III.—PROFESSOR SIDGWICK'S ETHICS.

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WHAT I propose to do in this paper is to recapitulate very briefly indeed what I understand to be the main points of Professor Sidgwick's ethical view, and then to attempt to answer some of the objections to it that have been brought forward in recent criticisms.

As regards *The Good* for man, that which is in itself desirable, Mr. Sidgwick holds that "if we consider carefully such permanent results as are commonly judged to be good, other than qualities of human beings, we can find nothing that, on reflection, appears to possess this quality of goodness out of relation to human existence or at least to some consciousness or feeling"—that "beauty, knowledge, and other ideal goods, as well as all external material things, are only reasonably to be sought by men in as far as they conduce either (1) to Happiness or (2) to the Perfection or Excellence of human existence" (*Methods of Ethics*, Book I, ch. ix, § 4).

With regard to Virtue, and the other "talents, gifts, and graces which make up the common notion of human Excellence or Perfection . . . reflection shows that they are only valuable on account of the good or desirable conscious life in which they are or will be actualised, or which will be somehow promoted by their exercise" (*Methods of Ethics*, III, xiv, § 2, p. 395).

Any quality of human life that is ultimately desirable "must belong to human life regarded on its psychical side, or briefly, Consciousness" (p. 396). And it is only *Desirable* Consciousness that we can regard as ultimate Good for man (p. 397). Consciousness that is painful or even merely

indifferent is not *in itself* desirable. The current notion of Virtue itself cannot without a logical circle be identified with the notion of Ultimate Good, for "to say that 'general good' consists solely in general Virtue, if we mean by Virtue conformity to such prescriptions and prohibitions as make up the main part of the morality of Common Sense, would obviously involve us in a logical circle; since we have seen that the exact determination of these prescriptions and prohibitions must depend on the definition of this General Good" (p. 392, *cf.* p. 391). And neither does Virtuous activity, if accompanied by extreme torture, appear to be *in itself* desirable to the agent, nor can mere subjective rightness of Will be maintained to be Ultimate Good.

It may be said, however, "that we may take 'conscious life' in a wide sense, so as to include the objective relations of the conscious being implied in our notions of Virtue, Truth, Beauty, Freedom; and that from this point of view we may regard cognition of Truth, contemplation of Beauty, Free or Virtuous action, as in some measure preferable alternatives to Pleasure or Happiness—even though we admit that Happiness must be included as a part of Ultimate Good. In this case the principle of Rational Benevolence, which was stated in the last chapter as an indubitable intuition of the practical Reason, would not direct us to the pursuit of universal happiness alone, but of these 'ideal goods' as well, as ends ultimately desirable for mankind generally.

"I think, however, that this view ought not to commend itself to the sober judgment of reflective persons. In order to show this, I must ask the reader to use the same twofold procedure that I before requested him to employ in considering the absolute and independent validity of common moral precepts. I appeal, firstly, to his intuitive judgment after due consideration of the question when fairly placed before it; and secondly, to a comprehensive comparison of the ordinary judgments of mankind. As regards the first argument, to me

at least it seems clear, after reflection, that these objective relations of the conscious subject, when distinguished from the consciousness accompanying and resulting from them, are not ultimately and intrinsically desirable, any more than material or other objects are, when considered apart from any relation to conscious existence. Admitting that we have actual experience of such preferences as have just been described, of which the ultimate object is something that is not merely consciousness, it still seems to me that when (to use Butler's phrase) we 'sit down in a cool hour,' we can only justify to ourselves the importance that we attach to any of these objects by considering its conduciveness, in one way or another, to the happiness of sentient beings.

