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Ethics among Primitive Peoples.

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IN attempting to understand the laws which govern the conduct of primitive peoples, Western standards of morality must be entirely set aside, lest one fall into the error of past generations, who proclaimed the savage to be an immoral or even an unmoral being. As a matter of fact, the savage is bound by very rigid rules of conduct, which arise out of the sheer necessity for maintaining the solidarity of the community, since in the struggle for existence under adverse conditions man as individual could never survive; indeed, it may well be that man's social instinct was a powerful factor in his emergence from the anthropoid state. Despite the views of Lang and Atkinson (*Social Origins*, 1903) and others, it may be reasonably held, with Kropotkin (*Mutual Aid*, 1902), that, apart from modifications in physical structure, the social development of man was very largely dependent upon the fact that he was a relatively weak and defenceless animal, but no doubt endued with that strong sense of sociability which engendered in him the social habits which characterize all gregarious animals. At a stage of man's fuller development the conditions would obtain which Westermarck has described (*Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1906, i. pp. 538-39): 'It may be said that, as a general rule, among savages and barbarians—with the exception, perhaps, of those who live in small family-groups—as also among the peoples of archaic culture, this duty [of assisting more distant relatives] is more prominent and extends further than amongst ourselves. The blood-tie has much greater strength, related families keep more closely together for mutual protection and aid.' The morality of primitive man is essentially social; the conduct of the individual must be regulated for the common good by immutable rules handed down from generation to generation. Thus savages are found to be intensely conservative and law-abiding folk. The good man is he who conforms strictly to that standard of conduct which by past experience has proved beneficial to society; that which is subversive of custom, disruptive, anti-social, is bad: hence the suspicion with which any innovation is regarded by chiefs

and those concerned in the maintenance of communal integrity. For humanity in these early stages the idea of individual morality is practically absent; it is a later development arising out of a growing self-consciousness. M. Durkheim and the French school of anthropologists are justified in assuming that 'in early society there was a solidarity in the actions of men as members of a social group which gave those actions a quite specific character, and makes it wholly illegitimate to suppose that they were directed by motives of the same order which set into activity the individual; and they assert that the explanation of the facts of early society is to be sought in social conditions which have as their psychological correlate or expression what they call collective representations' (Rivers, *Hibbert Journal*, x. [1912], p. 394). Primitive thought, according to Lévy-Bruhl, is totally distinct in its processes from that of civilized man, being characterized, *inter alia*, by what he terms the law of participation. 'Representations called collective,' writes Lévy-Bruhl (*Les fonctions mentales des sociétés inférieures*, 1910, p. 1), '... may be recognized by the following indications: they are common to the members of a given social group; they are transmitted from generation to generation; they are enjoined on individuals and awaken in them feelings of respect, fear, adoration, etc., as the case may be. They are not dependent on the individual for existence. Not that they imply a collective subject distinct from the individuals composing the social group, but because they possess characters which cannot be accounted for solely by the consideration of individuals as such.' As regards the law of participation the same writer says (p. 77): 'In the collective representations of primitive mentality objects, beings, phenomena, may be, in a manner incomprehensible to us, at the same time themselves and other than themselves. . . . For this mentality the opposition between one and several, the same and the other, etc., does not necessitate the affirmation of one of these terms if the other be denied, and reciprocally. . . . Often it melts away before a mystic community of essence between

beings which to our ideas could not be blended together without absurdity.' The primitive mind is prelogical in that for it connexions exist where to our minds there are none. This law of participation accounts for the effect on the child of food eaten by the father, the effect on an individual of sorcery worked by means of his hair or nail-patings, the effect on the crops or the weather of ceremonies performed by certain persons. It is the mystic participation of the individual in the community which underlies much that is puzzling to the Western mind in the ideas and institutions of savages.

