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ARTICLE V.

A FOUNTAIN-HEAD OF ENGLISH ETHICS.

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[Continued from Vol. XLIII. p. 547.]

IF the object of these articles were purely historical, it would be necessary to give an adequate account, at least, of the moral teachings of Hobbes, and of Bishop Cumberland's arguments against his views. It is the object, instead, to show what ethical teachings began in England with Cumberland—to re-open an obstructed fountain-head long covered with overgrowth and rubbish, whose streams have still been flowing down in winding and hidden ways to our own times.[1] Partly historical, however, the treatment of the subject will still be, in showing the indebtedness of great names in ethics and of schools of ethical thinkers, to the forgotten and acute Bishop of Peterborough. The influence of his ideas did not end with those already named (p. 528, Vol. XLIII.), who came within three quarters of a century from his day.

Thus far only the more general positions of Cumberland have been considered: his psychology at large, so far as he had any; his overlooking the sensibilities proper and the will as distinguished from them—as was common down

[1] Since the previous article was published, two English works of late issue have come to hand, one of which, Wilson and Fowler's "Introductory Chapters," Oxford, 1886, p. 36, says that Cumberland's "criticism has not exercised any permanent influence on the history of moral theory;" while the other, Sidgwick's "Outlines of the History of Ethics," London, 1886, p. 170, says that "Cumberland is a thinker both original and comprehensive, who has furnished material to more than one better-known moralist; but his academic prolixity and discursiveness, his academic language, and a want of clearness of view, in spite of an elaborate display of exact and complete demonstration, have doomed his work to oblivion." One can furnish much material to "moral theory," then, and disappear from its "history"! But this is the fate of some writers on other prominent subjects.

to our own day;[9] his denying intuitive ideas under the name of "innate" and admitting them in another form; his missing the true original idea of right; his confounding conscience with a foretokening of evil consequences to follow some of our acts; his limiting obligation to the relation between acts and consequences under law; the supremacy of the idea of natural good in all his moralizing, with a seeming enthronement of this idea in the place of the intuitions, and especially of the idea of right; and his understanding of law as simply that which requires of a moral agent the doing of what will result in natural good. Ethics thus becomes the rule for obtaining happiness, and methods of ethics, methods for obtaining happiness, unless, by some happy inconsistency, something more than happiness is included within the meaning of "good." It has not been worth while to trace the relation of these views to those of later moralists, as it will be to trace those of other views of his yet to be set forth.

Bishop Cumberland was the first of English-speaking moralists to teach that virtue or rectitude consists in general or universal benevolence. For this, his name is worthy of perpetual remembrance among philosophers. Such is the connection of President Edwards's name with this theory that, if not expressly named as the author of it, he is virtually considered so, at least this side the sea. But Edwards was seventy-one years younger than Cumberland. He was born fifteen years before Cumberland's death at the age of eighty-six, and a quarter of a century after the *Disquisitio Philosophica* was first issued in Latin. In Edwards's twenty-fifth year it was re-issued in English. This proves only priority of ideas and theory, not that Edwards studied Cumberland's book, or ever saw it. Professor Park says, in McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia, that Edwards's Essay on Virtue was the subject of "life-long study," and that "the rudiments were written

[9] Our first American work on psychology proper, Upham's, was obliged to argue at length that there is a distinction between feeling and will. See edition of 1869, pp. 471—510.

in his boyhood." It was not published till after his death, in 1765, almost a hundred years after that of Cumberland (the folio Latin edition of which appeared in 1672, the quarto edition, abroad, in 1683).[3] President Porter says in Ueberweg (II: 446) that Edwards "accepts the definition of Hutcheson," but "qualifies it objectively." Hutcheson's "Inquiry Concerning the Original of our Ideas of Moral Good and Evil," came between Cumberland and Edwards, fifty-three years before the latter's work, forty years after the former's. We shall trace down the history of ethical theories from Cumberland through Shaftesbury and Hutcheson as we go on. Edwards does not name Shaftesbury, but names Hutcheson, who drew from Shaftesbury. And these two writers must have been familiar with Cumberland. The names of subscribers to Maxwell's translation show that it passed into the hands of the intelligent men, thinkers, and scholars of Great Britain (1726-7).

We draw our account of what Cumberland makes virtue to consist in from his first, second, third, fifth, sixth, and eighth chapters; and, as usual, his most elementary and analytical statements do not come earliest. In his Introduction, written last, and reviewing what he had done in the treatise, he says: "The nature of things which subsists, and is continually governed by its First Cause, does necessarily impress upon our minds some practical propositions (which must be always true and cannot without a contradiction be supposed otherwise), concerning the study of promoting the joint felicity of all rationals; and that the terms of these propositions do immediately and directly signify that the First Cause, in this original constitution of things, has annexed the greatest rewards and punishments to the observance and neglect of these truths. Whence it manifestly follows that they are laws:

[3] There was a London abridgment in 1692, 8vo.; an Amsterdam translation into French in 1744, 4to., and a Dublin translation into English in 1750, 4to. Of Maxwell's translation seven hundred and fifty-seven copies were subscribed for.

laws being nothing but practical propositions, with rewards and punishments annexed, promulged by competent authority." Here, again, we might expect moral intuitions to be meant,—those "innate principles" with which he affirms that "human nature is endowed," as, in one of his summaries of the operations of the mind, he distinguishes "intuitive judgment" from "discursive judgment which consists in deduction," arrangement of truth, &c.; but he so blends facts and inferences from experience everywhere with allegations of the nature or fitness of things that this expectation would often mislead us, though not always. So when we read that universal ideas and propositions are "both speculative *and practical*," and from them "are formed unchangeable, eternal rules of actions," we are to understand that he blends intuitionalism and empiricism indiscriminately in his thought. When he declares, again, that "the truth of moral philosophy is founded in the necessary connexion between the greatest happiness human powers can reach, and those acts of universal benevolence or of love towards God and men which branch out into all the moral virtues," we understand that this connexion is inferred to be necessary from experience, and not intuitively known. With this agrees the following: "The whole of moral philosophy, and of the laws of nature, is ultimately resolved into natural observations known by the experience of all men, or into conclusions of true natural philosophy."[4] As Cumberland

