



The emotion which swept away this strange and yet natural depression, and which, therefore, if we are to describe all our feelings in terms of happiness, we must call a pleasurable emotion, might, he seemed to think, itself be made an aim; yet, assuredly, it would be so remote from no human being as from him who sought to produce it. That there is something profoundly distasteful in the notion of any one deliberately setting himself to feel and taste is here justified by logic, for unquestionably the effort would be self-defeating. Few do so much for the happiness of mankind as one who reveals to them their independence of happiness. The contemporary of J. S. Mill with whom it seems most natural to compare him—Carlyle—owed no small part of his influence to the fact that he was able, through the fiery glow of his own individuality, to endow the precept, "Let life have a larger object than enjoyment," with dynamic influence, and no revelation of his unfaithfulness to his own ideal should make us ungrateful for a lesson that all, perhaps, could utter, but which he has expressed in words that have the power of actions. Men under-rate the importance of an ideal. They do not know how much that is undelightful would become tolerable, if once their minds were so much occupied with what was to be done, that what was to be enjoyed was left in abeyance.

But if we urge that it is possible to regard Pleasure as a comparatively insignificant good, we are not therefore bound to concede that Pain, from the same point of view, would prove a comparatively insignificant evil? No more fertile source of error exists than what we would call the *fallacy of antithesis*. Let us illustrate this bias of the logical faculty by pointing out a similar error in the domain of Art. When a careless painter would represent reflections in still water, he merely draws in softened outline their inverted forms, and breaks them with silvery lines; and so little attentive are we to the true aspect of Nature—so much more ready to *invent* than to *transcribe*—that such a representation is more satisfactory to the eye of the ordinary observer than one which gives truly the dissimilarity, often striking, between the object and its inverted image. Exactly the same temptation haunts man's reasoning faculty. You cannot reverse any statement respecting a good thing, and be sure that it will be true of a bad thing; there is a certain antithesis between good things and their opposites, but it is not one that will bear any stress of logical deduction. We should subject ourselves to the most continual and bitter disappointment, if we measured the degree in which any one loved truth by the degree in which he hated falsehood. And when we quit the world of duty for the world of desire, this lack of correspondence becomes far more evident. Pleasure and pain! We have often wondered at the link that custom has forged between two things so incomparable. Rhythm and alliteration, surely, must have a mighty influence upon thought, for there is no human being who knows the meaning of either of these words who would for a moment dream of setting them side by side, as correlative facts of human experience. What wish can we imagine that should equal in intensity that for the cessation of violent toothache? Every longing that we could compare with it, though we might express it as something positive—as the desire for water in great thirst—is in reality no more than the wish that some feeling would end. When Carlyle urges that, "The healthy know not of their health, but only the sick of their sickness," he seems to forget that the healthy know not of their health because, in the sense in which the sick know of their sickness, there is nothing to know. Sickness brings us into the world of sensation; health lets us out of the world of sensation. The toothache forces upon us the conviction that we have teeth; the absence of the toothache simply allows us to eat our dinner in peace. It is not that there is one sensation which we suffer consciously, and another that we enjoy unconsciously; there is a sensation on the one hand, and on the other there is nothing. This, it may be said, is true of man only so far as he is a mere animal, and it is true that this dislocation between the contrast of pleasure and pain applies less forcibly to man's emotions than his sensations, yet surely the very common-places of philosophy and criticism prove it to exist, to a great extent, even here. The house of mourning was not, before the blow fell, a house of rejoicing. The bereavement which desolates a life does not divide it into joy and sorrow; it is often supposed to do so by the sufferer, but what he mistakes for the joy of possession is the imagined joy of restoration. The spiritual part of our being stands in a much closer connection with the physical than either does with the intellectual, and when we come to this latter region, this

law does not apply; on the contrary, knowledge is a pleasure, and ignorance is not a pain. Nevertheless, as compared with either of its neighbours, this whole region is so weak, that what we have said holds good, in spite of this exception. What is true of Man, so far as he has an animal nature, and then, again, so far as he has a nature capable of desire and emotion, may be called true of him on the whole, even though it be not true of that domain within which he reasons and knows. We may disregard the weak neighbour of two mighty and harmonious potentates.

The truth which seems to us so inadequately recognised, though it is the temptation of logical minds, was yet clearly discerned as a fallacy by the great thinker to whom we owe the very existence of Logic as a science. No mere logician could have invented logic, and that disinterested observation of human nature which contains the warning against all the temptations of the spirit active to infer rather than patient to observe was so marked in Aristotle, that if we might apply the expression "a prose Shakespeare" to any human being, it should be to him. With that peculiar attentiveness to fact which balances and sometimes confuses the logical faculty, he more than once returns to this want of symmetry between the two halves of the moral world. We will allow ourselves a single quotation. The two correlative vices with regard to pleasure and pain, he says, are *intemperance* and *cowardice*, both being an unmeasured surrender to the impulsive part of our being, and different only inasmuch as the impulse is, in the one case, towards pleasure, in the other from pain. Their relation to the *will* ought, therefore, from a narrowly logical point of view, to be identical; but in truth, there is no correspondence. Cowardice is, as compared with intemperance, half-involuntary. Pain dominates the mind as pleasure cannot do,—we *choose* pleasure; in flying from pain, we have hardly any choice. "The mental balance is altogether upset by pain." How much ethical theory might have been simplified, if that truth had always been borne in mind! How much approach we should make to the great problem of the freedom of the will, if we remembered that to contend that the will is always free against the invitations of pleasure, does not bind us over to assert that it is always free against the commands of pain; that in the sense in which we may withstand pleasure, we *cannot* withstand pain.