"The second argument, that refers to the common sense of mankind, obviously cannot be made completely cogent; since, as above stated, several cultivated persons do habitually judge that knowledge, art, &c.—not to speak of Virtue—are ends independently of the pleasure derived from them. But we may urge not only that all these elements of 'ideal good' are productive of pleasure in various ways; but also that they seem to obtain the commendation of Common Sense, roughly speaking, in proportion to the degree of this productiveness. This seems obviously true of Beauty, and will hardly be denied in respect of any kind of social ideal; it is paradoxical to maintain that any degree of Freedom, or any form of social order, would still be commonly regarded as desirable even if we were certain that it had no tendency to promote the general happiness. The case of Knowledge is rather more complex; but certainly Common Sense is most impressed with the value of knowledge when its 'fruitfulness' has been demonstrated. It is, however, aware that experience has frequently shown how knowledge, long fruitless, may become unexpectedly fruitful, and how light may be shed on one part of the field of knowledge from another apparently remote; and even if any particular branch of scientific pursuit could be shown to be devoid of even this

indirect utility, it would still deserve some respect on utilitarian grounds; both as furnishing to the enquirer the refined and innocent pleasures of curiosity, and because the intellectual disposition which it exhibits and sustains is likely on the whole to produce fruitful knowledge. Still in cases approximating to this last, Common Sense is somewhat disposed to complain of the misdirection of valuable effort; so that the meed of honour commonly paid to Science seems to be graduated, though perhaps unconsciously, by a tolerably exact utilitarian scale. Certainly the moment the legitimacy of any branch of scientific enquiry is seriously disputed, as in the recent case of vivisection, the controversy on both sides is generally conducted on an avowedly utilitarian basis" (*Methods of Ethics*, 6th edition, pp. 400-402).

On the same principle we may allow as possible some infelicitic effects of cultivation of Virtue, and are able to explain the aversion of Common Sense to admit Happiness to be the Ultimate Good.

If these considerations are accepted, the hedonistic or eudæmonistic end is admitted, and Virtue is interpreted as conduct conducive to that end. And an examination of the Morality of Common Sense, the precepts of duty and virtuous action which are currently accepted, leads us first of all to recognise that these rules are difficult to define, mutually conflicting, wanting in independence and self-evidence. The moralist is forced to seek for some principle which is clear and evident, and capable of explaining, justifying, and reconciling these vague and unsystematised rules of Dogmatic Intuitionism. A step towards this is made by Philosophic Intuitionism, which reaches principles of Prudence, Justice, and Benevolence, under which minor rules may be brought, Common Sense Morality appearing on examination to be a system of rules tending to the promotion of the general Happiness, and showing no clear and self-evident principles except such as are consistent with Utilitarianism.

The maxim of Rational Benevolence furnishes an intuitional basis for Utilitarianism, and the Utilitarian rule of "aiming at the General Happiness" is seen to "rest on a fundamental moral intuition." On this view there is, it seems, "no real opposition between Intuitionism and Utilitarianism."

As regards Method, Intuition gives the End, or Good; how that end or good can be best realised must be settled by careful appeal to experience, by a "Hedonistic Calculus." If Happiness is the Good, the right end of action, we have of course Ethical Hedonism. One of Professor Sidgwick's great services to ethical thought consists in the clear distinction between this, which is an ethical doctrine, a doctrine of ends, of what ought to be, and the *psychological* doctrine (Psychological Hedonism) that every one *does* always act from desire for pleasure or aversion to pain. This latter view he has, I think, conclusively disproved. He has also shown that a consistent Ethical Hedonism cannot admit differences of *quality*, but only of quantity, in pleasure (or pain). It may be remarked here that the case for Ethical Hedonism (so-called) would be very much strengthened in expression by a systematic reference to *Pain* as well as *Pleasure* in considering the end. Happiness includes absence of painful consciousness as well as presence of pleasant consciousness; if Pain is *in itself* (apart from consideration of causes and effects) bad and to be avoided, similarly Pleasure is, *in itself merely*, desirable—it is the happiness of any moment that makes *that moment* worth having to a rational creature who is also sentient. Besides the Principle of Rational Benevolence, Mr. Sidgwick recognises another fundamental ethical intuition—that of Prudence or Rational Self-Love—that "interest, my own happiness, is a manifest obligation." He agrees with Butler in recognising a Dualism of the Governing Faculty, or Practical Reason. But since he can find no intuition to the effect that what is for the greatest Happiness of others will also be for the greatest Happiness of the individual agent (*i.e.*, that Virtue will be rewarded), and as,