[4] "But natural philosophy, in the large sense (in which) I now use it, does not only comprehend all those appearances of natural bodies which we know from experiment, but also inquires into the nature of our souls from observations made upon their actions." The latest English critic of Cumberland, Mr. Sidgwick, (in his "Outlines of the History of Ethics," London, 1886, p. 166), distinguishing the methods of replying to Hobbes by the Cambridge Platonists and Cumberland respectively, observes: "The latter endeavors, while showing the actuality of the laws of nature, to systematize them by reducing them to a single principle." His treatise, "though written like More's in Latin, is yet in its ethical matter thoroughly modern," p. 170. One singular example of the confusion of intuitive and empirical truth in Cumberland's day is this remark of his: "Some propositions of *unchangeable*

continually had the Leviathan and the De Cive in mind, he shaped his metaphysics so as best to help his logic against Hobbes. From the predominance he has given to the idea of good in place of right, we are prepared to find him teaching that "all those propositions which deserve to be ranked among the general laws of nature" (discovered to be such in this mixed way,) "may be reduced to one universal one, from the just explication whereof all the particular laws may be both duly limited and illustrated. This general proposition may be thus expressed. The endeavor, to the utmost of our power, of promoting the common good of the whole system of rational agents, conduces, as far as in us lies, to the good of every part, in which our own happiness, as that of a part, is contained. But contrary actions produce contrary effects, and consequently our own misery, among that of others." This, as we have said, is so far simply a method or regimen of happiness. How does Cumberland make the transition here to morality, or attach moral quality to the promotion of the common good? Thus: "Those human actions which, from their own natural force or efficacy, are apt to promote the common good, are called *naturally good:* such actions as take the shortest way to this effect are *naturally right*,—because of their resemblance to a right line, which is the shortest that can be drawn between any two given points. Nevertheless, the same actions afterward, (when they are compared with the law, whether natural or positive, which is the rule of morality, and are found conformable to it,) are called *morally good*, as also *right*,—that is, agreeing with the rule: but the rule itself" (i. e., the moral law) "is called right as pointing out the shortest way to the end." This, though it seems at first, to allow right a separate meaning from common good, brings us back to that of means of good under law, the natural means of the best natural

truth can be formed concerning the value of *contingent* advantages." Another is this: "Propositions of eternal truth may be formed concerning the effects of external human actions."

end. Yet it was an advance on the ethics of his time, which neither undertook to reduce all moral principles to one, nor even to show why moral quality attaches to the promotion of the common good.[5]

Clearer and more explicit are the following statements of Cumberland:—"The greatest benevolence of every rational agent towards all, forms the happiest state of every, and of all the benevolent, as far as is in their power; and therefore the common good is the supreme law." "Seeing only voluntary actions can be governed by human reason, and those only which regard intelligent beings are considered in morality; and seeing the object of the will is good; it is evident that a more general notion of such actions cannot be formed than what falls under the name of benevolence, because it comprehends the desire of all kinds of good things, and consequently the avoiding all kinds of evils." He adds here that acts of understanding and of the body are included in his meaning. "I nowhere understand by the name of benevolence that languid and lifeless volition [of men] which effects nothing of what they are said to desire; but that only by force whereof we execute, as speedily and thoroughly as we are able, what we heartily desire." That is, he included actual beneficence in benevolence, as is often done still. As to the element of will in it [in the confused sense of will then prevalent, and long afterward], he affirms that "the inward and natural perfection of the will consists in willing what the wisest understanding (most perfectly comprehending the most and the best of things) shall have most truly determined to be most highly beneficial to the most and best of beings..... And, consequently, since it is the business of both faculties to determine our actions, when they are disposed as above (i. e., are right), they must determine us to do as

[5] "To this question Cudworth gives no explicit reply, and the answer of More is hardly clear," Sidgwick, "Outlines," p. 169. "More is too much under the influence of Platonic Aristotelian thought to give a distinct place to benevolence, except under the old form of liberality." Ib., p. 170.

much good, and to as many, as we can."[6] "No action of the will is enjoined or recommended by the law of nature and, consequently, is morally good, which does not in its own nature contribute somewhat to the happiness of men." "Things morally good are only voluntary actions conformable to some law." "The happiness of the will consists in the most extensive benevolence." "It is certain from the nature of the will and of voluntary action, that the effecting the greatest good is the greatest end prescribed by reason." "I judge it requisite to the natural perfection of the human will, that it follow the most perfect reason." "Those acts of will which are enjoined by the same law may all be comprehended in the general name of the most extensive and operative benevolence." "The greatest benevolence does consist in a constant volition of the greatest good towards all." Our author says he chose the word benevolence rather than love, "because, in virtue of its composition, it implies an act of our will, joined with its most general object, and is never taken in a bad sense, as the word love sometimes is."[7]

Yet he several times employs love as a synonyme for benevolence, as is so widely done yet. "The laws of nature are all summed up in benevolence, or universal love." "I have thought fit to deliver some evident principles concerning . . . . . universal love: because such benevolence is possible," &c. "Universal love endeavors to do things according to all the parts of the system of

[6] This can only be secured by "our free actions." He says: "No cause can be assigned to human actions of mutual assistance besides the consent of the will."

[7] He once seems to contemplate love analytically, as distinct from beneficence and benevolence. "Since man can pay nothing more than love, AND *the consequences thereof*," (among which he must have reckoned the desiring, willing, and doing of good to others) "toward all rational beings, (the head whereof is God), it is evident by the light of nature that he owes nothing more, because we cannot be obliged to impossibilities; and, therefore, that nothing more than love is required of him." "Universal benevolence" is "enjoined by the law of nature." But "love" is not its "consequences."

rational beings." He regards it as governing and regulating all our powers,—"acts of the understanding, or will and affections, or acts of the body determined by the will." He specifies prudence, (making the intellectual faculties subservient thereto), constancy, moderation, equity, love, desire, joy, hatred, fear, grief, innocence, gentleness, repentance, restitution, self-denial, candor, fidelity, gratitude, deference, observing that "there is no necessity that we should assign a distinct virtue to the government of every affection, since the same care of attaining an end will cause us" to exercise and practice them all. "The pursuit of the common good comprehends all virtues." He lowers the meaning of benevolence once to the negative signification of peace, but it is in an illustration, drawn from the animal creation, of the point that the opposite disposition, as the characteristic of all the active members of a system, would result in the destruction of the system. This by way of refuting the doctrine of Hobbes that the character of all rational beings is selfishness, and their natural condition, war.

