not only the physical constitution, but also very much the mental and moral qualities of the individual. And as these circumstances are widely varied and the hereditary tendencies very different, the results will be widely diverse in different individuals; but there is no doubt that a condition of poverty or of affluence, good or ill usage, neglect or over-governing, a solitary or a social

condition, surroundings of town or country, status of parents, nature of and facilities for amusements and studies, the degree of early responsibilities, the kind of business occupation or other avocation, all largely affect the conduct and modify the motives of the individual.

And it is wonderful in a highly developed and complex state of society, where the possession of great wealth creates a large leisure class, and the enormous activity pervading the whole ever tends to put the organisms included into every possible relation with the outer world, and with every relation that can grow up in its own complex social mixture—it is wonderful, we say, in such circumstances, the number of motives that will grow up. The relations extend to the past and the future. The most paltry, evanescent, and adventitious relations become more or less motives of action, and grow more or less established in the individual and more or less transmitted to posterity. Besides the great number of these relationships, there is the difference of kind. Many are of a concrete sort; as for instance, the love of dogs, horses, &c.; others are of a very abstract description. These latter are principally the outcome of social and intellectual relationships. They are generalisations of conduct, or they are abstractions of the intellect. Virtue, ideal conduct, justice, beauty, truth, science, philosophy, a perfected humanity, all become realised abstractions, as it were, with which a relation is established, and which, therefore, assume the guise of motives seeking their means of gratification. We recognize the fact that abstractions may become objects of motives, as distinct from the concrete objects which are definitely in relation with corresponding affections of the organism. These

abstractions grow into definite parts of self, and, if they largely predominate in an individual, he will become a martyr rather than abandon his devotion to them. He will esteem them the principal part of self, and let his body perish rather than act against them. Such organic abstractions may, indeed, become the objects of the most powerful passions, before which concrete objects sink into utter insignificance. We have found that the recognition of the continuous or "total self" can become such an object and induce the establishment of a corresponding motive.

At the outset, we distinguish the province of Reason, in which is included the calculation of the results of actions, and the devising of the best means for accomplishing a desired end without incurring pains and inconveniences. If a certain end is desired, the intellect has to forecast the outcome of different modes for effecting the desired result, and to discern that which secures the end with the fewest drawbacks. The end may be good or bad; the motives may be of the most elevated and generous character or they may be of the worst; but all the same, it must be duly considered what is the best means of securing it. What would be the result if I did this? on the other hand, would it not be better to do that? It will be seen that here there is no choice between motives, no dispute to settle between conflicting principles and passions, bu only a kind of mental calculus or intellectual engineering. This state of the mind is sometimes taken to be the exercise of a choice, and it may be so; but it is of a different kind to that involved in self-rule, which we now approach.

As a power of very gradual growth must we regard that cognition, (with its subsequent establishment as an

object and a motive in the human organism) which recognises the Self as a whole—as a whole at any given time, and as a whole extending over seventy years, and perhaps indefinitely longer!

Man's total self can become an object of thought and that object a motive, as distinguished from any of the particular motives of which it is made up. Man's future self may be an object of thought as well as the present; and man's Continuous Self may become a constant and all-predominating object of regard and interest—an all-absorbing motive. Indeed, so far may this go, that the long continuous self prospected after death may and has been so much an object of motive as to overshadow and dwarf every interest of the present. And if this Continuous Self is recognised by the Reason as the complete object, the one and chief motive—and it must be so since it includes every motive at every instant of time—then the Reason accords to it and claims for it a *ruling* position, a claim before which every other must give way. There is no doubt that this is substantially taught, although in different terms of exposition, in all ethical books and in all verbal precepts of good counsel.

The psychogeny of this development of the continuous self into an object and a motive is to be found in the intellectual recognition of the actual order displayed by nature in the processes of life. It is the harmonising of the volitional actions with the laws of natural change. We have seen that the process of life is the continuous adaptation of organism to environment. But this is a natural, non-volitional process. Change in the environment produces change of organism to correspond with it. When cognitions are developed the

sequences of action are foreseen, the changes of environment are foreseen, the developments of organism are foreseen; a generalisation is made of all the factors, and logical conclusions drawn as to the necessary adaptations. Then follows a rational or intentional adaptation of organism and environment, due to the motive o Self which we have just considered; this rational or intentional adaptation may be either incidental or continuous, and the adaptation may be either of organism or of environment. And in this calculus the relation of the individual to the mass of individuals constituting society must be taken into account.