moreover, an examination of experience admits the view that conduct which best promotes the one will not always best promote the other, this Dualism presents a fundamental problem. The Practical Reason is not satisfied unless *both* my own Happiness is promoted *and* the Happiness of others.* And yet it is interesting to notice that I cannot accept the maxim of Rational Benevolence *unless* I have accepted the maxim of Rational Self-Love; for surely it is only if my own consciousness tells me that my happiness is *for me as an individual* intrinsically worth having, only on this condition is there ground for holding that the happiness *of others* is that which, for *their* sakes, it is worth while for me to promote. Why should I think that another's happiness is any good to *him*, unless I feel that *my* happiness is a good to me? Can I judge his consciousness except by my own? And perhaps it may also be noted here that each individual, when aiming at the happiness *of others*, since he does not aim at the happiness of *one man alone*, has to aim at both happiness and virtue (in as far as virtue conduces to happiness) in each. (And, of course, on the utilitarian view, conduciveness to happiness is the very content of virtue.)†

Professor Sidgwick himself holds that in order that ethical science should be satisfactorily constructed and morality completely rationalised, Ethics must borrow a premiss from Theology or Philosophy; and he asks whether, "if the reconciliation of duty and self-interest is to be regarded as a hypothesis logically necessary to avoid a fundamental contradiction in one chief department of our thought," this necessity would "constitute a sufficient reason for accepting this hypothesis. This, however, is a profoundly difficult and controverted question, the discussion of which belongs rather

* It may be noted that the same difficulty might occur if *good* were not interpreted hedonistically.

† Cf. article on "Rational Hedonism" in *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. v.

to a treatise on General Philosophy than to a work on the Methods of Ethics, as it could not be satisfactorily answered without a general examination of the criteria of true and false beliefs. Those who hold that the edifice of physical science is really constructed of conclusions logically inferred from self-evident premises may reasonably demand that any practical judgments claiming philosophic certainty should be based on an equally firm foundation. If, on the other hand, we find that in our supposed knowledge of the world of nature propositions are commonly taken to be universally true which yet seem to rest on no other grounds than that we have a strong disposition to accept them, and that they are indispensable to the systematic coherence of our beliefs—it will be more difficult to reject a similarly supported assumption in Ethics without opening the door to universal scepticism.” The strength of this position has not, I think, been always appreciated. It appears to make the case for Ethical Science at least as good as the case for Natural Science.

I go on to consider a few of the objections to Utilitarianism of this type which have recently come under my notice. As regards those that appeared before 1894, I collected all that came in my way, and gave to them the best answer I could in the *International Journal of Ethics* for 1894 and 1895 (vol. v). Also Mr. Hayward's criticisms in vol. xi of that journal (1900–1901) have received, in the same volume, perhaps as much attention as they require.* I will, therefore, pass on to examine some points in the criticisms of Professor J. Seth and Mr. Moore. Professor Seth (in his article, “The Ethical System of Henry Sidgwick,” in *Mind* for April, 1901) considers that Professor Sidgwick has subordinated Utilitarianism to Egoism, yet that at the same time he recognises “three Methods of Ethics—the Egoistic, the Intuitional,

* Mr. Hayward's book, published soon after the article, is to a great extent an expansion of the latter.

and the Utilitarian, as equally legitimate." (This recognition, in Mr. Seth's view, is—"apart from Mr. Sidgwick's theological assumption or postulate—a position which may be called Rational or Intuitional Hedonism, not Rational or Intuitional Utilitarianism." What, however, is Utilitarianism but Hedonism ?)

But Professor Sidgwick shows how, in his view, Intuitionism and Utilitarianism coalesce (this is, indeed, recognised by Professor Seth on p. 177). As regards the subordination of Utilitarianism to Egoism, Professor Seth himself quotes on p. 177, the following statement of Professor Sidgwick: "I do not hold the reasonableness of aiming at happiness generally with any stronger conviction than I do that of aiming at one's own. . . . I hold with Butler that 'Reasonable Self-Love and Conscience are *the two chief or superior principles* in the nature of man,' each of which we are under a 'manifest obligation' to obey." And if one *were* subordinate to the other, how could the *three* Methods be (as Professor Seth says they are) regarded as "equally legitimate" ?

Again, Professor Seth says that (on Professor Sidgwick's view) "the conflict between Egoism and Utilitarianism is . . . ultimate and insoluble because each is the expression of the Practical Reason"; but what Professor Sidgwick holds is that each is *an* expression of Practical Reason—the expression of Practical Reason is the two together. And again, if there is an "insoluble conflict," as Mr. Seth says, how can one be subordinated to the other ?