We have seen that the moral law of savages is entirely social in its objective; he who fails in his observance of it commits an offence against the community, but at the outset there appears to be no idea of responsibility to any outside authority against whom a man sins in breaking the moral law. Morality is as yet perfectly distinct from religion even of the most rudimentary form, which may be defined as the acknowledgment of and dependence upon superhuman powers whether spirits or divinities. Professor Westermarck, in his chapter on 'Gods as Guardians of Morality' (*op. cit.* ii. p. 663), points out that it is by no means a universal characteristic of gods to punish vice and reward virtue, for the supernatural beings of savage belief frequently display the utmost indifference to questions of worldly morality. Ritual neglect might offend them as being sacrilegious, but otherwise they take no account of human conduct. On the other hand, many backward peoples are stated to have a belief in an 'All-father,' who may be a mythical ancestor or headman, and as such may take an interest in the morality of his descendants. Some Australian tribes now regard him as the original source of totemic and other regulations, breaches of which he will visit with punishment (A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of S.E. Australia*, 1904, pp. 488-508; K. Langloh Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, 1905, pp. 7-9). In fact, he may be to that extent a kind of personification of the collective conscience, aiding the efforts of the elders to maintain the ancient order of things. Mr. Howitt said of the S.E. Australian tribes (*Jour. Anth. Inst.* xiii. [1884], p. 459): '... I venture to assert that it can no longer be maintained that they have no belief which can be called religious—that is, in the sense of beliefs which govern tribal and individual

morality under a supernatural sanction.' This is borne out by his later work cited above (pp. 489, 495). The high-god 'is the Headman in the sky-country, the analogue of the Headman of the tribe on the earth' (p. 491). The law-breaker incurs not the wrath of the gods but the disapproval of society, and it is to his fellow-men, or possibly to the sorcerer, that the injured party turns for help in obtaining redress. Primitive sexual morality clearly reveals this point of view: chastity *per se* is of no account, therefore the relations of young people before marriage are often subject to no restrictions; but, once a man has married a woman and paid over the bride-price to her family, he has established rights over her, any infringement of which is tantamount to theft of another man's property. The perpetrator of such an act, according to savage ideas, is not guilty of the sin of adultery—such a thing does not exist—but he has committed the crime of theft. It must be further borne in mind that the primitive ethical code enjoins practices directly opposed to Western sexual morality. In certain Australian tribes it is recognized that, though the husband has prior claim to his own wife, yet other men of his totemic kin have accessory rights over her (Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1899, pp. 62-64). Among the Todas of South India the stigma of immorality seems rather to attach to the man who grudges his wife to another; the *kashtvainol*, or grudging people, Rivers tells us, constitute one group who find it difficult to reach the next world after death (*The Todas*, 1906, p. 530).

Let us consider briefly the ethical standards obtaining among certain primitive peoples who have been carefully studied, beginning with the simplest form of society.

The *Andaman Islanders* of the Bay of Bengal live in small local groups without organized polity; but in every community some man pre-eminent in skill in hunting and warfare, wisdom and kindness, takes the lead, holding such position only in virtue of these qualities. Respect for senior, capable, kindly men is one great factor conducing to social cohesion. A man only becomes an independent member of the community on marriage, which is not an established fact until the birth of a child. The hardest work of the community falls on the young unmarried men, and any game they kill is regarded as common property; he who

continues a celibate after the proper age for marriage is described as 'a very bad man'—an opinion revealing a social standard of morality. On the other hand, murder, assault, theft, or destruction of property is regarded simply as a personal offence for which vengeance may be taken on the culprit. But if a member of one community kill or injure the member of another, the whole community must take the matter up and avenge itself. Persistent celibacy, failure in respect towards elders, marital unfaithfulness, and laziness are regarded as wrong (which is equivalent to anti-social), but there is no punishment for such shortcomings other than loss of esteem. Promiscuous intercourse between the sexes is customary before marriage. (The above account is based on the observations of Mr. A. R. Brown, whose book on the Andaman Islanders will appear shortly.)

The *Torres Straits Islanders* had a system of morality based on the obligations of social life and deriving no sanction or support from religion; individual morality had scarcely emerged, for there was no idea of personal responsibility to any higher power outside the community. The rudiments of this sense are perhaps traceable in their attitude towards the spirits of the departed among the Eastern Islanders. Ghosts, if stunted in the matter of funeral ceremonies, might feel resentment and cause strong winds to destroy their relatives' houses or gardens; or their displeasure might be aroused because their children were neglected or wronged, or their property taken by those who had no claim to it. No doubt in the past such fear of the ghost's wrath had a deterrent effect on wrongdoers, and helped to keep the people in the straight path of virtue (*Torres Straits Reports*, vol. vi. [1908], p. 127). These islanders were very carefully studied by the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition in 1898; they are rapidly becoming modified by the influence of missionaries and traders, and are borrowing the moral concepts of higher cultures. A definite system of morals was inculcated when lads were initiated into manhood, and there is no ground for suspecting any missionary influence in the statements made by the natives. The following is the code *in extenso* of the Western Islanders as related in jargon English:—

We tell you and you think every year and every day. What word we speak out, you must put it along your heart.