It is hardly necessary to cite passages from Edwards's "Dissertation on the Nature of True Virtue" to establish the coincidence of his views with those now exhibited, and published by the bishop of Peterborough nearly a hundred years before the publication of his. One defining paragraph will suffice. "True virtue," says our great philosopher, "most essentially consists in benevolence to Being in general. Or, to speak more accurately, it is that consent, propensity, and union of heart to Being in general that is immediately exercised in a general good will." ("Works," II: 262.) In the difference of phraseology here, no one will discover any difference of idea. Cumberland's terms are, "the common good," "benevolence or universal love to all rationals." The confining of morality, as he does, to actions which regard intelligent beings makes his object no less extensive, in fact, than Edwards's, for Edwards did the same (p. 263) and Cumberland remarks,

that "he who seeks the chief good of rational agents, seeks the good and order of the whole world." Again, "There cannot be a greater object of beatific actions" (or actions promotive of happiness), "than what comprises *all* things and their mutual relation to one another, nor can that object be considered under a notion more general, perfect, and pleasant, than that [by which it is] represented in these words, THE COMMON GOOD" (capitals in Cumberland). "For, beside that *good is as extensive as being*, and so takes in all individuals, especially rational; there is this further consideration that it does not only respect the internal and essential perfections of things, but all those ornaments which can afterward accrue to them, whether considered singly in themselves, or in whatever relation; and, beside, beings are considered only as they are capable of doing or receiving good, when voluntary actions relating to them are directed by laws; hence it is, that the infinite extent of such an object calls forth, exercises, and suffices the whole force of the most capacious faculties, and delights the same with perpetual pleasure." This reminds us of Edwards's praises of the beauty of true virtue. "Beauty," he observes, "does not consist in discord and dissent, but in consent and agreement. And if every intelligent being is some way related to Being in general, and is a part of the universal system of existence, and so stands in connection with the whole; what can its general and true beauty be, but its union and consent with the great whole?" At times Edwards and Cumberland use the same phrase; viz., "the public good." Cumberland sometimes substitutes for it—"the common good of the universe," or that of "the whole aggregate of mankind," "the whole system of intelligent agents." Once he uses the Edwardean phrase, combined with his own usual term: "It is easy for every man to form an idea of rational *being in general.*" Of brutes he affirms that "they cannot regard the common good, and are therefore incapable of virtue," and of

men, "the common good is the only end in the pursuit whereof all rational beings can agree among themselves." And again (with an eye to Hobbes's unworthy and mischievous scheme of social life): "There is but one way of reconciling all rational beings to all and every one so far as the frame of the universe permits; and that reason suggests from the knowledge of a sum or aggregate of particulars, a knowledge peculiar to rational beings, namely, that all should agree in and pursue one end, the common good."[8] This is Edwardeanism before Edwards's day. The repetitions of it in Cumberland's long and elaborate chapters are well-nigh innumerable.[9]

Three times in his "Dissertation" Edwards names Hutcheson, once referring to his "Inquiry Concerning Beauty," twice to his "Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Moral Good." Pres. Porter says that, in writing, "he had Hutcheson and Hume before him. He accepts the definition of Hutcheson, etc., that virtue subjectively viewed is love or benevolence." When Edwards was born, in 1703, Hutcheson was nine years old: he published his moral theory half a century after Cumberland's came out in Latin, but a year or more before it appeared

[8] "The two salient features of Hobbes's morality, impressed on it by the reaction of a timorous spirit and calculating intellect against the anarchy and enthusiasm of his time, were its arbitrariness and its selfishness. To show that the rule of right was no wilful prescription of an irresistible power, whether human or divine, and that it had its source in quite another disposition of man towards man than Hobbes had alone seen evidence of in human nature, was the task taken in hand by his more serious opponents," (Cudworth, More, and Cumberland.) "Hobbes," by George Croom Robertson, p. 215. "Unlike Hobbes, he [Cumberland] finds in man's physical and mental constitution clear evidence of sociability as the most fundamental and far-reaching of human impulses; and this leads him to propound 'the common good of all'—not self-satisfaction or self-preservation—as the proper end of conduct (under theological sanctions) for a rational creature." Ibid., p. 219.

[9] They are so numerous that he suggests: "It ought not to seem strange to any that I have said, that no right whatsoever, no virtue, can be fully explained without respect had to the state of all rational beings, or of the whole intellectual system."

in English. He declared that "all moral goodness is presumed to flow from love." "The general principle of Love is the foundation of all apparent moral excellence." Every moral action flows "from some affection towards rational agents," "love to rational agents," which is Cumberland's formula. "All actions supposed to flow from such affections appear morally good if they are benevolent toward persons." The "true spring" of virtue is "some determination of our nature to study the good of others, or some instinct,—antecedent to all reason[ing] from interest,—which influences us to the love of others."[10]

Hutcheson professes in his first title page to support and expound the views of Shaftesbury, of whom he says in his preface, that he "will be esteemed while any reflection remains among men." The third Earl of this name, so honored in our generation, "is the first moralist," says Mr. Sidgwick, ("Outlines," &c., p. 187) "who distinctly takes psychological experience as the basis of ethics. His suggestions were developed by Hutcheson into one of the most elaborate systems of moral philosophy which we possess," (posthumously published 1755,) "with several new psychological distinctions," (p. 197.) "The very principle of virtue," says Shaftesbury, "is natural and kind affection." He does not always mean love by affection. He does not always identify it with benevolence, as when he says that "by affection merely, a creature is esteemed good or ill, natural or unnatural." But in a

[10] "Other points of agreement between Edwards and Hutcheson are, e. g., in respect to "moral sense." Hutcheson says: "Mankind agree in the universal foundation of this moral sense, viz., Benevolence." Another point is to be seen in the following from Hutcheson; viz., "Love toward rational agents is subdivided into love of complacence or esteem, and love of benevolence." Here benevolence is not synonymous with love, but specific, while love is generic. "And hatred is subdivided into hatred of displicence or contempt, and hatred of malice." Edwards did not adopt this last, I believe. But he followed Hutcheson in the former part of his analysis. He seems even to distinguish benevolence, as "causing the heart to incline to the well-being" of another, from love properly so called. The former "disposes it to desire and take pleasure in [his] happiness."

