

DEVELOPMENTAL ETHICS.

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I.

HUMAN PERFECTION, or the perfecting of mankind, has often been proposed as the object as well as the criterion of ethics. Although absolute perfection, in the sense of a state than which there is not a better, may not be readily apprehended, nor, much less, realised, yet we can form a clear conception of relative perfection, in the sense of a condition better than the present condition, or than any other condition taken as a term of comparison. And, since all ethics, whatever its particular views, deals with the means of bettering the condition of man, whether individually or collectively, or at least with the means of keeping that condition from retrograding, we may perhaps with propriety say that every system of ethics aims at the perfection of mankind ; or, in the language of moral philosophy, that perfection is the end of ethics. Nor is this all : the very word *end* implies that the relative perfection we have in view is not to be considered as a means or instrument in the prosecution of some farther object ; for in this case that farther object, not perfection, would be the end of ethics. This we express by saying that perfection, of one kind or another, is to be considered as an end in itself, to be striven after for its own sake, and not for the sake of something else ; although it is obvious that, there being no end without a means, ethics must necessarily relate to the means requisite for the attainment of the end, no less than to the end itself.

But the nature of this end is more or less definite, more or less vague, according to the view we take of perfection, i. e., according to the norm constituting our ethical guide and standard. We may, with the hedonist, make of pleasurable feeling our standard of perfection ; and the practice of morality, in this case, being di-

rected towards the enjoyment of pleasure, either by ourselves or others, we have secured our end, in every special instance, when either we or others have experienced the feelings in question; and these feelings being all we seek, we may describe them as constituting an end by itself; an end, moreover, which is perfectly definite, and whose character as an end—its finalness—is distinctly perceived. Or we may, with the ordinary intuitionist, establish a difference between the “higher” and the “lower” natures of man, including in the former all his virtuous tendencies, or the dictates of his “moral sense”; and in this case (although the distinction is by no means clear), we may still say that a given virtue, such as chastity (a favorite “virtue” with many writers, among them Mr. Lecky), is to be practised for no other reason than because it is an element of our “better nature”; because we know (or, rather, *feel*) that it is better to be pure than to be impure, irrespective of all consequences, either to ourselves or others. Here, also, as in the preceding instance, we have an end by itself, inasmuch as virtuous actions are performed, not in order to attain any remote ends, but because we conceive that by performing them we are what we “ought to be.” In both of the above cases the object in view is the satisfaction of what is, or is alleged to be, a specific feeling; and once the feeling has been satisfied, our goal, for the time, has been reached. The common characteristic of the two systems is that they both present a relatively final condition, whether pleasure or virtuousness, as the object of conduct; that they both find the ethical standard in an ideal capable of being completely realised.

The case, however, is somewhat different when we consider perfection in a dynamical instead of a statical sense; when we regard morality as a factor in the evolution of mankind, subject itself to the laws of change and adaptation, and playing no other part than that of an accelerating force impelling the human race in its uninterrupted onward and upward motion. The difference between this position and those mentioned above is, that, although the intuitionist and the evolutio-hedonist may hold, and do hold, that morality is a very powerful element in the development of the race, yet it is not a necessary consequence of their views that morality should be practised *because* of its developmental value; in other words, development is not their ethical criterion or standard. On the other hand, the doctrine now under consideration regards morality as having human progress for its main object; whence it follows that progress, in one form or another, is the ethical crite-

tion, the standard by which conduct is to be judged and measured. A system of ethics of this description may, I think, be more particularly termed an ethics of perfection. Its distinctive characteristic lies in this—that the end of every moral action, being subservient to the farther end of human progress, is only a relative end, not an end by itself; and, as such, may be more adequately described as a means, while the real end of ethics is a never-realised ideal which recedes from us in proportion as we approach it, or which constantly and continuously changes in proportion as it is partially realised. We may, however, take another view of the matter, and, by picturing to ourselves the evolution of the race as an unceasing motion, consider this motion as an end by itself, which, with respect to our actions, is attained when we are satisfied that they have been factors contributory to the preservation or acceleration of that motion.