You think for yourself, you're no stone or firewood, you're a man just like me.

You no play with small play-canoe, or with toy-spear; that all finish now. You no play with boy and girl now; you a man now and no boy.

If any man meets you walking along the road and you are carrying sweet-potatoes, or coco-nuts, or other food, you offer it to him without his having to ask you for some; he will then call you a good boy, but if you do not he will call you a bad boy.

Look here! Suppose a man send you for anything, you must do it quick—you no too much run about. Tell you do something, you do it quick. You should carry things for old men.

When all men stay at the *kwod* (ceremonial ground) you no walk upright, you stoop down as you walk. Do not stand upright in the presence of the old men. You must not speak to the men in the *kwod*.

You must not touch anything belonging to another man. S'pose you take anything and you lose it, he will call you a bad boy. You must ask him first, then if you lose it the man will say, 'Oh! it's my fault, I gave it to you.'

You no steal. You no take thing belong man without leave. If you see a fish-spear and take it, s'pose you break it and you no got spear, how you pay man? S'pose you see a dugong-harpoon in a canoe and take it and man he no savvy, then you lose it or break it, how you pay him? You no got dugong-harpoon.

You must take cold heart (*i.e.* you must have a quiet temper).

You must not talk scandal (*i.e.* if he heard about any one committing adultery he was to remain silent and not talk about it, and so make it worse) nor swear.

You no go and talk a lie, you speak straight. When you want to speak some word, you speak true, no tell lie; to tell lies no good.

You work hard to get plenty fish, and dugong, and turtle. You make garden, then you full up of food.

S'pose man ask you for food or water or anything else, you give him half of what you got. If you do, you good boy; if you do not, no one like you.

S'pose you're a bad boy, by and by you dead quick—sorcery man kill you—same too s'pose you speak too much or you play in *kwod*.

Give food to sorcerer should he want any.

S'pose you got plenty fish, you give mother and father before you give to brother; if you have a wife, give her a little, and plenty to parents, for they have had hard work along of you.

Look after mother and father; never mind if you and your wife have to go without. Give half of all your fish to your parents; don't be mean.

Don't speak bad word to mother. Father and mother all along same as food in belly; when they die you feel hungry and empty.

Mind your uncles too and cousins.

S'pose a man talk bad to your brother, you help him, you talk too.

If your brother is going out to fight, you help him; don't let him go first, but go together.

You no like girl first; if you do, girl laugh at you and call

you a woman (*i.e.* the young man must not propose marriage to a girl, but must wait for her to speak first).

You no marry your cousin, she all same sister.

You no marry sister of your mate, or by and by you will be ashamed; mates all same brothers (but mates, *i.e.* two close friends, may like brothers marry two sisters).

If a woman walk alone, you no follow; by and by man look, he call you bad name.

If a canoe is going out to fight another place, you go in canoe; no stop behind to steal women.

The injunctions were: remembrance of admonitions, reticence, thoughtfulness, respectful behaviour, prompt obedience, generosity, diligence, kindness to parents and other relatives in deed and word, truthfulness, helpfulness, manliness, discretion in dealing with women, quiet temper. Bravery, ferocity, endurance of pain and hardship, and other warlike qualities, were regarded as great virtues. The prohibitions were against theft, borrowing without leave, shirking duty, talkativeness, abusive language, talking scandal, marriage with certain individuals, revealing the sacred secrets.

The Eastern Islanders gave sound moral and practical instruction to youths at initiation. In their case the social welfare depended upon horticulture, and this fact is reflected in certain precepts of the code. A youth must not spend his days on the reef catching fish and neglect his garden; he might go on the reef once a week or so. He was strictly enjoined to make a good and large garden, and was taught the best method: *e.g.* 'When you got *ketai* (a kind of climbing yam), you plant him along big tree, you keep him along tree for three or four years.' He was told to build a large house for himself and surround it with a fence. There were admonitions against stealing other men's garden stuff or wives, against loss of temper, talking scandal, and so on, and death was threatened to any who should divulge secrets of the Malu cult to a woman or an uninitiated man.

The above precepts represent the regular course of instruction, but in individual cases an unruly youth might be reprimanded, as is shown by the following hypothetical instance given by two Western Islanders. If the eldest son of a family were bad-tempered, quarrelsome, and unkind in his talk, a number of men would come and give him a friendly warning: 'You are the eldest brother, but you are like an unsteady pole that wobbles in a tide-way. Your youngest brother is

a steady fellow and lives quietly. You had better do the same or the *maidelaig* (sorcerer) will have something to say to you; he is watching you. You must take care of yourself. We now warn you, in case you may want to amend your ways. It would be better for you to stop that bad fashion and to follow your youngest brother's example and remain quiet.'