A man having regard to his continuous self finds himself in a certain position. The motive relating to the continuous self determines that his conduct shall be regulated by the best regard for that continuous self. And it must be admitted at once that technically it is not qualitatively related to any abstraction, such as virtue, &c., unless, indeed, virtue be interpreted as the establishment of such a harmony, but has regard purely to the establishment of the most harmonious correspondence between himself and his environment for the remainder of his life. It might be that such a resolve would result in a system of ethics, but we wish to limit the consideration to our special subject.

And, in the first place, we must recognise the *quantitative* character of such an adaptation. The self is surrounded by an enormous and highly complex environment; but it may, from heredity, or want of education, or perverse education, be a very narrow, poor, meagre, little self, having very few, weak, feeble correspondences with the environment. A pig in his stye may be well adjusted to his environment; but

his correspondences with the external world are few in number and of small intensity. We would therefore assert with Mr. Spencer as a corollary from the continuous adjustment of the organism and the environment, not merely the establishment of a convenient *modus vivendi*, but an adjustment of the organism by enlargement of the number of its correspondences with the environment, so as to render the adjustment between organism and environment more perfect by making the former co-extensive with the latter. In proportion to the number of points of interest or correspondences established between organism and environment, so is the perfection of the continuous self. In this manner then Free Will or Self Rule in its very nature is related to the conception of a continuous self towards which it acts as the object of a motive, and possesses also an ethical bearing with regard to the enlargement of the correspondences with the external world. For what is there of greater interest in the external world than the subjective individuals of our surroundings, the society of which we form a part, the mysterious past out of which we came and the dependent nations of the future which we are helping to make?

It is evident that in thus setting up the continuous self as an object, whose realisation is to be the ruling power in the regulation of conduct, (whether this self be the complete self we have just contemplated, or the incomplete self which we may happen to be, and to be pretty well contented with,) a certain amount of self regulation will always be necessary in order to effect the object in view, and at occasional crises a very great amount of struggle and effort will have to be exerted in order to put down the influence of some active motive

which would, by its hasty and blind gratification, mar the result of that line of conduct already decided upon as the best. Here will come in the conflict of passion with reason, and of impulse with prudence, which is really of the greatest practical interest in our study.

And here we find, as one of the chief motives in such a conflict, the motive of *regard for the continuous self*. It is not always a ruling motive. It is best that it should be so. The object of education and self culture is to make it so. But at any rate it is a motive, and a strong one. In proportion to its predominance is the amount of self-rule, of self-control, and, as we read it, of Free Will.

Thus the rational regard for self becomes recognised as a motive. The Rational Volitional becomes the Emotional Volitional. It has been recognised in many philosophies under various names, advanced sometimes as a motive, sometimes as the very self of self, and sometimes designated by the term "self-determining power," &c.; but its true character and genesis is best explained by Evolution.

The great practical question is this: Has man the power of choice amongst motives? Has he the vaunted power of self-rule? and can he cultivate it?

We can only reply that, as a matter of fact, some men have it and some have not; that some have in some respects and not in others. As a matter of possibility, most men may attain in a considerable degree to the power of self-rule by judicious self-culture: and in the education of the young, more particularly in home education, a very high standard in this respect may be attained. Some feeble minds and flighty or impassioned natures, as well as idiots, may not be able to reach it, and some fools may lose it after they have got it; but as

a general rule and a safe fact for all to accept, we may say that a high degree of self-rule may by most people be attained, and that the possession of it is for the most part happiness.

Adopting, then, the statement of the essayist, "from the moment that self became an object of consciousness it became also a motive," we would add the element of time and recognise a continuous self. Then, placing the statement in a subordinate position, as part of the general evolution of life—which is the continuous adjustment of organism and environment—and acknowledging the growth of reason, we would define the course of action which results from all these factors as *the rational quantitative and continuous adjustment of organism and environment.* This is the Evolutionist formula of Free Will or self-rule.