Of all the various forms in which the ethics of perfection has appeared, there is one which, affirming to be founded exclusively on the law of cosmic evolution, as that law is understood by the foremost thinkers of the age, claims for itself, as legitimate property, the title of evolutionary ethics. Unfortunately, however, this appellation has been already appropriated by such systems as those presented in the works of Leslie Stephen and Herbert Spencer, whose doctrines, from a purely ethical point of view, are almost (not entirely) diametrically opposed to the doctrines with which I am now dealing. It becomes necessary, therefore, to make a distinction, and I think we may give the name *developmental ethics* to that system of ethics whose moral standard is development, especially mental development; in which the morality of an action is measured by its fitness to enter as a new factor in the sum total of forces impelling the human race in its upward motion.

Of this ethics Dr. Paul Carus, editor of *The Monist*, is a very strong adherent and enthusiastic advocate. It is the object of the present essay to examine the most salient points of his doctrines, as they can be gathered from his numerous writings. I shall, first, endeavor to present an outline of his views, not indeed in the literal form in which he has stated them, but as they can be logically interpreted. In following this method of exposition I am not actuated by the pretentious hope of improving upon Dr. Carus's lucid and vigorous presentation of his subject: my reasons are of a more plausible nature. In the first place, an uninterrupted series of quotations is almost always monotonous, especially when they are from a well-known writer; and, in the second place, the critic, by

presenting, as he understands them, the views he wishes to discuss, shows at once what he conceives the position of his author to be, and on what interpretation of his author's ideas he will base his criticism.

II.

Having, through the constant study of nature, acquired a scientific or positivist habit of mind, we have reversed the principles of the old systems of philosophy ; and, no longer seeking to evolve natural phenomena from the purely formal operations of our understanding, we seek in natural phenomena the materials to be combined and elaborated in those operations. However consistent our theories, however rigorous our reasonings, they will evidently remain nothing but pure forms of thought, answering to no objective realities, unless the premises have been taken from the objective world itself. But, if it is true that, in the language of Kant, pure formal thought is "empty," it is equally true that pure sensations, the data of experience, are "blind"; whence the necessity, on the one side, of looking in experience for the real content of knowledge, and, on the other side, of looking in formal thought for the meaning or interpretation of sensations. Experience furnishes the premises, but logic must give us the conclusions : without the classifications of experience in the categories of formal thought, the coherence and unification in which real knowledge consist would be impossible ; man might be a sentient being, but not a cogitative being. The laws of logic, however, are not isolated subjectivities, disconnected from the world of experience : they are conditions of thought corresponding to certain conditions of objective reality : they have been arrived at by the elimination of all the special properties of reality, except the most general property, without which no reality can be conceived, *viz.*, *form*. The laws of logic being, then, nothing but the laws of form, they must be applicable to any system of reality where form is the primary condition of existence. It follows that to that regularity and uniformity known in logic as consistency, there must correspond that regularity and uniformity in nature we describe by the term law—natural law. Hence we arrive at the conception of the universe as being not a chaos, but of necessity a cosmos, an orderly concatenation of causes and effects, where events, which are only changes of form, are invariably determined by the preceding forms of existence. Furthermore, the correspondence between the operations of formal thought and the

objective realities of nature arises from their very identity, or their oneness ; for the laws of logic are the subjective aspect of the laws of nature working in the cerebral substance ; they do not dictate or create order, but are the consciousness of the order followed by nature in the process of organisation : they are self-conscious nature, becoming aware of the conditions she has fulfilled, and *must* have fulfilled, in the course of her evolution—nature, so to speak, interpreting herself.¹