general way he affirms that "there can no goodness arise in [a man] till his temper be so far changed, that he comes in earnest to be led by some immediate affection—directly, and not accidentally,—to good and against ill." "If at the bottom selfish affection moves him, he is in himself still vicious." "The natural affections are founded in love, complacency, good will, and sympathy with the kind or species." Fifteen years before Hutcheson's Inquiry, Shaftesbury's was issued: eighteen years before the latter's, Cumberland's views were offered to philosophers. Shaftesbury did not so rigorously as Cumberland and Edwards exclude everything but benevolence from virtue, but, lacking in a serious ethical spirit as he was, he went so far as the following statements: "If affection be equal, sound, and good, and the subject of affection such as may with advantage to society be prosecuted; this must necessarily constitute equity and right." He identifies this with "a concern for the good of all and an affection of benevolence towards the whole." "To deserve the name of good and virtuous, a creature must have all his inclinations and affections, his dispositions of mind and temper, suitable and agreeing with the good of his kind, or of that system of which he constitutes a part." "To be wanting in those principal affections which respect the good of the whole constitution, must be a vice," "is in itself an inconsistency, and implies an absolute contradiction." Real virtue is "an affection of benevolence and love towards the whole." This is Cumberland over again —the astute prelate drawn from academic shades and introduced into polite society. The moral sense of Edwards and Hutcheson appeared first in the works of Shaftesbury, though, as Sidgwick very justly says, ("Outlines," 185) it "is not exactly necessary to his main argument; it is the crown rather than the key-stone of his ethical structure." The key-stone indeed, is the social sentiment, which he does not neglect to assert against Hobbes.[11] His view of the moral

[11] "With Shaftesbury ethical thought in England passes definitely into the phase of seeking the ground of right conduct in a relation of harmony

sense agrees with the doctrine of Cumberland, and not with that of the Cambridge Platonists or that of Bishop Butler. It is "always in harmony with rational judgment as to what is or is not conducive to the good of the human species, though it does not necessarily involve the explicit formation of such a judgment," (Sidgwick, 186,) as in Edwards. But our great divine himself hardly rose higher than the master of his English leader, who declared that "to love the public, to study the universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine." No such flight, however, above the banter and persiflage of his criticism of Hobbes would the English Earl have ever taken, but for the broad and massive platform of eudæmonism erected for him by his predecessor, the English prelate, now recalled from forgetfulness.[19]

Cumberland labored hard, (as one leading the way in the overthrow of so dangerous a system as that of Hobbes, and preparing for others, must needs do,) to show the consistency with general benevolence of that regard for private and personal good which Hobbes represented as selfish and hostile in its nature. Again and again he returns to the point in ever varying aspects and relations. He never tires of setting forth the ways in which the two dispositions coincide, and little has been added since to his ample exposition of the subject. One of his summaries of his whole teaching is this: "There being given a knowledge of the necessary dependence of the happiness of particular persons upon the pursuit of the com-

among the mental impulses natural to man; and these being found by him to include 'social affection' to such a degree that their play gives the very meaning of 'virtue' or 'goodness,' his contention with Hobbes becomes narrowed to the most definite issue." Robertson, "Hobbes," p. 220.

[19] The views of moral beauty held by Edwards were taught by Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. Dr. McCosh, in his interesting and instructive account of "The Scottish Philosophy," gives Hutcheson the credit of being its true founder.

mon good; it appears evidently that each particular person is obliged [obligated] to pursue that good." Again: "He who, so far as it is in his power, best consults the good of the whole body of rational agents, does, likewise, best consult the good of those parts of that whole which are essential thereto, and receive all from its influence; and, consequently, of himself in particular." "The common good is that one end which is consistent with, and most promotes, the greatest possible happiness of every particular person." Therefore: "Reason will not suffer that the greatest private good should be proposed as the ultimate end." The connexion is both immediate and mediate "between all the actions of every particular person directed (as far as may be) through the whole course of life to promote the public good and the greatest possible happiness and perfection of each." "Does not the nature of things, and consequently God, its Author, powerfully persuade and command an endeavor to promote the common good of mankind, by every indication they give that it is both a possible effect, and the greatest, and also more closely united with the private happiness of every one, than any other effect which we can foresee as possible; and by making us in some degree to promote it necessarily, even when we give way to our natural affections and oppose it to the utmost of our power?" And "this effect is both in its own nature the most noble, and most closely united with the preservation and possible happiness of every individual." "Since there is naturally in man so large and noble a faculty, which can both comprehend and pursue that vast good, the greatest united happiness of all rational agents, the reader will easily judge whether the greatest happiness of every particular person does not consist in the perpetual vigorous exercise of that faculty." "If we hazard, nay, lose our lives for the public good, we part with less for its sake than we had already received from it." "The measure of good things every one is entitled to, and may rationally seek, is

no otherwise to be determined and settled than by that proportion he bears to the system of all rational beings or to the whole natural kingdom of God." "The first and principal regard [of the mind] is to the whole: the parts are its second care. Nor do they lose by this method: they all reap their proportionable share of happiness from the happiness of the whole. For the whole is nothing else but the parts considered jointly and in their proper order and relation to each other; and, consequently, the good of the whole is nothing else but good communicated to all the parts, according to their natural mutual relation. . . . . He, I confess, increases the common stock of happiness who benefits even one without hurting any other; but this cannot be deliberately done without taking care that the rights of others be not violated; nor will this be taken care of, except we have universal benevolence, which regards the rights of God, of other nations, our native country, and family, in all which consists the common good of the whole: this therefore, must be taken care of, if we would innocently profit one." "Hence we may understand the reason," (having distinguished public and personal good as ends united in thought), "why the minds of men do not always very explicitly view and intend the common good, even when they act according to the rule of virtue. 'Tis this: the *immediate* object of their pursuit is some part thereof, but which they otherwise very well know to be perfectly consistent with its other parts, and necessary to the composition of this whole. But in every act of virtue, there are many things which prove that the care of the common good is never laid aside. For, in these cases, care is always taken that every one confine himself within the bounds of his own rights, and invade not those of another. But rights cannot be considered as so limited, without some respect to the rights of others, and, consequently, to the good of all others, on account of which the properties of all are limited. Hence is easily inferred that their principal end is

the common good of all rational agents; for this is not really distinguished from the good of those parts, considered in that order" (God first, &c.,) "and mutually united by those bonds of society." This is an original analysis.