Thus the consciousness of choice and of the power of self-rule receives an explanation on the Evolution of Deterministic hypothesis in this respect, that the recognition of the continuous self as an object of thought and an important object of interest and regard, *becomes thereby a motive determining action and conduct*, even against the immediate urgencies of passion. Determinism is thus acknowledged to be a correct theory: but the dignity of the claim for self-rule and free choice is vindicated, and the attainment of it by most people is shown to be both desirable and feasible.

CHAPTER VIII.

Evolution, Ethics, and Religion.

The recognition of the ultimate tendencies of evolution suggests two further enquiries, one as to the personal relation with the far-off result, and one as to the origin of such a definite progress.

Perhaps the consideration of the former question is bound up in the latter. Nevertheless, within the scope of the former more limited enquiry, the Comtists are content to rest. For them the narrow limits of history and its immediate outlook are sufficient. What is actually recorded of humanity, and what is actually revealed in it, together with the indications of its possibilities, suffice for the creed of the Comtist. The Positivist produced by Evolution worships his Cause under the name of humanity, and works towards Mr. Spencer's evolutionist ideal. He seeks no justification in philosophy. The product of Evolution—he acts from inward impulse and requires no authority. He has none to appeal to in the inculcation of his worship, but the natural response to be found in the hearts of those who occupy the same intellectual and sympathetic position. But this is after all only a partial grasp of the fundamental problem of history. It is an abandonment, temporary or otherwise, of the intellectual problem, although it is a recognition of the onward sweep of humanitarian Evolution. The history and the tendencies are alike sought to be explained by the philosophy of the Evolutionist. What, then, is the position of the Evolutionist in regard to

the problem of religion, and what practical bearing has it upon Ethics or moral obligation?

The answer to these questions depends upon what is meant by the theory of Evolution. If by Evolution is meant a complete system of explanations by which all the events comprised in all departments of human knowledge, stretching throughout the whole of history recorded and surmised, are intelligibly accounted for as the results of the interrelation of primordial factors, of which we have a clear apprehension, insomuch that the logical order becomes a picture of the historical order, then our estimate of Evolution depends upon our estimate of the original factors. If they are held to be some seventy in number, and to be those elements of which a full account is given in chemistry, and to be subject to general laws, such as those described in works on physics, then our regard for Evolution must be one due to the reverence we possess for chemistry, electricity, heat, gravitation, and the like, and our conduct must be made to conform—if we wish to coincide with the eventual tendencies of evolution—with what we judge to be the ultimate tendencies of the evolution of these factors, namely, their ultimate equilibration in universal quiescence. Life, according to this view, is an interruption of the process, and a contradiction of cosmical intention.

This view of evolution is not saved by the theory that behind these chemical affinities and physical relations there is an unknowable power of which they are but the manifestations: for the power is not unknowable if its manifestations are limited to these known manifestations; and if they are not so limited, but operate in other ways with new factors, not com-

prised in our estimate of them, then our explanatory system is at fault, and has to be abandoned or amended. The recognition of an unknowable power behind chemistry and physics, yet limited by the laws of chemistry and physics, is equal only to our estimate of chemistry and physics. We could but address it as Oh my Lord Chemistry! Oh my Lord Physics!

But we have shown in our previous criticisms that this view of evolution, as dealing with purely physical factors, is inadequate to explain the cosmical histories. We have criticised adversely Mr. Spencer's attempts so to explain biological development; and we have indicated the necessity for supposing that other superior factors are present in biological evolution. We do not know that Mr. Spencer disputes it—his work is too vague and inconsistent to enable us to say precisely what he does and what he does not teach. But the admission of additional factors does not destroy the theory of evolution. Darwin and Spencer and the modern school have established, beyond dispute, the fact of orderly development in the cosmos. We are forced, therefore, to admit both evolution and the presence in it, so far as Biology is concerned, and probably also as regards all the changes anterior to the beginnings of life, of a factor over and above the chemical and physical factors. The nature of this factor we do not know, nor do we know how, as having an orderly relation to chemical and physical events, its law is to be expressed in such a manner as to enable us to understand how organisms arose and were developed. Here, indeed, we can recognise a power, and an inscrutable one: but inasmuch as it is inscrutable it spoils our philosophy—our systems of explanations—and laughs at our formulas.