If, having established the universality of law, we ask ourselves what view we are to take of the phenomenal world in its entirety, we arrive at very important generalisations. Not only the very conception of the universe as a cosmos leads us to consider it as a unitary system of reality, but the development of all scientific knowledge points in the same direction. Knowledge is a continuous process of inclusion and harmonisation : of inclusion, in the sense that every new fact is understood when it has been referred to, or included in, a general order of facts or experiences formulated by us as a law ; of harmonisation, in the sense that the inclusion of a particular fact in a general order of facts consists in harmonising the new fact with the other known facts, in making objective the subjective requisite of consistency. In this manner we are led, by the very nature of cognition, to the theoretical conclusion that a perfect understanding of the whole world of phenomena is only possible by the reduction of all modes of existence to one single, universal law, of which particular laws are but special manifestations, or special aspects, conditioned by the special forms in which the one universal law exhibits itself. Thus the consistency of facts with one another is easily accounted for on the theory of their oneness ; a theory which is not merely the result of abstract speculation, but a legitimate induction based on the well-established truths of experimental science. All science, indeed, aims at the realisation of monism, of a continuity in nature which is the characteristic mark of its unity ; and, as said before, the solution of scientific problems consists in bringing new phenomena within the applicability of one law, or in extending the range of the law so as to make it embrace, in a synthetic whole, a greater number of phenomena. An unsolved problem is an apparent break of continuity, which disappears on the solution of the problem : so long as the break of continuity exists, the problem remains unsolved.²

¹ See chapter on "Form and Formal Thought" in Dr. Carus's *Fundamental Problems*, 2nd edit., Chicago, 1894.

² See *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 7, 20, 21, 22 ; also *The Monist*, 1., 2, p. 240. "The unitary conception of the world has become a postulate of science. Indeed, the single sciences, each one

One exception seemed for many centuries to defy all efforts directed towards including it in the one universal whole ; and the philosophers of the past were, and many of our own generation are, wont to dwell, sometimes with devout satisfaction, sometimes with the pangs of despair, on the impassable chasm, impossible of being bridged, separating the realm of life and consciousness from the lower realm of dead and inert matter. To-day, however, with the progress of natural science, the chasm is becoming narrower and narrower ; and if we cannot say that we have actually bridged it, we can, in some measure, see one shore from the other shore, and are not unwarranted in suggesting the means by which the intervening distance may be satisfactorily spanned. The doctrine of evolution, by tracing the most complex forms of life to the relatively simple compound known as protoplasm, has familiarised us with the truth that matter is possessed of potentialities never before dreamed of, and also with the all-important truth that two phases of the same process may appear, when taken at sufficient distance from each other, as independent, and even disparate, facts ; but that, by gradual, infinitesimal changes of the one fact, we may finally arrive at the other as its necessary consequence. A gap in nature may, therefore, simply indicate, not that the gap is so in reality, but that we are unacquainted with the "connecting links." Were we ignorant of the laws of thermotics, we should, no doubt, dogmatically affirm, as an axiomatic truth, that so disparate two facts as heat and cold could never change into each other, nor one originate from the other. The thermometer, however, soon convinces us of our error ; while, if we stop to reflect on the *gradual* change of a low into a high temperature, all the apparent contradiction disappears at once. A chasm between any two facts of nature is a subjective discontinuity, not an objective discontinuity ; it is a discontinuous perception of a continuous reality.

Since, according to the theory of evolution, the most complex forms of consciousness have evolved from the apparently unconscious protoplasm, we must believe that the material elements constituting this protoplasm already contain, in a latent form, all the *elements* of mind ; contain feeling *in potentia*, not otherwise than as molar motion contains the potentialities of heat ; or, to use a very striking illustration, as darkness contains the potentialities of light.¹

in its province, have always worked out and endeavored to verify the principles of monism. Every fact which seems to contradict the principle of unity must be, and indeed it is, considered as a problem until it conforms to it. As soon as it is found to be in unison with all the other facts the problem is solved." (*Fundamental Problems*, p. 22.)

¹ *The Monist*, I., 1, pp. 85-86.