But not only would the metaphysical problem lying at the root of Ethics be simplified by the recognition, the whole course of ethical theory, in modern times, has suffered from its absence. Experience forces on every one the conviction that there is a definite reality called Pain, and that we are all agreed as to its meaning, at least as far as the sensations are concerned. Then steps in Logic, and assumes that there is also a definite reality called Pleasure, and that the reverse of everything that is true of pleasure is true of pain, so that there is a human aim, in the same sense as there is a human point of recoil. The mistake lies in not recognising that all distinctness is given to Pleasure by the shadow of Pain. We must allow, if we look at the world before us, that pain is a common terror to every child of man; but if we are wise, we shall make no assertions about men's hopes that equal in definiteness those which concern men's fears, *except so far as hope is concerned with the termination of evil*. We may know all the facts of a man's history, and remain utterly ignorant of his wishes. "I did not much dislike it," said once the most sincere man of our acquaintance, in speaking of a public compliment that would have been as little unwelcome to most men as a decoration from the hand of Royalty. Nowhere are human beings so unlike each other as on the ground of preference. Could we borrow the pen of our illustrious namesake, and set forth our moral with the lightness and grace of the early eighteenth century, we would depict this individuality of desire by means of an apologue of the kind so familiar to the eighteenth century, and one which, by an odd coincidence, Addison has, we think, somewhere anticipated. A fountain endowed with a magic power to fulfil wishes, but needing time for its spell to work, should be the resort of an eager throng, ignorant of the fact that the wish fulfilled was not the wish of him who possessed the fulfilment, but always the unfulfilled wish of the predecessor of him who realised it. What varied forms of wretchedness suggest themselves as the result! Here, a shy student is driven across a Scotch moor, under the sultry sun of August, gun in hand, mysteriously impelled towards a pursuit of which he loathes every detail, and could not say whether the object, the exertion, or the companionship were most distasteful to him. His successor



sits in the shadowy recess of a noble library, the wisdom and learning of ages look down at him from shelves that touch the lofty ceiling—the table is piled with folios, the mystic influence makes him turn the page; but his hot blood tortures him with its restless throb, and the busy turmoil he has left to some one as ill-fitted for it as he is for its opposite haunts his imagination like a Paradise. The shrinking, undecided girl finds herself loaded with the responsibilities of a sumptuous establishment and a noble name, while her ambitious sister shares the cottage of some country curate—. But let us not pursue a theme which so rapidly shrinks from a fantastic imagination into a mere transcript of what is dreariest in the experience of every day!

The lesson we have devised this fable to enforce would need no fanciful illustration, if men attended to what is always before their eyes. It is implied alike by our theories of a future world, and our experience of this. Every newspaper preaches it. When we read of a war, we read of that which brings certain misery to thousands. We require to know nothing of those whose houses are destroyed, whose sons die on the field, whose life is to be held at the pleasure of a foe, in order to be certain that these things are terrible. To avoid this, must be a common aim to all. But when you say that peace is a hope in the same degree that war is a fear, you are merely saying the same thing twice over. In the same proportion as men dread an evil, they will wish for its removal, but that does not make the removal of an evil a positive thing. Or again, let us look at the truth as it is imprinted on the pages of poetry. The Hell that is described by Dante, and imagined by Christian tradition, would be a punishment to the holiest of human beings, if we could imagine him to be found there. But when we enter on the glories of Paradise, we enter on that which has no attraction to any but the pure in heart. The saint would suffer, were he transformed to the circles where the fiery rain falls on the sufferer, or the "thick-ribbed ice" that Shakespeare borrowed from Dante encloses him in its iron grasp; but the sinner would not rejoice (except so far as he were delivered from Hell), at being summoned to a share in the Beatific Vision. In thus describing a Heaven which could inspire hope only to the Christian, and a Hell which would inspire fear to all, Dante expressed no individual feeling; wherever men have imagined the rewards and penalties of futurity, they have depicted pains which would be pains to all, and joys which would be joys to a few. A great preacher of our own day tells us that the invitation, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," would, if it could fall on the ear of the sinner, give him no more joy than the familiar words, "Let us pray," but certainly he did not mean that if, by a supposition of equal difficulty, we imagined the command, "Depart from me," to fall on the ear of a saint, it would not inspire terror. Circumstances can give no joy to the spirit unprepared for them, but they can impose suffering on all.