But after all, if we succeed in establishing purposive actions as incidents in a process of equilibration, what have we gained? We have gained a scientific explanation of all purposive actions as well as of all actions of organisms in general. They all stand upon the same footing—that is to say they are all equally explicable as parts of the universal process. They are all equally equilibrations, and so justified in their order of occurrence. They rank alike as incidents in a line of causation explicable by the law of equilibration.

Apparently all that is, is right. Equilibration does not recognise any distinction as to the quality of actions. This distinction can be explained by equilibration, but cannot be justified by it as a law for future conduct, any more than any other incident of the course of equilibration. If certain laws of living become established, then moving equilibria capable of recognising this fact must act accordingly—they must adapt themselves to the environment: but this does not prevent the organism from adapting the environment to itself, if it can, by changing it or overcoming it—this is merely a matter of equilibration. The law of Biology will allow it to cope with an adverse environment in many ways, namely, by conformity, by escape so as to preserve its individuality, and by altering or overcoming the environment. If the forces of the environment be powerful and omnipresent, then conformity is the only resource. It is only a matter of superiority of force, and the resulting conformity is merely a matter of equilibration. It is not that equilibration lends any special sanctity or quality to certain actions. Social pressure coerces individual pressure—the mutual coercion of society is equilibra-

tion—the result of this equilibration, whatever it is, is a variable Ethics. The recognition of great duties and great faults, the facts of moral approbation and condemnation, the phenomena of a private and public conscience are all explicable as equilibrations: but since whatever is, is an equilibration, it is not from the laws of equilibration that any established moral distinction or obligation can be justified for guidance for a single day in advance. There is no universality, either in place or time in Ethics thus viewed. The justification of Ethics from the evolution point of view must be sought on other grounds than in that of a cosmical equilibration.

It is difficult to say what support is rendered to practical Ethics by the theory of Evolution. According to it, Ethics is a history and a prediction; but failing the existence in any individual (as the result of a growth) of the moral sense for which Evolution professes to account, the prediction only applies to future generations; and it is difficult to see that practical Ethics has for such a person any intrinsic authority. And even if the moral sense, and social pressure (which are respectively the intrinsic and the extrinsic authority, for practical Ethics) are sufficient of themselves to enforce moral conduct, then the understanding of how they both came to possess such a power of command, lends them no additional authority, but rather tends, at first sight, to detract from their sacred prestige. The confidence of the philosopher is however soon restored, when he considers that despite the failure of his theory to intellectually establish moral enforcements, nevertheless, the great forces which have produced both the intrinsic and the extrinsic ethical

authorities are still at work, and must more and more prevail. If these are natural growths the movement in the hearts of men, and in societarian organization, will ever prevail over and above all reasoning about them. Individual opposition and restiveness will be levelled before the might of the advance. The individual must obey or perish; indeed he must himself change and become part of the coercive power.

Thus it will be found that the apprehension which Mr. Spencer expresses in his preface, as to the loss of a controlling agency in the decay and death of an older regulative system is not met by the establishment of a new controlling agency which takes the place of the discarded authority, but may be met by the fact disclosed in evolution, that whatever authority men may recognise, nay, even if they do not recognise any, it s all the same—they are part and parcel of an onward growth against which it is useless to rebel. The moral authority is the conviction of the inevitable. Thus evolution dispels the fear of a moral anarchy by showing the necessity for the existence of present and future moral order, ensured alike by extrinsic social organization, and by a no less certain prevalence of intrinsic motives. Thus, though evolution lends but little additional theoretical force to moral argument, it shows forth the power of natural ethical authority, and declares with convincing efficacy, "magna est veritas et prævalebit."