And it does not require a long stretch of imagination, nor is it illogical or unscientific to conclude, that those very potentialities exist as constituent elements of the material particles composing the protoplasm; while the transition from unorganised matter to protoplasmic matter is no more impossible (although we are as yet ignorant of the process) than the transition of mere protoplasmic matter to man. In this hypothesis the vexed question as to the origin of life disappears as unmeaning: life, in its rudiments, is a property of all matter, and, as matter, is eternal, and calls for no explanation. The problem, then, for science to solve, is not, "What is the origin of life?" but—"What is the origin of that form of matter known as protoplasm?" And the latter problem is not only scientifically intelligible, but its solution is readily conceived as both possible and probable.¹

¹Dr. Carus's views as to the universality of life may be found in *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 110-133, 185-187, 300. His views on "The Origin of Mind" may be read in *The Monist*, I., 1, and *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 345-347. The theory of the origin of mind from what Professor Clifford called "mind-stuff," or "elements of feeling," is very clearly and forcibly stated by Dr. Carus in the following terms: "Subjectivity cannot originate out of nothing; it must be conceived as the product of a co-operation of certain elements which are present in the objective world. In other words, the elements of the subjective world are features that we must suppose to be inseparably united with the elements of the objective world which are represented in our mind as motions. This leads to the conclusion that feeling has to be considered not as a simple but as a complex phenomenon. Feelings originate through a combination of elements of feeling; and the presence of elements of feeling must be supposed to be an intrinsic property of the objective world." (*The Monist*, I., 1, p. 72.) "As light originates out of darkness, being a special mode of motion, so feeling originates out of the not-feeling. The not-feeling accordingly contains the conditions of feeling in a similar way as potential energy contains the potentiality of kinetic energy, or as molar motion contains potentially the molecular motion of heat, light, and electricity." (*Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.) I have quoted this theory at some length, for two reasons: in the first place, because it exhibits in a very plain light the scientific and naturalistic, and, therefore, deterministic view Dr. Carus takes of man as a natural phenomenon submitted ultimately to the laws of chemistry and mechanics (he repudiates this description of his views, but I think its accuracy can be substantiated, making due allowance for the meaning of words), and this is of great importance for my main purpose; and, in the second place (and although this has no direct bearing on my subject, I may be allowed to make a short digression), because, although the theory is open to serious criticisms (at least as to its form), it is, one of the most striking illustrations of the revolution worked in philosophy by the evolutionary doctrines and methods of analysis; for we no longer regard natural phenomena as mechanical *mixtures*, whose properties are identical with those of the elements mixed, but as *combinations*, whose properties, although resultants of the properties of the combining elements, are not identical with these.—The theistic argument of Locke based on the non-cogitateness of matter is well known. He argues that, if cogitateness were a property of matter, then, since matter is discontinuous (in the sense that it is not all "one being"), every particle must be cogitative, and every particle being eternal, every particle must be eternally cogitative, and, therefore (he thinks to have proved that the eternal being must be "all-knowing"), every particle must be a God. (Locke, *Of Human Understanding*, book IV., chap. x. Comp. Leibnitz, *Nouveaux Essais*, liv. IV., ch. x.) Besides a defective logic, we at once discover the error of assuming that mind is a simple, irreducible fact, not derivable from another simple and disparate fact—matter; and that mind, owing to its very simpleness, is not conceivable except in all its completeness, as we know it in man or imagine it in God. Locke never thought there could be such a thing as "elements of feeling," or elements of mind, for he took mind to be undecomposable; and it was, therefore, natural for him to suppose that if matter were cogitative at all, every particle must have a developed will, a perfect memory, and a clear understanding (although this view, when closely examined, does not tally with the theory of the *acquisition* of ideas, which is really a *formation* of mind).

III.

The foregoing doctrines as to the nature of the universe and man do away, in the first place, with that anthropomorphic view of the world which postulates an independent and arbitrary will "directing" all phenomena, either from "within" (and this is called an immanent God), or from "without," as in all popular forms of theism; and, in the second place, with that anthropocentric view which considers the will and the feelings of man as having a legitimate claim on, and absolute authority over, the processes going on outside of his conscious being. This radical change of view as to "man's place in nature" necessarily implies an equally radical change of view with regard to man's conduct—with regard to ethics. The test of all truth is no longer subjective, but objective,—not introspective, but experimental; and ethics, if it aspires to be a science at all, must take its stand on the facts of nature, considered as objective realities, and formulated into universal laws by the scientific principles and methods of research. Since our feelings and our thoughts are not self-existing or independent entities, but are dependent on, and related to, the whole order of nature, it is necessary to know what that order is, what its laws are, and how we are connected with them; and this done, we shall be enabled to enunciate in truly scientific formulas the special laws of conduct we ordinarily distinguish as ethical rules.