Professor Seth does not, I think, rightly represent Professor Sidgwick's attitude towards the *natural* Methods of Ethics, and his attitude to Common Sense (which Professor Sidgwick does not regard as sole and final appeal—recognising that Common Sense requires to be "clarified" for philosophical purposes).

Again, Professor Seth asserts that Mr. Sidgwick's "own statement of the principles suggests, if it does not imply,

that both Prudence and Benevolence are transcended in the Principle of Justice of which they are only special applications. All three," he goes on, "are principles of the distribution of the Good or Happiness, and the common mark of all is that impartiality which is of the essence of Justice." It is surely a very odd use of "distribution" to say that Prudence and Benevolence are principles of distribution; and to say that Prudence and Benevolence are transcended by Justice, because "impartiality," which is the mark (it should be *a* mark) of Justice, also characterises them, is also odd, since Justice in this sense is simply the mere form of law—any *law* must be equal and impartial—and Prudence and Benevolence imply a definite ultimate good (Happiness) without reference to which Justice remains a bare form of impartiality, without any content of good to be impartial about. Justice is not (unless we have accepted the Hedonistic principle of Rational Benevolence) a principle of "action with impartial concern for all elements of general Happiness" (p. 181). The form of Law is common to all systems of Ethics, but the hedonistic end is peculiar to Hedonism. The acceptance of Happiness as *end* is a very important addition to the mere form of Law, and on the Utilitarian view, the maxim of Justice seems plainly subordinate to that of Benevolence. And unless it can be shown that from the individual's point of view there is no valid or important difference between *self* and *others*, it seems futile to argue as Professor Seth does (p. 184), as if this difference did not exist. Could we, indeed, have any knowledge of, or care for, the happiness of another, unless we have first recognised happiness as good for ourselves, worth having for ourselves? (*Cf.* above, p. 36). Does not even the very conception of Duty (not to say of Life or Consciousness) imply a valid and important difference between Self and Other? And when it is said that "moral good is always a common, never a private good," what is meant by a *common* good? What is a common good but the good of many individuals? Is not our duty to our neighbour—brother

or sister or wife or child—and the good hence accruing, to the merely “individual” child, &c. ?

“The only possibility,” says Professor Seth, “of reducing morality to a rational system is by subordinating Prudence to Benevolence through the subordination of both Prudence and Benevolence to the formal or logical principle of Justice, of which they together constitute the special application and content” (p. 182). . . . “We have only to ask what is the relation of a Logical [whole or genus] to a mathematical [or quantitative] whole to reach the conclusion that the one is the form, the other the content, and that the larger application of the principle of Justice which we find in Benevolence must include and transcend the narrower application of the same principle in Prudence.”

But the question is not to be solved by a mere consideration of the relation between two such wholes, and in any ordinary use of the maxim of Justice this maxim is not applicable in the case of Prudence, because there is only one person concerned. And the maxim of Prudence can be subordinated to that of Benevolence only if we ignore the difference between self and other ; it is not from the point of view of the sentient individual that *he* is merely one of those similar units that make up the Logical Whole, and that *his* fraction of the quantitative whole constituted by the various *quanta* of good of all sentient individuals taken together, is on a par with every other equal quantum—this is only true from the universal point of view.

It may seem superfluous to dwell on this point, but Professor Seth lays much stress upon it. “If,” he says, “the point of view of the individual and his happiness is once exchanged for the point of view of society and the general happiness ; if the former is subordinated as only a part, to the latter as the true ethical whole ; if, in Sidgwick’s own terminology, the principle of prudence is subordinated to that of benevolence, or both to the principle of justice, the dualism and contradiction of ethical