The moral imperative is found to be firstly extrinsic in social pressure, and secondly intrinsic in altruistic sympathy. These are the only authorities competent to say: "Thus shalt thou do, and thus shalt thou not do." Evolution establishes no absolute morality. It is

always relative to the surroundings, and it differs according to the stage of civilization. The more nearly the conduct approaches the relatively perfect the more truly ideal is it. The imagined ideal is not so perfect as the relatively perfect. According as a necessity is universal, so is the degree of moral enforcement which accompanies it, and the degree of accord in the recognition of its imperativeness. The sanctity of life, the condemnation of these who infringe it, the commendation of those who promote it are of first eminence. Liberty, Property, and other essentials receive little less recognition ; and so on by degrees down to the small details of everyday life. The kind of moral imperative is the same throughout, the degree of enforcement differing according to the varying importance of the actions.

As this point very properly comes in the Evolutionist's view of religion. We take, as our text on this subject, the speech by Professor Fiske at the Spencer banquet held in New York, November 9th, 1882, and since published in the form of a tractette.*

Professor Fiske here pursues Mr. Spencer's faulty plan of generalising all religions, and assuming the common or fundamental content as a true finding, besides holding that the fundamental truths of science are identical with this final deliverance of religion. It is not that Professor Fiske's argument is bad, but that it is badly put. If we confine ourselves to the scientific view, and say that the universe manifests an orderly development ; that it is probably altogether the result of the relations of primordial factors ; but that of these we can form no adequate conception although, nevertheless, they un-

*"Evolution and Religion," by John Fiske, M.A., LL.B. London ; J. C. Foulger, The Modern Press, 1882. Price Twopence.

doubtedly contained something of the elements of a subjective nature—then we do not transgress the scientific view. Neither do we so transgress when, by inductions from the history of man, we assert that the law of development of the subjective is towards altruistic sympathy, quantitative increase of life, and social harmony or equilibration. Mr. Matthew Arnold's recognition of "an eternal power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness" is as near an approach to the truth as we can get. Mr. Spencer's formula should be "an unknowable power, not ourselves, that makes towards equilibrium." The question, thereupon arises, Is the subjective a factor in a process of equilibration, and is righteousness subjective equilibration? The question also arises in the latter case, Is the "makes for" or "makes towards" a teleological aiming at an end, or a process determined completely by antecedent factors of which it is but the outcome?

It is difficult to imagine under a system of evolution, even if an universal subjective factor be admitted, the operation of a teleological activity as ordinarily understood. Nevertheless, we find a teleological faculty evolved in man. And even if we accept Mr. Matthew Arnold's description, the question arises, Has the eternal power a conscious intention of making towards righteousness from the first or from any time? Or is it implicit in the original relations of the subjective to the chemical and physical that it makes through Biology towards righteousness—is righteousness merely another expression for a completed biological law involved in the original relations of atoms with an omnipresent subjective and relative factor?

And again, what, scientifically viewed, is our personal

relation to that inscrutable power which makes for righteousness? Here comes in the ethical problem as affected by the religious, and both as affected by our views of evolution. Professor Fiske says of the propositions recognised by all religions "that men ought to do certain things and ought to refrain from doing certain other things; and that the reason why some things are wrong to do and other things are right to do, is in some mysterious but very real way connected with the existence and nature of this divine Power."

The fact that personal responsibility to the inscrutable Power belongs to the essence of all religions is one thing, and the establishment of it as a scientific truth is another. The fact of its existence and of its universality is a presumption in its favour, but is not more than a presumption. What has science to say to it? With this point Professor Fiske next deals. He says that science, after all its searchings, finds, in its ultimate enquiries, not only inexplicable laws whose effects it can calculate though the laws themselves remain unexplained, but also long processes which are not explicable by the known laws, and which will probably remain for ever inexplicable. If he does not say so in those words, we presume that must be what he means: for if he only means that all cosmicial histories are explicable by known laws, these laws being themselves inexplicable, the inscrutable or Divine Power is only antecedent to cosmical histories, and is not present in them, nor does it affect the future. Nevertheless, what Professor Fiske has to say of the results of scientific enquiry does not amount to much. "The doctrine of evolution asserts, as the widest and deepest truth which the study of nature can disclose to

us, that there exists a power to which no limit in time or space is conceivable, and that all the phenomena of the universe, whether they be what we call material or what we call spiritual phenomena, are manifestations of this infinite and eternal Power."