It may be stated at the outset, that the "authority" for ethics, the ultimate sanction and standard of conduct, can be no other than the cosmical order itself. Although the cosmos itself is neither moral nor immoral, it is the possibility for such a thing as a moral life; a possibility which, by the development of consciousness, has become an actuality. When we are convinced that all present existence is but a feature of the one eternal reality, that our consciousness has been formed and moulded by the invariable laws of the objective world, and that our actions, being special manifestations of those laws through the intermediary of feeling, are really continuations of an uninterrupted motion which comes from eternity and goes to eternity, following one, and only one, direction; then we see how idle it is to speculate on what, according to the fancies of our imagination, *ought* to be, without taking the trouble to inquire into the deeper question of what, according to the nature of things as we know them by experience, *must* be; and how liable we are to err when, leaving aside the criterion of objective

reality, we erect our feelings into a criterion of morality, by confusing those things which are logically possible with those that alone are actually possible, their possibility being no other than their very existence. The *can* is a prerequisite of the moral *ought*; but this *can*, in order to be so actually and objectively, has to be an agreement with the universal laws of nature; in which case the *can* is identical with the *must*. The universal laws of nature, then, being the necessary conditions of actual possibility, are the only justification of the moral precepts and the moral *ought*; and it is a sufficient guarantee of the morality of an action to show that it harmonises with those cosmical operations which have been revealed to us by scientific research. Nor could it be otherwise; for only that endures which, as a part, can fit the universal whole of phenomena; what does not fit must meet with inevitable ruin; and it is needless to say that what is doomed to certain failure cannot be a subject of approbation. In this sense we may say that morality "means obedience to the law," and that "human beings can be moral or immoral, according as their conduct agrees with, or does not agree with, God" (the universe).¹ Our very existence is involved in our obedience or disobedience to the supreme authority of nature; if we wish to exist, we must submit to the "cosmical conditions of existence," and such actions as conform to those conditions must be considered "good"; other actions, "bad."²

Were we unacquainted with the direction in which the world moves, with the line of progress in general, and of human progress in particular, ethics would have no meaning: in the ignorance of the causal relations between human actions and their consequences, one form of conduct could have no more justification than another; at least, no more *à priori* justification. But if there is a law of progress, a direction in which alone progress can take place, and if we know that law, then that law is our only possible norm of morality.³ This norm has been revealed to us by the doctrine of evolution, the first of whose teachings is, "that life as it is now can transcend itself; it can transform itself, and *must*, according to nature's laws, transform itself into a higher form of life."⁴ When

¹*Fundamental Problems*, pp. 315, 321. Dr. Carus constantly reverts to this position—that the objective phenomena of nature are the supreme authority and criterion of ethics. (See, e. g., *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 198, 257, 322, 328, 329; *Religion of Science*, second edition, Chicago, 1896, pp. 21, 27; *Ethical Problem*, Chicago, 1890, p. 31; *The Monist*, I., 4: "The Criterion of Ethics an Objective Reality.")

²*Ethical Problem*, p. 31.

³*Homilies of Science*, Chicago, 1892, p. 37.

⁴*Fundamental Problems*, p. 316. "Morality is that which is in concord with the law of evolution." (*The Monist*, VI., 4, p. 389.)

life is thus considered as a *necessary*, continuous upward movement, and conduct as one of the factors of this movement, the moral problem appears no longer as a mere question of *ought*, but mainly as a question of *must*: its solution consists in rationalising the *ought* by bringing it within the pale of the *must*. Shortly stated, the ethics of development may be thus formulated: Since the world moves in a certain direction, it *must* move in that direction; since it must move in that direction, we, who are but elements of the world, *must* act so as to further that movement. Hence development is at once the cause, the standard, and the authority of ethics.