As regards the behaviour of the people in everyday life, the men seem to have treated their wives well on the whole and to have been affectionate to them; parents were very fond of their children, and no case of cruelty was heard of. The shame felt when any tabu was broken which regulated the behaviour of certain persons to one another was a manifestation of domestic morality.

Sexual morality: the highest moral opprobrium attached to incest, *i.e.* marriage or connexion within the clan or between those considered as too nearly related. This is an example of a social convention which was of fundamental biological importance to the community. Irregular relations with women were spoken of as 'stealing,' girls being regarded as the property of their fathers, and wives as that of their husbands; the only party wronged was the owner. There seems to have been no word for fornication or adultery other than 'theft,' though this does not necessarily imply the absence of a corresponding concept. It seems that chastity before marriage was formerly practically unknown, but decorum was always observed. Unbridled licence was probably never indulged in, public opinion exercising a restraining influence. In the case of the rape of a married woman or adultery with her, the aggrieved husband might require the death of both parties, and he would take over the wives of the co-respondent if he were married, but sometimes he would satisfy himself with a fine. However, the women seem to have been faithful wives as a rule.

Commercial morality: it was customary for canoes to be purchased from New Guinea on the instalment system, and this could not have persisted unless there had been honest dealing between debtor and creditor. Repudiation of debts would have resulted in a cessation of the supply of canoes, and then 'how we get fish, or turtle, or dugong, we hungry all the time, that no good'; also there would have been fighting.

Crime: any infringement of the rules of the community was regarded as an offence against

society rather than a definite violation of law. Many acts of the people were of a social nature; a clan or group must perform certain ceremonies for their own or the public weal. Such practices were regulated by tradition, and any inaccuracy of performance on the part of an individual might impair their efficacy and would clearly constitute a crime against society. Most tabus and regulations arose in the interests of the community, though some were designed to strengthen the authority of the old men. Any infringement of custom weakened that authority and tended towards individualism and disintegration of the community, which was a danger to be guarded against. Crimes against the person would be punished by the injured party if strong enough; if not, he would enlist the help of the sorcerer or else of his friends.

Revenge: the blood-feud between different communities was a recognized custom, but private wrongs were often avenged by the community.

Homicide was not *a priori* reprehensible: a man had the right to kill his own wife or children since they were his property; and feticide and infanticide were not uncommon, being a social necessity in view of the limited food-supply. No stigma attached to any one who sought the sorcerer's help to compass the sickness or death of an enemy. The murder of one's clansman, relative, or friend was a matter for personal revenge. To kill foreigners in fair fight or by treachery was most meritorious, and he who brought home skulls covered himself with glory and found favour with women. In the early days any stranger or person arriving unbidden was done to death—a custom arising doubtless as an act of communal self-preservation, for outside the island lay the great hostile unknown whose emissaries boded harm.

Among the *Elema tribes of the Papuan Gulf* moral instruction is given to youths when they are secluded for the initiation ceremonies. The Rev. J. Holmes states (*Jour. Anth. Inst.* xxxii. [1902], p. 418) that admonitions respecting a man's duty to his tribe have always the first place. When choosing a wife, the primary consideration is that the girl be one likely to bear healthy children who will be a strength to the tribe; if she is barren, the husband's obligation ceases. If twins are born it is right to bury one of them, because no mother can nourish two children at once successfully, and two weak men are not the credit to the tribe that

one strong man can be. No one will be responsible for the future conduct of an illegitimate child; it is best, therefore, to strangle it. If a mother dies, no one can be relied on to nourish her child satisfactorily; so it is well that it die too. Much attention is devoted to the art of sorcery in order to impress on the minds of the initiates how great is the power of sorcerers. Careful advice is given as to tribal duties; each individual must regard the tribal enemies as his own. The tribal conscience of the Papuan Gulf is fully attuned to Nature's law of the survival of the fittest: personal desires and all else are subordinated to the great end of adding to the strength of the tribe.

In *Kaiser Wilhelms-Land* boys undergoing the *asa* rites are taught certain moral precepts: to be generous, not to steal, to behave properly towards the women.