But this scientific truth does not in its mere enunciation bear upon the question as to our ethical relationship to the Unknown Power. It is only when we study its spiritual or subjective manifestation as an orderly development that we can recognise a power to which we owe a moral obligation. The scientific evidence of moral obligation to the inscrutable power rests, not upon the recognition of the power of which the cosmos is a manifestation, nor upon the fact of its inscrutability, but upon the knowledge of the subjective factor, its manifested history, and the inductions to be drawn from a study of that history in the laws of the working of altruistic sympathy, of quantitative life, and of the harmony of life as already set forth. Professor Fiske's conclusion is a good statement of this scientific establishment of personal responsibility to the divine power, and of religion as the crown and sanction of Ethics.

"Now, science began to return a decisively affirmative answer to such questions as these when it began, with Mr. Spencer, to explain moral beliefs and moral sentiments as products of evolution. For clearly, when you say of a moral belief or a moral sentiment that it is a product of evolution, you imply that it is something which the universe through untold ages has been labouring to bring forth, and you ascribe to it a value proportionate to the enormous effort that it has cost to produce it. Still more, when with Mr. Spencer we study the principles of right living as part and parcel

of the whole doctrine of the development of life upon the earth; when we see that, in an ultimate analysis, that is right which tends to enhance fulness of life, and that is wrong which tends to detract from fulness of life—we then see that the distinction between right and wrong is rooted in the deepest foundations of the universe; we see that the very same forces, subtle, exquisite, and profound, which brought upon the scene the primal germs of life and caused them to unfold, which through countless ages of struggle and death have cherished the life that could live more perfectly, and destroyed the life that could only live less perfectly, and humanity, with all its hopes, and fears, and aspirations, has come into being as the crown of all this stupendous work—we see that these very same subtle and exquisite forces have wrought into the very fibres of the universe those principles of right living which it is man's highest function to put into practice. The theoretical sanction thus given to right living is incomparably the most powerful that has ever been assigned in any philosophy of Ethics. Human responsibility is made more strict and solemn than ever, when the eternal power that lives in every event of the universe is thus seen to be in the deepest possible sense the author of the moral law that should guide our lives, and in obedience to which lies our only guarantee of the happiness which is incorruptible—which neither inevitable misfortune nor unmerited obloquy can ever take away."

This appears to us the best statement yet made of the logical results of the enquiry into Evolution when pursued to its furthest point. Some enquirers halt at the materialistic point, but an irresistible logic leads

the honest and open-minded enquirer beyond this stage of thought, and he finds in the recognition of the existence of the subjective, and in the history of its development, a law of spiritual life. He finds a law of relation in subjective individuals which induces the establishment of a quantitative life in the increase of the number of correspondences with the external world both in Time and Space, and, which induces also the establishment of altruistic feeling—a feeling that expands to a greater or less comprehension of the great life of the subjective throughout the cosmical history; and in this recognition he finds also a sense of personal responsibility towards a Power which demands from him a surrender, so that he shall work towards its great ideal, and find his happiness therein. What more there may be in natural religion is beyond the scope of our present volume, though we hope at same future time to treat of this important subject. Our present view is limited to the consideration of Ethics, and how that science is affected by the recent large generalisations of Biological history. Certain definite conclusions of a religious character have come forward as the result of our studies, and since these have an ethical import, it is necessary to refer to them in this place.

Nevertheless the study of Evolution assists Ethics, although it can bring no argument to bear upon those who possess little moral aspiration, and can add nothing to the forcefulness of social pressure. Its *point d' appui* is in the existence in most men of the moral aspirations. Through them it will work upon individuals of their environment, and upon the teachers and legislators who form and guide society. To them

is disclosed the fact that their aspirations coincide with the tendencies of nature. They find that they are going with the stream, are in fact part of the historic stream itself. They recognise in society three movements. The first is the growth of altruism or sympathy. The second is the enlargement of quantitative life. The third is the approach towards a harmony or equilibration of life. The recognition of these truths imparts a deeper faith in moral progress, and gives a greater breadth of view, and a more intelligent and charitable interpretation of human action. Philosophers teachers, and statesmen, understanding the movements of society from age to age, and discerning the goal to which it inevitably works, can read more intelligently its primary phases, and assist more skilfully in its onward movement. The more extended recognition of the social aim throughout society will guide and increase social pressure in a corresponding direction, not only in the proper application of social rewards and and penalties, but in the ethical inculcations, and eventually in the hereditarily established intrinsic motives.