Here the very natural question presents itself: What is meant by development, by progress? To this Dr. Carus answers that "the test of progress must be sought in the growth of soul." By soul, of course, he does not mean an independent and "spiritual" *ego*, but simply the mental activity of the nervous structure. For us, as conscious beings, the world is a system of interconnected phenomena more or less accurately represented, or "imaged," in the cerebral substance; and, in proportion as our experiences grow in number and complexity, the representation gains in accuracy and distinctness; which means that we interpret our feelings in a more faithful manner, or that there is a closer correspondence between the subjective states and their objective correlates. Otherwise stated, soul-progress consists in a constant approach to truth; for truth is nothing but the correct interpretation of our feelings, or a congruity of our mental states with reality.¹ Considering, then, the development of soul as, for us, the most important feature of cosmical law, we may accept it as a direct criterion of ethics, a standard of right and wrong; this standard not being different from the law of evolution in general, nor from the supreme standard of universal law, but simply a special aspect of both, or a special point of view from which we may regard them; there being, strictly speaking, only one law by which all phenomena are governed, and to which all particular laws can and must be referred.²

IV.

Such are, if I have understood them aright, the *fundamental* principles of developmental ethics. I have dispensed with minor

¹ *Homilies of Science*, pp. 41-42.

² In this sense, I think, are to be taken Dr. Carus's numerous references to the development of "soul-life" as the ethical criterion. It is man's duty, he says, to do "that which he needs most do, according to the laws of nature, to let his soul grow and expand, and to develop to ever higher and nobler aims." (*The Monist*, I., 4, p. 560.) "That which makes our souls grow and evolve is moral, that which dwarfs our souls and prevents their evolution is immoral." (*Homilies of Science*, p. 47.) Compare *Ethical Problem*, p. 42.

details, it being my main purpose to discuss the bases of the system ; but to such particulars as are of capital importance I shall advert in the course of my discussion. Although I believe that the postulates set forth by Dr. Carus as the foundations of his ethical theory are substantially correct, being identical with the generally accepted scientific doctrines of to-day, it does not appear to me that he has made a logical application of them ; that is to say, his ethical corollaries do not seem to be consistent with the general principles from which he has endeavored to derive them.

The first objection to the ethics of development is one which, demolishing, as I conceive, the very foundations, brings the whole structure to the ground ; the objection, namely, that the foregoing principles themselves are a protest against, and a nullification of, all ethical judgments ; and that, therefore, it is an incongruity to speak of morality as deriving its authority from those principles. If we are nothing but a part of nature ; if our development obeys necessary, universal laws ; in short, if we ourselves are natural phenomena, is it not a contradiction to say that we can oppose the laws of nature, and be thereby immoral ? All human passions being of natural growth, are all alike transformations of the one universal energy, as it operates in the various forms of material existence ; and passions being the springs of our voluntary actions, the action of the martyr is as natural as the action of his executioner ; they both follow the laws of their natures, that is, the laws of nature ; there is nothing in the one that makes his action more "agreeable" to the cosmical order than the action of the other ; and, judged by the supreme standard of universal law, they are equally moral, that is to say, they both act in response to the demands of nature, the only difference being that nature makes different demands upon different organisms. If, then, the laws of nature in general are to be accepted as the standard, there is really no standard, for the simple reason that there is no right or wrong ; and the everlasting objection against Spinozism remains unanswered, unless we have the courage to abide by the logical consequences of our postulates, and declare, with the philosopher, that a scoundrel is no more blamable for being a scoundrel than a horse for being a horse.¹ For Spinoza, however, the scoundrel is simply "excusable" ; but, according to that view which identifies morality with naturalness, the scoundrel must be declared to be actually moral. In fact, since everything happens, and every man acts, in absolute conformity with the laws of nature, the criterion of right is nothing but bare reality ; right-

¹ *Lettre de Spinoza à H. Oldenberg* (*Œuvres*, t. III., pp. 376-377, Saisset's trans., Paris, 1872).

ness and existence are ultimately one and the same thing ; and it were better to do away with all ethical terminology, for such terms as *moral* and *immoral*, *good* and *bad*, *right* and *wrong* lose all their significance, when one of the terms of the antithesis has disappeared.