Hutcheson discussed the same question afterward in his "Inquiry,"[18] and reached similar conclusions. "Our reason," he affirms, "can discover certain bounds, within which we may not only act from self-love, consistently with the good of the whole, but every mortal's acting thus within these bounds, for his own good, is absolutely necessary for the good of the whole. Hence, he who pursues his own private good, with an intention also to concur with that constitution which tends to the good of the whole; and much more he who promotes his own good with a direct view of making himself more capable of serving God, or doing good to mankind, acts not only innocently, but also honorably and virtuously; for in both these cases a motive of benevolence concurs with self-love to excite him to the action." "Here we must also observe that every moral agent justly considers himself as a part of this rational system which may be useful to the whole: so that he may be in part an object of his own benevolence. Nay, further, he may see that the preservation of the system requires every one to be innocently solicitous about himself." Shaftesbury had followed Cumberland lightly along this path, before. In his "Inquiry" (Sixth Edition, Author's, 1737) he shows that a lack of "the affections towards private good" is a lack of virtue, since they are essential to "the good of the system:" it is to "be wanting in those principal affections which respect the good of the whole constitution." Up to a certain point, Shaftesbury's philosophy, which is avowedly the mere "study of happiness," recognizes what he calls "the self-affections" as promoting private and public good alike, though, as Mr. Sidgwick notices, ("Out-

[18] I quote from the Second Edition, London, 1726, dedicated to Lord Cartaret, 1725, by Hutcheson, (the first was anonymous), probably the edition Edwards used.

lines," p. 184,) "he does not attempt to prove [this] by any close or cogent reasoning," or, indeed, by reasoning at all. And though Edwards hardly went so far as this, and was very vigilant in warring against private affections not subordinate to and dependent on, but detached from general benevolence, as contrary thereto and to virtue, he explains himself thus: "When I say [that] true virtue consists in love to being in general, I shall not be likely to be understood that no one act of the mind, or exercise of love is of the nature of true virtue, but what has being in general, or the great system of universal existence, for its direct and immediate object; so that no exercise of love or kind affection to any particular being, that is but a small part of the whole, has anything of the nature of true virtue; but that the nature of true virtue consists in *a disposition to* benevolence towards being in general."[14] From such a disposition may arise exercises of love to particular beings, as objects are presented and occasions arise. No wonder that he who is of a generally benevolent disposition," (i. e., disposition to benevolence?) "should be more disposed than another to have his heart moved with benevolent affection to particular persons whom he is acquainted and conversant with, and from whom arise the greatest and most frequent occasions for exciting his benevolent temper. But my meaning is, that no affections towards particular persons or beings are of the nature of true virtue but such as arise from a generally benevolent temper, or from that habit or frame of mind wherein consists a disposition to love being in general." Here Edwards seems to hold a position the reverse of those of Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, and Cumberland as to the rise of private and public affections respectively. His conscientious and acute wariness as to acts

[14] In this sentence, as in one before quoted, Edwards seems to distinguish love from benevolence, if by "a disposition to" he means love. But there are few more perplexing or slippery words in moral philosophy than "disposition." Specific benevolence arising from general is one thing, general benevolence arising from a disposition [of love?] is another.

of apparent benevolence which are not real, so largely treated in his "Dissertation," doubtless led to this, and perhaps also that high and intense theistic habit of mind (compare Corollary, p. 271,) which is lacking in the lay philosophers of England whom he followed, and those theological relations of ethics always present to him, from which the devout prelate of Peterborough in refuting Hobbes debarred himself. In suggesting this I do not overlook the fact that the two former avow theism and recognize a divine moral government, or that Cumberland elaborately shows that the consequences of benevolence establish the law of nature as the law of God. Even Shaftesbury says that "the perfection and height of virtue must be owing to the belief of a God," and that "in some respects there can be nothing more fatal to virtue than the weak and uncertain belief of a future reward and punishment."

It was the religious element alike in Cumberland and Edwards which made them carefully consider an objection to their theory of ethics which the two intermediate lay philosophers did not touch. Dr. McCosh says of Hutcheson[15] ("The Scottish Philosophy," p. 85), that "he represents virtue as consisting in benevolence, by which he means good will," and that "this view cannot be made to embrace love to God, except by stretching it so wide as to make it another doctrine altogether; for surely it is not as a mere exercise of good will that to love God can be described as excellent." Cumberland felt the force

[15] So Prof. S. S. Laurie ("Notes on Certain British Theories of Morals," p. 41): "When this doctrine has to be applied to the worship and fear of God, it breaks down, in our opinion, by omitting from view the morality which resides in the mere act of submission to a recognized superior. The effort made to make this a case of love contradicts history and the facts of human nature." Either love and benevolence are identical in meaning, or they are distinct. 'According as one takes the former or the latter position he will agree with Hutcheson and Edwards or with the objectors. It is inevitable that Cumberland should say such things as this: "The *common good of God and man* is the greatest and most excellent object we can employ ourselves about."

of this objection. In his introduction, he lays down the proposition that "to promote the common good of the whole system of rationals" "includes our love of God and of all mankind, as the parts of this system," "benevolence toward both." But he apologizes for these expressions and the phrase "to bear a good will towards God"—for these "are not properly and in the same sense said of God in which we use them when we speak of men." He therefore substitutes love, when virtue is said to be exercised toward God; it is regarded as "agreeable" or "acceptable" to him in place of beneficial or benevolent; though in his definitions of virtue, love is rejected and benevolence put in its place. Edwards, who had doubtless pondered the objection more deeply, met it more resolutely. "If it be objected," he says, (II. 267), "that our fellow creatures, and not God, seem to be the most proper object of our benevolence, inasmuch as our goodness extendeth not to him, and we cannot be profitable to him, I answer: 1. A benevolent propensity of heart is exercised not only in seeking to promote the happiness of the being, towards whom it is exercised, but *also in rejoicing* in his happiness. 2. Though we are not able to give anything to God, which we have of our own, independently; yet we may be instruments of promoting his glory, in which he takes a true and proper delight. Who will deny that any love or benevolent affection [whatever] is due to God and proper to be exercised towards him?" Edwards here assumed that these two are identical, and overlooks the fact that this is a question of propriety of language, and that those who object to the phrase "benevolence toward God," insist upon love as supremely due to him. With another change of language, he adds: "If true virtue consists partly in a *respect* to God, then doubtless it consists chiefly in it": he is "every way the supreme object of our benevolence." He almost *insists* on the identity in meaning of the two terms in this inference.