The *Bushongo*, a Bantu people living in the Upper Kasai basin, Southern Congo, have advanced in their social organization to the point of having a well-defined chieftainship, about which their polity centres. Their morality, as expressed in their traditional law, is based on fairly high ideas. Actions causing material harm to the community or to individuals are regarded as crimes; drunkenness is an attenuating circumstance, and held in no special disapprobation. Incest is a crime against the community, and in the few cases on record the man has always committed suicide on account of his public disgrace. Hospitality—that is, food and shelter—must be given to strangers regardless of their tribe. Fraud, lying, and bad faith are intrinsically evil deeds; cowardice is punished only by universal disapproval (Torday and Joyce, *Annales du Musée du Congo Belge*, 1911, p. 75). No mention is made of any religious sanction attaching to the code of morals of the Bushongo. The all-powerful creator, Chembe, since leaving this world, seems to have concerned himself very little with the human race, except for an occasional appearance to some individual in a dream: no actual cult is paid to him (*op. cit.* p. 120). Among the Western Bushongo, youths undergo initiation at which they are taught the law (*nkanda*) as follows:—

1. Above all men is the Chief: absolute obedience is due to him; his person and possessions are to be respected; there is one chief only, the Nyimi; none other must be obeyed.
2. Obedience and respect are due to the chief's descendants.

3. Respect the nakedness of your mother; look not upon her while she is bathing; when going to your parents' home, do not enter suddenly; say who you are, and wait till you are invited within, lest you enter at an inopportune moment.
4. Respect and obedience are due to parents from their children.
5. If you take in a temporary mistress, arrange it so that your parents see nothing.
6. Do not use indecent language before your parents (e.g. when going aside into the bush for purposes of nature, invent an excuse).
7. If your father's loin-cloth is displaced so that you see his buttocks, tell him; if your mother is in like case say nothing, it is her daughter who should tell her of it and not her son. You must not make your mother blush.
8. Respect the body of your parents; ask your friends to dress them for burial, for fear of your seeing them naked; do not perform this duty yourself.
9. Do not look at a woman while she is lying in.
10. Do not undress a woman in public.
11. Do not beat your wife; but if married people quarrel, do not interfere.
12. Be just to your enemy; if he is in danger of drowning, rescue him; if he is attacked, go to his aid; if the chief sends for him, do not refrain from giving the message in the hope that he may be punished.
13. Do not allow several persons to attack one.
14. In warfare avoid killing, but defend yourself with courage.
15. Do not steal: if you want a thing, ask the owner for it; if he refuses, do without it.
16. Be faithful to your wife while she is with child.
17. Respect the wives of the following persons: the king, the king's sons, your friends, your slaves, your sons, your father, your uncles, your brothers, your cousins; also respect your female cousins and your cousins' daughters.
18. Do not waste your substance in gaming.
19. Do not lie to a man of your own tribe (*op. cit.* pp. 85-86).

These prohibitions are called *Ikina Nyimi*, royal prohibitions, and are distinct from the *Ikina Bari*, tabus on animals, which seem to be a degenerate form of totemism.

The *Todas*, living on the jungle-surrounded plateau of the Nilgiri Hills in South India, have a code of morality presenting many points of interest. Their whole life centres in the care of their sacred cattle and the work of the dairy, from which women are rigidly excluded. Rivers (*The Todas*, 1906, p. 554) doubts whether crime can be said to exist among them. 'Acts such as infanticide are committed . . . but since these are the outcome of custom they are not crimes from the Toda point of view.' They have a code of offences

against the dairy (p. 295), but these must be regarded as sins rather than crimes, since the civil authority, the *naim*, takes no account of them; they are punished directly by the gods, and various ceremonies of an expiatory character take place. The list of offences includes quarrelling between people of the same clan at a festival, quarrelling in the dairy, stealing milk, butter, or ghi from the dairy; but these are regarded as sins of sacrilege against the dairy, not as crimes against the persons concerned. Rivers heard of no offence against property in any other connexion; ornaments and clothing are apparently never stolen. Cases of assault or murder seem unheard of; the only instance of murder on record is that described in the legend of Kwoten. 'The Todas may take part in the murder of a Kurumba who has been working magic, but this is of course no crime from the Toda point of view, but an obvious method of self-defence, for it is believed that the only way of stopping Kurumba sorcery is to kill the sorcerer' (p. 555). Suicide by strangling is said to have been a recognized custom among the Todas. As regards sexual intercourse, there is little restriction of any kind; several Todas assured Rivers that unfaithfulness was no motive for divorce, being in no way regarded as wrong; there seems to be no word in the Toda language for adultery. From the point of view of the savage, Toda sexual morality is certainly very low; the custom of polyandry seems to have weakened the idea of the husband's proprietary rights in the wife to a very great extent. Even the abhorrence of incest, which is almost universal, seems absent in the case of the Todas. It may fairly be said that the whole communal conscience is concentrated on the dairy, the ordinary relations of life being of subsidiary importance.