The objection, however, may be partially met by saying, that our standard is not to be found in the laws of nature in general, but in the law of evolution in particular ; that ethics takes into consideration the difference between actions which tend to promote, and actions which tend to retard, the evolutionary movement ; and that the latter, although really as natural as the former, are by us conceived, at least relatively, as opposed to these, and may, in ordinary language, be said to be antagonistic to the general movement of the race. There seems, then, no contradiction in classifying conduct, as we classify other natural facts, into two different orders : good actions, which are conducive to development ; and bad actions, which are opposed to development. And it may be added that this distinction, when the words are sufficiently understood, and the hair-splitting of casuistry is not allowed to confuse what is plain, is entirely intelligible, and may be legitimately used as the foundation of a science of morality—of an ethics. Furthermore, it may be argued that the moral feelings from which ethical judgments arise, are simply the emotional concomitants of human progress ; that the law of society being a law of evolution, special feelings evolve, as is to be expected, in harmony with the same law ; and that thus both the physiological and the psychological aspects of morality are perfectly understandable : the physiological, in the sense that a moral person, considered as a social organ, must discharge his functions in a manner subservient to the health and vitality of the whole ; the psychological, in the sense that the actions and judgments of a moral person are accompanied by those characteristic feelings we distinguish as moral feelings.

While the logical cogency of such a reasoning as this will not be disputed, the assumptions made are open to the following objections. As regards the physiological aspect of the question, it cannot be denied that, if by ethics is meant *nothing but* the science of the objective relations and consequences of conduct, viewed from a purely descriptive and non-emotional point of view, the ethics of development, being a branch of natural science, rests on as solid a foundation as human physiology ; it may, indeed, be termed social physiology.¹ So long as we confine ourselves to tracing the con-

¹ "If by moral science," says Fouillée, "we mean the science of the necessary conditions of individual and social progress, we can understand how it was possible for Spinoza to write

sequences of murder as affecting the stability of the social group and the sense of security of its members, its effects upon industry, trade, and other pursuits of our activity, we are within the limits of descriptive science. But in this there is nothing sufficiently characteristic to make a separate science, a science of ethics; for in the above facts we have nothing but a combination of sociology, psychology, and political economy; and, if this is *all* we have to deal with, we are only disguising our surrender of ethics with the obstinate preservation of the name. Although I believe that this will finally be the only view taken of the matter—that the right-and-wrong ethics will finally disappear—I do not believe that we have reached that state, or that ethics is understood in this bare and indifferent physiological sense. For us ethics implies a special kind of feelings—moral feelings—and a special kind of judgments—moral judgments. Ethics, in its present form, deals with the relations of human conduct considered not only in their external reality as mere facts or data to be used and elaborated by reason, according to the pure laws of formal thought: it deals with those relations in so far as they affect our emotional nature—our conceptions and feelings of right and wrong. The part of science in modern ethics is to bring certain forms of conduct within the pale of the moral feelings; to show the connexion between the various forms of conduct and a recognised emotional standard. When the surgeon is asked to justify himself for amputating his patient's limb, he explains that the operation is necessary in order to save the patient's life: his science enables him to establish the morality of his conduct by showing the agreement of his action with a recognised moral judgment—that it is right to save a man's life.

Ethics, then, must take account of an emotional factor, which, being indispensable to all ethical judgments, has to be considered as a criterion; and this criterion, by its very nature, is purely subjective. To say that the amputation of a gangrened limb will save a man's life is not an ethical proposition; it is the statement of a matter of fact, not of a moral judgment. The moral judgment is passed when we say that we ought to save the man's life, or that it is our duty to save the man's life. Indeed, Dr. Carus himself, by his frequent references to the *ought*, the sense of duty, and other emotional conditions, as inseparable from morality, has virtually

a science of morality, an ethics." (A. Fouillée, *La liberté et le déterminisme*, 3me. éd., p. 52.) Here, however, the subjective element, apparently excluded, is virtually included in the term "progress." Unless progress is maintained to be a *moral* end, something that *ought to be* aimed at, the above description may apply to biology and to sociology, not to ethics.

surrendered his objective standard.¹ Although he has written an essay intended to prove that "the criterion of ethics is an objective reality,"² yet he speaks of ethics as having for its object to teach us our duty;³ and this is to recognise that the objective criterion, whatever it may be, must be ultimately subordinated to a subjective criterion; for, while the apprehension of a fact and its effects as simple relations of reality is a mental process guided by entirely objective conditions, the apprehension of the same fact *as a duty* is guided more specially by subjective, emotional conditions, which, whatever our theory as to the nature of the moral feelings, may be included under the two general terms, "moral approbation" and "moral disapprobation."