As to the relation of Cumberland to modern utilitarianism, it may be said that the influence of his thinking may be seen in so late a writer as John Stuart Mill. Streams from this old and half-clogged fountain-head are vigorously flowing yet. Dr. Wm. Lindsay Alexander says in the eighth edition of the Encyclopædia Brittanica ("Moral Philosophy," Vol. XVI., p. 553,)[16] of "the theory which refers the rectitude of actions to their tendency to promote the general good," that "the first formally to develop it was Bishop Cumberland in his elaborate treatise," &c.; that "it was subsequently embraced by Puffendorf, Howe, Paley, and Bentham;" that "in substance it is the theory which lies at the basis of the ethical system of Edwards, and has been avowed and defended by one of Edwards's ablest followers, Dr. Timothy Dwight." But Dr. Whewell says ("Hist. Mor. Phil.," 109) that Cumberland "clearly divided this principle of benevolence from the regard to our own good," and Mr. Bancroft says in the New American Cyclopædia (Vol. VII., p. 19): "The doctrine of Edwards is the intensest protest against the theory of self-love." Some discrimination then must be used in deciding whether they both held that a virtuous man promotes the common good, the good of being, for the sake of his own, or not.

1. Such statements of fact as this, that "our own happiness depends upon the pursuit of the common good of all rational beings," which Whewell cites in Cumberland's favor, are indecisive. One may see that the former so depends, and be led therefore to seek the common good in pure selfishness, for the sake of his own. Edwards, with a religious purpose in view, abundantly shows this. Nor do the extended arguments of Cumberland *versus* Hobbes in respect to the naturalness of kind feelings decide anything, unless, indeed, moral qualities are promptings of instinct. Among actions not governed by any

[16] This essay is displaced in the *ninth* edition, 1878, by that of Professor Sidgwick (Vol. VIII., pp. 506–537), now published, enlarged, as "Outlines," &c.

dictate of reason, he names "the desire of good in general." He commends the man who, "by love and obedience to God, by innocence and benevolence towards all men, seeks his own happiness, in consistence with that of others and in dependence upon their concurrence." True, his extended arguments to show that the highest individual happiness can only be secured by general benevolence, and that, if one seeks it in any other way, he will fail, sound utilitarian in the selfish sense. But his answer to the dictum of Hobbes: "Whatever is done voluntarily is done for some good to him who wills it," simply maintains that the public good, as well as his own, may be an end to man. "It is necessary in order to our own happiness, that we should co-operate with others to promote the common happiness." Nor is it decisive of the point before us that the virtuousness of benevolence is made to consist in conformity to natural law, this law being established by the effects of benevolence and its opposite on the good of all and of each. Closer to the point is the proposition that "naturally, *by a hope of probable good*, we are moved to cultivate the common interest: which hope, nevertheless, is of itself neither the only nor the principal cause impelling, but as it conspires with other rewards." Still closer is the following: "A *prudent* benevolence toward all rationals, fulfills the most general law of nature;" and the following: "From the love of our own happiness, under the conduct of prudence, all who are truly rational attain such a knowledge of natural things and [of] God himself, and such affections towards his honor and the common happiness of all, as either prevent or root out all perverse self-love" (i. e., all self-love that will not seek one's own good in promoting the happiness of all). "We are excited by the love of our happiness to consider those causes upon which it depends. . . . . Such are God and all other men. We observe in them a perfection and goodness, or an aptness to preserve and improve the state of the universe, evidently like to what

rendered us amiable to ourselves, but in God we perceive it infinitely greater." In showing that no benevolent person will make his own happiness supreme in rank, he says: "Perhaps the first inducement to a more strict inquiry into the nature of all things, was a regard to our own happiness." These are the baldest utterances of our author. It is a utilitarian who says of him that "so far he may be fairly called the precursor of the later utilitarianism." I have never met with such utterances in Edwards.

2. It must be added in justice to our theme that it is not always happiness which he makes the object of human action, though he names this far oftener than any other good. The preservation of the individual and of society he often names. His general conception of good is not that of happiness. Nor does he say with Dr. Dwight, that "good is of two kinds only: happiness and the causes or means of happiness" ("Theology," III., 156); or that "happiness is the ultimate good," all else being means thereto; or that "virtue is the only original cause of happiness." Here I think he would deny. He does say that "anything is truly judged good because its effect or force truly *helps nature*." He manifestly holds that happiness helps nature best, for he calls it "the greatest good of every particular person." But he teaches, on the contrary, that "virtue is therefore good (and in truth it is the greatest good) because it determines human actions to such effects as are principal parts of the public natural good, and consequently tends to improve in all men the natural perfections, both of mind and body." By good, he means, "with respect to created beings, that which preserves, or renders them more perfect or happy: with respect to the divine nature, as being completely happy in himself, what is grateful or pleasing to him." And happiness is to "have the mind endowed with the natural perfections of understanding and will, and body sound," rather than any enjoyment or any measure of it. "To seek one's own good adds to perfection of nature." Among

the effects of the "prudent benevolence" which he commends, are mentioned "a fuller knowledge of God and men, the conformity of our nature with the divine, the dominion of reason over passion" and will, "the internal perfections of the mind, all the moral virtues, all the benefits of natural religion, a life equal to itself throughout, by means whereof a wise man is always consistent with himself, tranquillity of mind, and (what arises from a grateful consciousness of all these) a joy which is both uninterrupted and, because its rise is in ourselves, affects and satisfies the most inward recesses of the soul." It secures "the most flourishing state of the essential powers." The criticism has been made here that this inclusion of perfection within the meaning of good involves moral perfection and so falls into a logical circle.[17] It is likewise inconsistent with utilitarianism, which allows no moral perfection or moral good, even, of any degree to be sought, save as the seeking of the natural good of the individual or the whole furnishes it. Perhaps Edwards's love to being in general, in the sense of good will or willing the good of being in general, is open to the same criticism.[18] The term "well-being" does not seem in common usage to be merely equivalent to happiness. It was not with Cumberland and Butler.