thought immediately disappears, and Utilitarianism, or the identification of the individual with the social whole of which he is a part, is seen to be the only rational principle of conduct, the only principle worthy to be called intuitive." But is it intuitive? And is it either a principle or rational? To me it seems to be none of these good things—indeed "the identification of the individual with the social whole of which he forms a part" seems to me a contradiction in terms; if an individual is *part* of a whole, he surely, *ex vi termini*, cannot be *identified with* the whole—indeed, from his point of view, the whole, as far as he knows it, is only a part of him, his cognitive self being the other part, and that part, too, upon which the existence *for him* of all the rest depends. But even the identification of the individual with the whole does not quite satisfy Professor Seth—the further question would remain, he says, "whether the point of view of a quantitative or even of a logical whole is the ethical point of view." (This seems to me so unfair as to be quite beside the mark.) ". . . . If the Good is itself interpreted rationally, the value of pleasure is determined by its quality, and not merely by its quantity." (Is it rational to hold that pleasure *in itself* can vary qualitatively?) "Sidgwick's main interest," Professor Seth goes on, "seems to have been in the question of the true method of the distribution of the Good, rather than in the question of the nature of the Good. . . . His investigation of the problem of the Good does not compare, in seriousness and in persistence, with his investigation of the problem of its distribution."

If Professor Seth considers Prudence and Benevolence to be principles of *distribution*, it is perhaps explicable that he should think that distribution receives a disproportionate share of attention, but how he comes to regard them as principles of *distribution* is a little hard to understand, and the view that Professor Sidgwick treated the question of the nature of the Good with comparative neglect is still more surprising in

view of the discussions, *e.g.*, in ch. ix of Book I, and ch. xiv of Book III. To the complaint (p. 180) that Professor Sidgwick does not apply to his own intuitions (of Rational Self-Love and Rational Benevolence) the criterion of consistency on which he justly lays stress, it may be replied that the two intuitions in question cannot be shown to be incompatible with each other, that a possible mode of complete reconciliation is indicated, and serious reasons offered for its acceptance, and that Benevolence certainly presupposes Self-Love.

Finally, I would just observe that the conjectural tracing of the sources of Professor Sidgwick's Ethics needs correcting in the light of his own account of the development of his view; and that in many of the quotations from *The Methods of Ethics* which Professor Seth gives there is a curious disregard of context, owing to which a garbled impression is (without doubt unintentionally) produced in several cases; the quotations, too, are in some cases strangely beside the point—*e.g.*, p. 178, line 87, &c.; pp. 180, 184, foot, and 185, top, &c.

I go on to make a few remarks on some of Mr. G. E. Moore's criticisms, in his recent book, *Principia Ethica*.

In attempting to disprove Hedonism, by which he means the doctrine that Pleasure is the sole good, Mr. Moore lays stress upon what he calls (1) the principle of organic unity; (2) the method of isolation. The principle of unity is that the value of an organic whole bears no regular proportion to the sum of the values of its parts. This he uses chiefly, I think, for the purpose of showing that though wholes of which pleasure (or pleasant feeling) is a factor are highly valuable, and none of the parts (except pleasure) taken alone seem valuable, it does not therefore follow that the value of the complex whole is due to pleasure. By the method of isolation, we separate a thing or quality from its causes, accompaniments, and effects, and as so separated endeavour to determine by reflective inspection (by "looking to see") whether it has value or demerit in itself, and, if so,

how much. Pleasure, he decides, though it has *some* intrinsic goodness, has not much, in isolation, and is by no means the sole good. He settles this by a hypothetical consideration of cases in which every element of the concrete instances, except pleasant feeling itself, has been abstracted from, and of cases in which the other elements of a whole which is good in itself are considered apart from the pleasure or happiness which is their normal concomitant.

In dealing with Professor Sidgwick's doctrine (which he recognises to be free from some of the defects and faults of previous English Hedonistic Moralists) Mr. Moore first attempts to answer the contention that nothing outside of Human existence can be good or the good for man. He takes the passage of *The Methods of Ethics*, already quoted above (pp. 33-35), and objects to the limitation of good to certain characters of Human Existence. "Is this conclusion justified?" he asks (p. 83). "I cannot think it is. 'No one,' says Professor Sidgwick, 'would consider it rational to aim at the production of beauty in external nature, apart from any possible contemplation of it by human beings.' Well, I may say at once that I, for one, do consider this rational; and let us see if I cannot get anyone to agree with me. Consider what this admission really means. It entitles us to put the following case:—Let us imagine one world exceedingly beautiful. Imagine it as beautiful as you can; put into it whatever on this earth you most admire—mountains, rivers, the sea, trees and sunsets, stars and moon. Imagine these all combined in the most exquisite proportions, so that no one thing jars against another, but each contributes to increase the beauty of the whole. And then imagine the ugliest world you can possibly conceive. Imagine it simply one heap of filth, containing everything that is most disgusting to us, for whatever reason, and the whole, as far as may be, without one redeeming feature. Such a pair of worlds we are entitled to compare; they fall within Professor Sidgwick's meaning, and the comparison is highly