Dr. Carus may, perhaps, say that this is a misconstruction of his views; that, while he recognises the sense of duty, that sense of duty is governed by the actual facts of reality, and that it is to these facts that we must ultimately refer as being super-ordinate to all subjective states. He may say that once development has been ascertained by scientific research to be an unavoidable law, we will, as a matter of fact and of necessity, modify our sense of duty so as to make it correspond with what we necessarily must do. But to this the obvious answer is, that development is *not* a law of human nature individually considered: that some individuals neither wish to, nor do, "develop," and that their condition is as much a matter of law and of *must* as the condition of those who wish to, and do, "develop." The developmentalist must show why his line of action is "better" than theirs; he must show that his line of action is preferable or more desirable; and, in doing this, he cannot help appealing to those subjective states in which preference and desire consist. And if, with Dr. Carus, we reject the hedonistic theory, in which these states are reducible to pleasure and pain, we must accept the *ought* and the "moral feelings" of the intuitionist, although putting on them a scientific interpretation; accept them, be it understood, as *standards, guides, or criteria*; for nature presents to us two opposite roads, either of which we can, or believe we can, follow; and nothing can determine us to follow one or the other except either our desire for happiness or

¹See, e. g., *Fundamental Problems*, pp. 191, 202, where "the *ought* in our breasts," which is identified with Kant's categorical imperative, is declared to be "an undeniable fact" inseparable from "our moral consciousness"; and where it is affirmed that, without the moral *ought*, "human society could not even exist, nor could it ever have risen into existence."

²*The Monist* I, 4, to which I have already referred.

³*Ibid.*, p. 560. Compare *Ethical Problem*, p. 7, and *Religion of Science*, p. 28.

our sense of duty (assuming, with Dr. Carus, that the two are different from each other).

Furthermore, when we come to examine this psychological characteristic of moral judgments, we find it in irreconcilable conflict with the fundamental principles of monistic philosophy. We cannot rest satisfied with the assertion that the moral feelings are the concomitant emotional states of our general development, or that they are "social instincts" which have grown together with, and as necessary elements of, social progress, being but the consciousness, on the part of every individual, of his relations to, and dependence upon, the other individuals constituting the society of which he is but a subordinate part.¹ It becomes indispensable to see if those feelings be of such a nature as will agree with our scientific doctrines, and whether the sub-criterion of development consist with the supreme criterion—the cosmical laws. It must be remembered that, according to our view of these laws, a scoundrel is as necessarily a scoundrel as a horse is a horse; and such being the case, I may appeal to consciousness, and ask: When we are convinced that the scoundrel is as much a necessary outcome of cosmical laws as the tiger or the hyena, shall we, or can we, attach to our judgment of his conduct any feeling of *moral* disapprobation? If I may, in this matter, judge of the consciousness of others by my own consciousness, I think the general answer to such question is not uncertain. And the reason, in my opinion, is, that the moral feelings are *not* only the psychical correlates of our physical and social evolution: they have been derived, among other sources and experiences, from the conception of man as a *free* agent, and from the exclusion of man from the universal realm of nature; that is, they owe their origin to, and are based on, conceptions entirely antagonistic to the conceptions of monism. To say it is a man's duty to do a certain action, or that he ought to do a certain action, is to say that we can reasonably expect him to do that action; is to suppose that he can, irrespective of his special constitution, do the action; it is, in short, to suppose that it is *possible* for *every* man to act in a certain manner; and this is obviously a lack of recognition of that law of causation that asserts that a given man *can* act in only one way, whatever that way may be; although, in our uncertainty as to his real nature, it is not unreasonable to think that he *may* act as desired.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

¹ Such is the view taken by Dr. Carus. (See *Ethical Problem*, pp. 39, 56.)