3. Cumberland has some views of moral virtue and of justice that bear on his relation to utilitarianism. He seems to classify natural virtue, (as arising from natural good will,) and moral virtue separately, but on what

[17] Sidgwick, "Outlines," 171. Cf. his discussion ("Method of Ethics," Bk. 1, Ch. 9, Bk. 2, Ch. 14, Supplement, pp. 103–111), of the excellence of conscious life as a distinct good from happiness. Hutcheson also recognized personal perfection as a good. But that one who expects utilitarianism to be the last form of intuitionalism (as Sidgwick does) should even discuss such a question, is noteworthy.

[18] Bancroft says ("New. Am. Cycl.," p. 19): "The theory of Edwards is directly at war with the system of self-love as the foundation of moral order, or a respect to happiness, as the only good." Others accept the first part of this statement, (but not the last), understanding Edwards to mean more than happiness by the good of being.

principle of classification can hardly be discovered. Temperance for the sake of the body, he distinguishes from temperance for the sake of God and all men, proceeding from a general and habitual intention to do what is acceptable to the one and useful to the other. Speech ordered for the common good and the honor of God, gravity, generosity, moderation, compassion, fidelity, veracity, modesty, truth in compacts, all exercised for the same great ends, are moral virtues, by distinction. Moreover, after his long and diversified exhibition of benevolence as the whole of virtue, he announces universal justice as "the summary of all the moral virtues," and gives us a new definition of ethics as limiting "the actions of particular persons, regarding their own private advantages, by the respect due to the good of all rational beings; viz., the honor of God and the *rights* of all other men."[19] This distinction seems to be indicated also by such expressions as "natural and moral obligation," (both "flowing from the law of nature"), "the intellectual and moral virtues," "the moral virtues in particular," "the special laws of the moral virtues," &c. God is said "to act towards other rational agents according to the rules of the moral virtues," rather than from instinctive kind affections. "The special laws of the moral virtues may be deduced from the law of universal justice." "The precepts of justice and of every virtue that can be mutually exercised among men, are means necessary to every man's happiness, and therefore oblige [obligate] every man." "Universal justice is a moral perfection to which we are therefore obliged." It is "virtue itself conspicuous among men." "The law of nature which I have now laid down" (that of benevolence) "is the very same that enjoins universal justice." "The public good is best obtained by unerring justice." The essence of moral virtues "consists in the inclination of the will to obey the

[19] "Honor of God" seems to be equivalent here to "the good of God" elsewhere. "His honor is to be regarded by men in the consideration of the common good."

laws deduced from the general law of justice." These passages pretty clearly imply that in his thought benevolence and justice run parallel and are coincident as to result, but they do not go so far as to say, with New England metaphysicians, that the two are one, or that one is a species of the other. Prudence is also asserted to coincide with both of them. "A prudent care of our own happiness cannot be separated from the pursuit of the happiness of others," so that reason determines "that the strictest justice is to be cultivated." "The dictates of prudence, directing human actions everywhere to the greatest possible good of all natural agents, are the very laws of nature."[20] "All the virtues spring from prudence, (which directs to the best end by proper means,) as from their fountain: and they are all integral parts of universal justice." Elsewhere he argues that the discovery of what is good to ourselves will lead to our securing the same for others. On the whole it must be decided that here, as on other points, Cumberland had not worked out his views with the clearness of those who learned much from him.

It only remains to indicate the relation between the views of Butler and those of Cumberland, and our task is done. Butler was about the age of Hutcheson, and his personal friend, twenty-two years younger than Shaftesbury, and fifty-nine years younger than Cumberland. All three of these published their views before Butler's Sermons came out: Cumberland half a century earlier, in Latin, and, in English, about the same time with Butler. Butler's ideas of right remind one of Cudworth, More, and Dr. Samuel Clarke rather than of Cumberland, and his great doctrine of the supremacy of conscience was all his own. But there are touches of analogy here and there in the "Disquisitio Philosophica," and positions as to "right reason," that suggest the younger bishop to a reader. Still more does the large scheme of the social and moral

[20] For prudence as specific benevolence, see *Ante*, pp. 111, 113.

universe as a whole which runs through the "Disquisitio" make one think that similar meditations once occupied the country clergyman who was called to the see of Peterborough, with those that made useful to the world the seclusion of the London preacher who was elevated to the bishopric of Durham. They held similar convictions as to the place self-love may hold in moral conduct and character, though Butler does not quite recognize prudence as a virtue. "When we limit our love of ourselves," says Cumberland, "by the bounds prescribed by universal justice, this cannot but be just and laudable." This sounds like Butler's assertion of relative duty to ourselves. "If by a sense of interest is meant a practical regard to what is upon the whole our happiness, this is not only coincident with the principle of virtue or moral rectitude, but is a part of the idea itself."[31] Duty to a part is part of duty to the whole. Cumberland's elaborate reasonings to show that men naturally reward virtue, recall the terse and dense exhibitions of the fact by Butler. How much alike were the methods of these two great thinkers in discovering evidences of a moral government, as well as a natural one, administered by God!—as much so as their respective habits of uniting observation and abstract reasoning. "I have endeavored to prove the law of nature," says the elder of the two: "only from that reason we find ourselves at present possessed of, and from experience." "God's constantly and naturally rewarding any actions is the plainest and most effectual method that can be, by natural signs, of persuading to such actions, and authentically declaring that he has commanded them." This is the very tone of Butler.[32] "They look upon natural conse-

[31] "Analogy," Pt. I., Ch. 5. Separating from utilitarianism, even in its highest form, as Butler did, this recognition of the subordinate or special place of utility in a moral system is very noteworthy. It is in a note often overlooked, and shows the large, healthy, equitable working of Butler's mind.