relevant to it. The only thing we are not entitled to imagine is that any human being ever has, or ever, by any possibility, *can*, live in either, can ever see and enjoy the beauty of the one or hate the foulness of the other. Well, even so, supposing them quite apart from any possible contemplation by human beings; still, is it rational to hold that it is better that the beautiful world should exist, than the one which is ugly? Would it not be well, in any case, *to do what we could to produce it** rather than the other? Certainly I cannot help thinking that it would, and I hope that some may agree with me in this extreme instance."

To this I reply that I cannot myself see that it is of the smallest consequence what happens so long as there is no consciousness anywhere in any creature of this happening—not that I think anything can or does happen or exist apart from all consciousness, but just supposing that we put the case.

I submit, however, that Mr. Moore does not really put this case, for he says, "*Let us imagine one world exceedingly beautiful. Imagine it as beautiful as you can . . . Would it not be well . . . to do what we could to produce it . . . ?*" "The ugliest world" is described as "containing everything that is *most disgusting to us*." (This includes more than mere ugliness.) And in the last paragraph of his book he speaks of the love of *imaginary* things and persons as "undoubtedly good." "It is enough for my purpose," he remarks (p. 84), "if it be admitted that, *supposing* no greater good were at all attainable, then beauty must in itself be regarded as a greater good than ugliness; if it be admitted that, in that case, *we should not be left without any reason for preferring one course of action to another, we should not be left without any duty whatever, but that it would then be our positive duty to make the world more beautiful*, so far as we

* Italics mine.

were able, since nothing better than beauty could *then result from our efforts.*" *

This refutation, then, of the limitation of human good to goods of consciousness by reference to imaginary cases of beauty and ugliness seems to me to break down. The appeal is to our imaginative appreciation or disgust, and to our duty to produce beauty rather than ugliness. Can we, by help of such considerations, make any decision about things that are *not* matter of any consciousness? Is not even the attempt to put the case, and to estimate the hypothetical beauty and ugliness on the supposition of their not being objects of consciousness, quite futile?

Mr. Moore goes on to consider the doctrine that Pleasure alone is good for its own sake (p. 87). He first spends some pages in combating the view that "*pleasure alone and not the consciousness of pleasure* is the sole good," quoting in support of it a passage from the *Philebus*, in which Socrates sophistically presents to the victimised Protarchus an arbitrary mixture of possible and impossible. "You would not think you needed anything else if you possessed for your whole life the enjoyment of the greatest pleasures in completeness?" Socrates enquires. "Certainly not," Protarchus answers. Then Socrates supposes his interlocutor to be divested of sight, wisdom, intelligence, reason, memory and knowledge, and asks, "Would Protarchus be content in this state of destitution if he still had the greatest enjoyment, but without knowing that he had it?" To this Protarchus feebly, but very naturally, responds, "Socrates, your reasoning has left me utterly dumb." He is too surprised and shocked to retort, "Yes, certainly, *if* I still possessed this blessing in completeness."

Why Mr. Moore should have troubled to give so much space to this refutation of *pleasure without consciousness* I do not know, as he admits that he thinks it is *consciousness of*

* Italics mine.

pleasure which Hedonists have meant, and after the quotation he gives from *The Methods of Ethics* there could be no doubt about Professor Sidgwick's view.*