The inculcation of morality.—The folk-tales of backward peoples the world over cannot be considered to offer any ethical teaching; not that the sentiments expressed in them are immoral—they are simply non-moral. Some may relate how misfortune followed wrongdoing, but as a rule actions regarded by the people themselves as offences are recorded without comment (cf. *Torres Straits Reports*, vol. v. p. 273). The example of the older men serves as incentive to good behaviour—that is to say, to conduct in accordance with the accepted standard. The initiation ceremonies, however, afford the supreme occasion for moral instruction.

These rites are of the deepest significance: they represent the new birth to the responsibilities of manhood, the putting away of childhood once and for all. At the psychological moment in his physical and mental development, when his young virility is surging within him, a boy is taken apart into the bush with his fellow-initiates, separated entirely from the wonted environment, restricted by tabus on certain foods, and compelled to undergo tests of endurance and to witness ceremonies which fill him with awe and it may be alarm. It is during this momentous period in a boy's life that all instruction in tribal lore is imparted and he learns what it behoves a man to do. The time of seclusion may last for months and in a few instances for years. Some initiatory rites are pantomimic representations of what novices must avoid in future, and have at first sight a highly immoral appearance: for instance, at the initiation ceremonies of the Coast Murring of S.E. Australia, the *kabos* (instructors) made use of an inverted manner of speaking, saying one thing when another was intended, their object being to break the boys of a habit of telling lies and to make them for the future truth-telling. (A. W. Howitt, *Nat. Tribes of S.E. Australia*, p. 533). Various moral offences are represented, and the novices are threatened with death or violence if they repeat such actions. Obscene gestures are made on these occasions by some tribes, but their purpose is to shock the initiates, and any sign of levity is suppressed instantly by a blow. As regards phallic observances met with among the Australians and elsewhere, Professor Hutton Webster points out (*Primitive Secret Societies*, 1908, p. 50, n. 2) that they are to be interpreted from this primitive point of view of instruction and warning. 'But, remembering that the initiation ceremonies are intended primarily as a preparation for marriage, we shall not be surprised to find much instruction in sexual matters, conveyed sometimes in a most direct and startling fashion.' Among many tribes the whole education of youths is compressed into this short period. They are taught the complicated class and totemic divisions on which the marriage system is based, the tribal songs, dances, games, and traditions. When the initiation cere-

monies are over, Kurnai boys (Victoria) remain for months in the bush, gaining their own living and learning self-control, manly duties, and such virtues as to obey the old men, to live peaceably with their friends and share all they have with them, to avoid interfering with girls and married women, and to observe the food restrictions.

In Africa, too, the initiation of youths and often of girls at puberty is very widespread, and instruction of various kinds is imparted during their seclusion. Basuto boys are beaten frequently and mercilessly. They are told to mend their ways, to quit themselves like men, fear theft and adultery, honour their parents, and obey their chiefs. Bechuana lads receive much the same treatment. At the close of initiation a long exhortation is delivered. All objects connected with their seclusion are burnt, and they may never again visit the scene of seclusion, where they have left all evil dispositions and follies of childhood. Professor Hutton Webster, from whom quotations have been made above, has an admirable chapter on 'The Training of the Novice' (*op. cit.* ch. iv.), in which many additional instances are cited. 'Obedience to the elders or tribal chiefs, bravery in battle, liberality towards the community, independence of maternal control, steadfast attachment to the traditional customs and the established moral code, are social virtues of great importance in rude communities.'

It would be easy to multiply instances of ethical codes and of initiation ceremonies at which these are inculcated, but it is unnecessary to do so. The social morality of the Torres Straits Islanders has been dealt with at considerable length, because it seems desirable to give an approximately complete view of the moral concepts of a particular people and of the effects of these upon them. In the majority of other cases such information is fragmentary, though doubtless more rigorous investigation would reveal similar conditions. The object of this article has been to point out the futility of applying the moral standards of higher civilizations to the conduct of primitive peoples, and the impossibility of justly appreciating the social relations and ideals of a people without taking into account their environment and mode of life.