Surely, then, the human aim must be a thing more definite than pleasure, more positive than the escape from pain. We shall not look sincerely on the facts of life, if we assert, as Plato would have asserted, that the aim of life stands out of all relation to pleasure and pain. But if we confess that the attempt to describe the spring of human activity in terms of pleasure, and thus to make the attendant circumstance of fulfilled desire its object, has led to incoherence, we may approach a true ethical science more closely than has as yet been given to our modern speculation. The deeper experiences of life—the apprehension of all tragedy, and of music—nay, even the thrill of an intense joy, seem to carry us afar from this feeble antithesis of pleasure and pain, to hint at a depth in our souls lying beneath its influence, and to recall some dim memories of a hidden life, older than its very existence, when what we call Pain was either mingled with some element that took away its fierce dominance, or had no relevance to beings moving in a freedom that has been lost.

#### HOUSE-GUARDING.

FROM the days when Horace delighted Roman society with his sharp-cut verses, the "old lady" has been more or less the butt of unkindly criticism; and she is still, in various ways, held up to the derision of the crowd, as the stock-subject of "nervous" alarms. But the truth is that old ladies are rather fussy than nervous, and it may be doubted whether the ordinary "old gentleman" is not equally deserving of the former epithet. The pen has been almost as exclusively a weapon of the male

sex as the sword, and has been wielded with even greater injustice, in that it has been too often employed, with but scant mercy, against what has been admitted to be the weaker half of mankind. The mere experience of life, however, cannot but tend to fortify age against irrational alarm, and the cowardice due to ignorance or the want of self-confidence is rather a characteristic of youth than an accompaniment of grey hairs. The rumblings in water-pipes, the crackings of furniture, the hurried rushes of scared rats, and the crashes caused by undexterous cats, are fearful sounds to untried housekeepers—some of whom have been known to take the unfamiliar deep bass of a male snore for a burglarious noise—rather than to matronly "inner treasures," as the Japanese fondly term the partners of their joys and sorrows. Some recent feats of the "burgling" fraternity might well, however, excuse a timidity on the part of the frailer sex of which they do not seem, nevertheless, to have caused the display. At least, the Belgrave ruffian caught this week will not be inclined to agree with the dictum of the Laureate that,—

"Woman is the lesser man,"

and will carry through life a pretty poignant memory of a woman's courage and a woman's strength. With his annual reappearance as the leaves begin to fall and the days to shorten, the violent and cruel thief who, unlike the dormouse, reserves his activity for the season of Nature's rest, seems to show an increasing audacity. The modern burglar, taking advantage of the greater mercifulness of the age, is equally prepared to murder or to rob. The old-fashioned bludgeon is exchanged for the deadly revolver, and the plea is always ready that the intention was not to murder, but to rob; the victim's foolish resistance being made responsible for any "accident" that may have occurred to him, in his stupid defence of his property or his person. On some such plea, it is hoped, the greater penalty will be escaped; and while the burglar's task is thus facilitated, he trusts to the absence of the witnesses he has killed, and the reluctance of Englishmen to go beyond the law,—which, however, as explained elsewhere, is not favourable to the burglar,—for defence against the gallows.

The natural history of the burglar would be an interesting subject for investigation. The word, a corruption of "bourglarron," means a town or house thief. Mr. Skeat cites it from Shakespeare. "Larron," of course, is the Latin *latro*, and the "lar" of "burglar" is identical with the "lar" of larceny. Revenge, covetousness, and idleness lie at the root of crime. Drink intensifies the evil tendency of these vices, but does not give rise to them, and the habit is in a great measure a product of idleness. The defrauder is usually actuated by covetousness, sometimes by a kind of monetary or plutocratic ambition; the thief, under all his various aspects, mainly and at bottom is an idle fellow, with more or less sensuality in his composition. He is idle even in thievery, and steals irregularly, never hoarding, living from hand to mouth, and thieving to live. For the most part, he is a mere pilferer, an area sneak, a petty larcener, and as such, nearly always an arrant coward, with, probably, his blood corpuscles few in number and pale in hue. The burglar is the more enterprising and energetic rascal, cruel in a passive, if not in an active sense, driven often to the more dangerous course by a sort of sinister love of peril and pleasure in achievement. It is rarely possible to reform him, his nature is too brutal, and can be acted on only by fear, or, sometimes, by powerful motives of self-interest. The certainty of punishment would be the most effectual check upon his practices. But no great degree of certainty is attainable without an inquisitorial police, which in this country would be looked upon as a remedy worse than the disease. Next to certainty, no doubt, must be ranked severity of punishment. History shows too many instances of the success of rigorous measures, rigorously administered, in stamping out, not merely crime, which the community willingly aid in doing, but religious or political heresy, in the teeth of public sympathy, to allow of any doubt as to the efficacy of a Draconian code, when Draconically applied. But modern manners put Draconism out of the question, at any rate in this country. Perhaps, after all, the best means of repressing the burglar would be to increase the difficulty of his task, and make his business a more irksome and laborious one, thus indirectly adding to the certainty of his detection. At present, we almost invite him to the exercise of his nefarious *métier*,—we use the French word, because it is used in this connection by the French themselves, and we cannot think of any English equivalent. Like the ostrich, who is