But even the formula, "Consciousness of Pleasure is the sole end," does not correctly give Professor Sidgwick's view, for he expressly says that we have to include *absence of pain* as well as *presence of pleasure* in the Hedonistic end. The most striking point in Mr. Moore's account of Good and Bad is that while it is rather reluctantly that he admits mere happy feeling to be intrinsically valuable, he fully allows that Pain (unhappy feeling) is in itself a great and unmixed Evil. "Great evils may be said to consist either (a) in the love of what is evil or ugly, or (b) in the hatred of what is good or beautiful, or (c) in the consciousness of pain." Probably the love of evil is itself evil, and the love of good persons may be sometimes good, but what is the evil of which the love is an unmixed Evil, what is that good in persons the love of which is an unmixed good? Is not "*love of good persons*" very vague indeed? Is it the love *as felt*, or *as contemplated by a third person*? Is it good to the persons who feel it? Is anything definite left as good in itself except beauty, anything as evil in itself except ugliness and pain? Is it so certain that ugliness and the love of it are evil, and that beauty and the love of it are very great goods? And if Pain (there can be no Pain without consciousness of pain) is in itself a great evil, how can we escape the admission that Pleasure or Happiness (conscious, of course) is a great good? If Pain intrinsically, abstracting from its causes, concomitants, and effects, is in itself and while it lasts evil, if a feeling-tone of absolute indifference makes any state in which it occurs *intrinsically* worthless—worthless while it lasts, *considered in itself*, what justification is there for not treating Pleasure or Happiness

* Pleasure without consciousness seems to me a contradiction in terms—as impossible and absurd a notion as colour without extension, warmth without temperature, or music without sound.

(the feeling-tone which is the contrary-opposite of Pleasure) correspondingly? If Pain is to be estimated *in itself*, abstracting from any particular causes, concomitants, &c. (and, of course, causes, concomitants, and effects of Pain may be excellent), ought not the opposite Feeling, Pleasure, to be also estimated in abstraction from all particular causes, &c. (which may, of course, be bad)? Mr. Moore himself is very emphatic about the need of the "method of isolation," but in order to convince us that pleasure is not *intrinsically* good he appeals to concrete cases where causes and concomitants are supposed such as to arouse strong condemnation of the whole state. Would not his supposititious cases be more effective if more in conformity with ordinary human experience? And, by the way, does cruelty mean mere pleasure in contemplating suffering? If it had no effect direct or indirect in *producing suffering*, would our condemnation of it be so severe?

I think, too, that there is a constant tendency to forget both that it is *General Happiness* which is the utilitarian end, and that (the world and human life being what they are) among the most important means to this are the currently-accepted rules of morality.

In as far as appeal is made to intuition, it is, of course, to each individual's intuition; if the appeal is to common sense and common usage, it seems to me that Happiness is as much sought and as highly estimated as Pain is avoided and disapproved—and that appearances to the contrary may be satisfactorily explained (*cf. Methods of Ethics*, Book III, ch. xiv, § 5). Why else do we habitually wish each other long life and happiness, many happy returns of the day, a happy new year, a merry Christmas, why do we have Christmas trees for children, why try to secure happiness for others, why reward labour and merit with the means of securing, from among many sources of happiness, those which the labourer most desires, or can best turn to account?

No doubt Mr. Moore's method of isolation may be a valuable help towards finding out the character and value of any whole or part *in itself*, apart from causes, &c. If we want to know, *e.g.*, the value at the moment of its occurrence of a state of consciousness, or any element of it, this method applied with exact care is what it is necessary to use. We must abstract rigorously from all particular causes, concomitants, and effects. This is what Professor Sidgwick has, I think, succeeded in doing in estimating Pleasure or Happiness. But anyone can use it for himself—and I cannot understand how anyone who has carefully and systematically used it can say that any whole state of consciousness or any part of such whole is intuited by him as intrinsically worthy, as good in itself, if abstraction has been made of all pleasant feeling—that is to say, if it is taken as absolutely indifferent, or in some degree painful. Who would care to live through a year, much less a life, in which, whatever else there was, there was not a moment's happiness? Who would think it, in itself, worth having? It seems difficult to allow this without allowing the great intrinsic value of Happiness or Pleasure.

If the good is a good of consciousness, it must be the good of some consciousness in particular—and if a good of Feeling (*i.e.*, Happiness) it is a good of the consciousness of the particular person who feels it, and can only be a good to other consciousnesses indirectly. All Happiness, I think, is in itself absolutely good from the point of view of an universe consisting of creatures capable of Happiness and misery; but it could not be good from the universal point of view unless it were first good from some individual's point of view, since it can only exist, or be contemplated or imagined as existing, as the good primarily of the particular creature that experiences it; the good of each being, although good in itself, only a *part* of the good of the whole—the sole good being the sum of the good of each and all.