Nor will prophets, the ripest fruit of evolution, be wanting in the future. Ages produce not only the working results but the religious voices. There are always men who give utterance to the thought and to the aspirations of their time. Standing in the fore-front of the advancing race, they face the mysterious darkness of the future illumined but by the lights drawn from the Power working through the subjective history.

CHAPTER IX.
SUMMARY.

Whether we consider Biology as a process of equilibration of physical factors in a state of moving equilibrium, (including in this formula the process of reproduction and heredity to which biologically speaking the life of a species is limited—which equilibration explanation includes an equilibration of forces, as well as an equilibration of motives, respecting which our conceptions are as yet very indefinite and vague,) or on the other hand consider that the facts of Biology require us to include in our explanatory moving equilibrium theory an equilibration of subjective factors with each other, and with the physical forces concerned, t is clear in either case that the dominant law of Biology as set forth by Mr. Spencer is that of Equilibration.

The place to be assigned to Purpose in a process of equilibration is not very clear. In the first place, if the biological explanations are all strictly limited to the chemical and physical factors, it seems evident that there can be no purposive actions, since all actions are determined by the chemical and mechanical relations of molecules, masses of molecules, and organised masses of molecules. To say that what we call purposive actions are explicable by physical and mechanical laws is to abolish purpose and substitute physical causation. Can purpose by any means be made lineable in such a

sequence? The problem is a fair one to consider and to attempt. We fail to do it, and we think that all who have attempted it have failed.

But if a subjective factor is admitted into the problem, then it is necessary to understand in what way it becomes part of, and in what way it affects, a process of equilibration on the part of a moving equilibrium in which it is a factor. The peculiar nature of a biological moving equilibrium, and the respect in which it differs from a physical or mechanical moving equilibrium, consists in the fact that it works towards, if indeed it does not purposely aim at self-continuance by assimilation of force and self-continuance by means of self-protection from adverse forces in the environment. The coincidence of the subjective element with this tendency, in many equilibria, is suggestive of an efficient connexion. Yet if we do not understand the law of the relation of a subjective factor with the physical and mechanical factors, how can we understand the resultant process of equilibration and the necessity for the biological law of adaptations for self-preservation and self-protection? How can we understand Purpose as an equilibration?

Ethics to be affiliated upon the cosmical process requires that we should understand how purposive actions can be so affiliated, for Ethics relates to purposive actions. In the failure of such a logical connexion, we may understand Ethics on partial and limited grounds, but we do not understand it as Mr. Spencer proposes we should understand it, namely, as part of the cosmical process.

According to Mr. Spencer, we are bound to accept Ethics as part of the process of cosmical equilibration for this is after all the main conception of Mr

Spencer's great work. The apparent and ostensible conception, and that with which he has most succeeded in impressing the public mind, is the principle of evolution or gradual development; but we must not lose sight of the fact that what he proposed to accomplish was an explanation of evolution, and not merely the establishment of its historical verity. This explanation is in terms of equilibration. That conception lies behind and above the celebrated "Formula of Evolution," and by means of it the fanciful law of the moving equilibrium is posited as the ruling principle of biological change and development, as well as of physical changes proper. The biological law, or law of the moving equilibrium, rules supreme over all actions and developments of organisms: and even if an additional factor of subjectivity is present as one of the forces which equilibrate in a moving equilibrium, it is, nevertheless, subject to the laws of equilibration. It is not yet made clear how the law of equilibration, which necessitates that all forces should come to a state of rest in as speedy a time as possible, can be changed into a biological law working in the antagonistic direction of the self-preservation of a set of motions, and their self-protection against a possible cessation or extinction, with the addition of means of reproduction in view of an eventual cessation or extinction. But it is these biological actions, some of them purposive, and some of them perhaps not consciously purposive, which have to be properly shown as part of the cosmical process of equilibration, before purposive actions, and therefore, before Ethics can be explained upon cosmical principles.