[32] For this old method of deducing "laws of conduct," but agnostically as to God, see Spencer's "Data of Ethics," 57: "I conceive it to be the busi-

quences of actions as "natural rewards and punishments" in the same way. There are "arguments in the sanctions of law," says Cumberland, "as effects of God's will," "which, by means of the inward constitution of all men, and of this whole system of the world, framed by the appointment of the Divine Will, are the natural and ordinary consequences of human actions." The same shrewd judgment appears in each, the same fearless style of thinking through a topic. They held alike that "the detriment of a single person is, in certain cases, the means necessary to the common good, and his safety is neither a part nor a cause of it;" else they could not have believed in Divine punishments, or an upright government in favor of virtue, whatever virtue is conceived to be. But the author of the "Analogy" includes far more in virtue than the older churchman. He recognizes co-ordinate species. "Some men seem to think," ("Analogy," I. 3), "the only character of the Author of nature to be that of simple, absolute benevolence. . . . . Now, surely this ought not to be asserted unless it can be proved." In his private memoranda he calls "the real benevolence of men, the love of power to be exercised in the way of doing good." (Blackwood's "Philosophical Classics," II. 59.) In his dissertation on the "Nature of Virtue," he clearly and widely separates from Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, and Cumberland. "Benevolence and the want of it, singly, are in no sort the whole of virtue and vice. For if this were the case, our moral understanding and moral sense would be indifferent to everything" beside. "The fact appears to be that we are constituted so as to condemn falsehood, unprovoked violence, injustice, and to approve of benevolence to some preferably to others, abstracted from all consideration which conduct is likeliest to produce an overbalance of happiness or

ness of moral science to deduce from the laws of life and the conditions of existence what kinds of actions necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deductions are to be recognized as laws of conduct." God's laws, adds Cumberland: in part, adds Butler.

misery." "Some of great and distinguished merit have, I think, expressed themselves in a manner which may occasion some danger to careless readers, of imagining the whole of virtue to consist in singly aiming, according to the best of their judgment at promoting the happiness of mankind in the present state; and the whole of vice in doing what they foresee, or might foresee, is likely to produce a balance of unhappiness in it; than which mistakes none can be conceived more terrible." Butler was the first philosopher to distinguish between natural and moral benevolence, and to maintain that a disposition to make others happy without regard to their character is not merely characterless, but proof of moral perversity. Even God cannot make the wicked happy as he does the righteous. Every form of evolution of the moral from the non-moral encounters Butler. Very striking, therefore, are such remarks as these from such a thinker as Leslie Stephen ("History of English Thought," pp. 293–306):[22] "The God whom Butler worships is, in fact, the human conscience deified." "His attitude is impressive from the moral side alone, but from that side its grandeur is undeniable. Duty is his last word." To the question, whether the seeking of happiness or any other natural good, (be it individual, altruistic, social or universal), can be right, irrespective of its regulation by the moral faculty, he first gave the negative answer. And it is his answer we still hear. "There may be other immediate ends appointed us to pursue," he observes, "besides that one of doing good or producing happiness. . . . . Fidelity, honor, strict justice, are themselves approved in the highest degree, abstracted from the consideration of their tendency. Now, whether it be thought that each of these is connected with benevolence in our nature, and so may be considered the same

[22] But this accomplished writer certainly errs, when he says that, in the "Analogy," "he contemplated utilitarianism only in its crudest form, as sanctioning individual selfishness." How could this be possible, with Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, and Cumberland before him? He understood eudæmonism well.

thing with it; or whether some of them be thought an inferior kind of virtues and vices; . . . . . or, lastly, plain exceptions to the general rule: thus much, however, is certain, that the things now instanced in, and numberless others, are approved or disapproved by mankind in general in quite another view than as conducive to the happiness or misery of the world." (Sermon upon "The Love of Our Neighbor," note, p. 510). Here he parts from Edwards without knowing it, (neither ever read the other's writing,) as well as from the first English moralists. Here he opens the way to unite what Cumberland could not formally and logically unite,—justice and benevolence; and to answer a question in ethics, which he never analyzed and only glanced at, whether love in general, or, indeed, any love, can be approved as right save it be moral love. (Cf. pp. 9, 23, *ante*.) Here historically, it is held, the struggle between intuitional and utilitarian morality openly begins.

"Cumberland stands by himself," says Professor Alexander Bain ("Moral Science," p. 142): his book "is important as a distinctly philosophical disquisition, but its extraordinarily discursive character renders impossible anything like analysis." This remark was not seen till the task of the writer was nearly finished; which he can only hope that readers of the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA will kindly look upon as something "like analysis," and believe that it was not accomplished easily! The book, however, has fewer inconsistencies or contradictions than an old pioneer treatise, of range so wide, and proceeding by analyses and arguments from so many starting points, and so diversified, might be expected to show. Repeated study of it will deepen one's sense of the author's grasp of mind, the massiveness of his work, and the justice of the tributes paid to it as "a fountain-head of English ethics." He says of it himself, as "the offspring of his brain": "Its face is not painted with the fervid colors of rhetoric; nor are its eyes sparkling and sportive, the signs of a light wit: it wholly

applies itself, as it were, with the composure and sedateness of an old man, to the study of natural knowledge, to gravity of manners, and to the cultivating of severer learning."

ARTICLE VI.

INFALLIBLE SCRIPTURE.

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Of late years it has been given out that the progress of Biblical study has made it necessary to revise our theory of Inspiration. It is said that the high ground taken by our fathers cannot be maintained. We have fallen on an age of careful and well-equipped criticism. Germany has examined and spoken. The teachings of the Westminster and other great confessions, of Gaussen and Doddridge and Edwards and Knapp, were premature, ill-considered, and must be largely modified in the light of a riper scholarship and fuller knowledge. In particular, we are warned that we cannot now insist on the inerrancy of the Scriptures, even of the originals, as to historic and scientific matters, and the smaller details of all sorts; that it is altogether safer, and more in the line of recent findings, to speak of the Scriptures as *containing* a divine message than as *being* such a message. And so we are told, perhaps with bald outspokenness and perhaps under various disguises of reverent and orthodox phrase, of the mistakes of Moses and Matthew, of Peter and Paul, and