And it seems to me that since each man is himself and not another, and since (if the good is Happiness) he can only know good directly as part of his own feeling-consciousness, and since there is no such good except what is part of a feeling-consciousness, that therefore Egoistic Hedonism is rational from the individual's point of view—supposing there were no one but himself, as we are “supposing” so much. It is surely true (*cf.* p. 99) that the difference to any individual “between his own happiness and another's happiness” is “*for him* all-important”—his own greatest happiness is “not merely the ultimate rational end for himself, but a part of Universal Good.”

“Ultimate rational end for himself” means, I suppose, what is intrinsically good to him personally—*his* good in a sense in which it cannot be another's, in a sense without which no good of feeling could exist at all. In this way Egoism must be the presupposition of Universalism in Hedonistic Ethics. Everyone who is part of the universe has, it would seem, reason to try and realise all parts of the good of the universe—but unless each one's own Happiness concerned him specially there would on hedonistic principles be no good of the whole to be aimed at. I think that some at least analogous considerations would apply to any non-hedonistic good of conscious creatures.

Without denying the Principle of Organic Unity,* it may be observed that since *pleasure* is necessarily *felt pleasure*, the only whole that we are here interested in considering in relation to the Principle is a whole of consciousness. The only elements that such a whole contains are elements of (1) cognition or perception, (2) feeling or emotion, and (3) volition; and the only abstraction that seems valid and applicable in the

* It may be said, however, that this principle and its application seem to need much fuller exposition and discussion than Mr. Moore has given us.

case of any of these three is an abstraction not of *all* cognition or *all* volition (attention) or *all* feeling, but of any particular case or kind of cognition, feeling, &c. We have, *e.g.*, no experience of volition cut off from cognition, or destitute of feeling-tone. Thus there exists no concrete Whole of consciousness that is without feeling-tone, and no feeling-tone that is not the feeling-tone of some whole of consciousness. Though feeling can be distinguished in thought from cognition and volition, the separation is not so much comparable to that of, *e.g.*, an arm from a human body (as in Mr. Moore's illustration) as to that of Life or Intelligent Consciousness from such an organised body.

And if Pleasure or Happiness is allowed to have some value, while no one can hold that *any* combination of volitions and cognitions, if accompanied by unremitting torture, or even absolute indifference, would be good *in itself*, and, on the other hand, the only ground that anyone can find for refusing to allow that happy feeling is good in itself seems to be by reference to *causes, concomitants, or effects* that are disapproved—if this is so, how can we escape the affirmation that it is Happiness and it alone which is in itself (*i.e.*, in abstraction from all *particular causes* and accompaniments) worth having? At the same time, the notion of organic unity, which may be extended to cover the whole of conscious life, helps us to see how it is and why it is that happy feeling under the name of pleasure is so readily condemned—for all actual happiness as well as suffering has causes, concomitants, and effects, and these may, *in any given case*, be such as we disapprove. I believe that the grounds of disapproval may, in any instance, be explained, systematised, and justified by appeal to effects upon General Happiness—but I will not pursue the point here. And another contributing factor to the condemnation of Happiness, when called by the name of *Pleasure*, is the influence of the word itself; it is, to most of us, what Bentham calls a *dyslogistic* term—an instance in which a word, “like the Tartar’s bow, shoots back upon him

that uses it, and mightily disturbs and confuses his understanding."

My attention in the above discussion of Mr. Moore's attack on Hedonism has perhaps been too entirely taken up by Chapter III (Hedonism) and the destructive side of the argument, with which indeed that chapter is almost exclusively occupied. The chief point in Mr. Moore's positive case against Hedonism is that though nothing is good which is not pleasant, the only things which are good in themselves in any high degree are very complex wholes, the goodness of which cannot be arrived at by any computation of the separate values of the constituents into which they can be analysed. Of the complex things which are intrinsically good, the chief are the love of beautiful things and the love of good persons.

In any complete consideration of Mr. Moore's whole view, the constructive side of his doctrine must, of course, be included. I hope that I may have an opportunity at some other time of attempting some discussion of it.