We may, I believe, recognise the following concepts as the fundamental ethical notions: 'ought', 'morally good', and 'right'.

It will be my initial purpose in this thesis to enquire into the meaning of these concepts, to decide as to their ultimacy or irreducibility, and to determine our attitude to their relations.

It is hardly necessary to say that there lie real problems in such an enquiry. Although in everyday life we may pronounce unhesitatingly that in such and such circumstances a certain person ought to act in such and such a way, that an action of a given nature would definitely be right or wrong, good or bad, we may yet entertain considerable differences of opinion as to the meaning of these judgments. It may be held that our conviction of obligation in regard to certain forms of conduct is but a result of social sanctions; on the other hand, the 'ought' of ethics may be conceived as ultimate and unanalysable - a unique notion indeterminable from what exists, yet capable of having ontological im-
Regarding the notions of 'right', 'wrong', 'good' or 'bad', a vast range of interpretations of their meanings is possible. It is argued sometimes that an action is good because a person chances to feel an emotion of approval towards it, or because the majority of society entertain such an emotion. In contradistinction to these relativistic views, 'good' may be conceived as an objective "attribute" (2) of the action: the goodness of an action is given - it is the ground and not the consequence of the appreciative attitude of the person judging. Supposing an objective conception of value is accepted, there still remain further differences of opinion as to the meaning of 'right'. Is an act right on account of its productiveness of good consequences other than itself, or is it right by virtue of its intrinsic nature? And if the latter alternative be true, must this intrinsic nature

(I). I refer to the view, afterwards to be developed, that moral obligation implies the existence of God.

(2). I place "attribute" in inverted commas so as to imply that I do not wish at this stage to prejudge the question whether 'good' is a quality or a substance.
be unrelated to good, or could it be an expression of goodness? When we next turn to the relation between our moral judgments we are confronted again with divergencies of views. In common parlance we tend to say summarily that it is a person's duty to do what is right, and that in acting rightly his conduct expresses moral goodness. Inversely, we conclude wrong action to be indicative of a morally evil disposition. It is far from my intention to deny that there is much truth in such a position. Yet it is not wholly satisfactory. There are circumstances in which we are forced to declare an act wrong, but at the same time feel unwilling to consider it destitute of all moral worth (3); we may even venture to say that wrong though the act is, the agent has done everything which could be rationally expected of him, and has hence fulfilled his duty.

There is need, then, for a greater clarity than that with which we are customarily satisfied in regard to the meaning and relations

(3). I refer to cases where a man honestly but mistakenly supposes the act in question to be right.
of our moral judgments. An enquiry on this subject matter with no other aim than that of introducing a degree of precision in our ethical outlook, would, I think, be justified. The student of moral philosophy feels particularly the need for making such an enquiry. He is presented with a considerable range of ethical theories; he becomes acquainted with the appreciations and adverse criticisms of such theories from the points of view of opposing systems. The multiplicity of divergent standpoints causes him to be extremely diffident in accepting unreservedly the tenets of any one school. Yet he is not without a desire for some specific attitude; there grows a dissatisfaction with acquaintance with many positions but possession of none. It has been, in part, my aim in this thesis to render determinate my own beliefs in regard to what I think would be agreed upon as the central problem of ethics - the meaning of our moral judgments. It has not been my endeavour to present some new system - any such effort at this stage would indeed have been presumptuous. My procedure has rather been that of surveying several ethical theories relating to the judgments ' ought ',...
'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong', and indicating in what particulars I have been able to accept or have been forced to reject these theories. My thesis has thus been largely an attempt to secure for myself some measure of determinateness, clarity, and consistency, in respect to the numerous and often antithetical accounts of the meaning of our moral judgments.

Although, as I have just said, the principal aim in this thesis is to render determinate my views of the nature of the moral judgments, I do not claim that my study has been conducted without practical interests. I have endeavoured to clarify my views not solely for the sake of clarification as such, but also by reason of my belief that a tenable account of moral experience indicates a conclusion which I am interested to sustain. And this conclusion is that the facts of ethics - the nature of moral obligation, our judgments of right and wrong, good and bad - do, if truly interpreted, point to a world-view which permits, or more, necessitates, religious belief. I do not
think that such a purpose is at variance with the "pursuit of truth for truth's sake". Completely dispassionate, disinterested enquiry is perhaps an impossibility. In studying any subject one always has in view some conclusion, some end - vague though this may be - which it is considered the facts of his study tend to substantiate. Certainly fidelity to truth demands that facts shall not be distorted, neglected, or "explained away", if they do not happily fit some preconceived theory; it may be necessary to modify or even finally to reject the theory in favour of some other. But it is never required that there be no guiding principle of interpretation at all. Indeed, that there be some hypothesis - at least provisional - is not a matter of permissibility, it is one of necessity. And as Rashdall has emphasised (4), if we pursue our enquiry in morals without reference to their religious implications, then in so far as we believe morality to have any bearing on religion, we are tacitly assuming an agnostic or atheistic attitude. It is

thus that I feel myself justified in conducting the investigation into our ethical judgments with the practical interest I have indicated, namely, of endeavouring to substantiate the conviction that our moral judgments point to a cosmos demanding a theistic interpretation.

It has been this consideration which has dictated the ordering of sections of my thesis. I have begun with an examination of the three moral judgments already referred to: that expressing moral obligation, that of moral goodness, and the judgment of an action as right. In regard to these I have endeavoured to show: (a). The notion of the moral 'ought' is inderivable from non-moral considerations: it is a unique ethical concept - a categorical imperative, expressing unconditional obligation. Further, the facts that its commands imply an Ideal Form of Life which is not in its fulness apprehended by us, and that the commands enjoining us to approximate to this Form of Life evoke in the responding soul an attitude of reverence, point to the source of obligation as
residing not in our own individual wills, but in the Will of a personal God. (b). Moral values are objective: judgments of moral approbation or disapprobation are not merely expressive of the pleased or displeased state of mind of the subject judging; they represent acts of discernment of values to be found in the objective world. Moreover, our particular intuitions of moral value always have reference, at least implicit, to a conception of an Ideal Good: a Supreme Good which not being fully existent in any human mind, but necessarily being present to some mind, may be conceived as existent in the Mind of God. (c). A right act is related to good; not however in the way of productiveness of good consequences other than itself, but in that it is intrinsically good or the expression of goodness of character. It may be regarded as the embodiment in any situation of the requirements of the Ideal Good, or alternatively, as the particular act in the specific circumstances which would be in conformity with the Will of God. The discussion of these fundamental concepts of ethics comprises the first three sections of my thesis.
The fourth section I have devoted to a more specific treatment of the relation between these notions. I have contended that we are unconditionally obliged, not to perform the absolutely right act, but to do what we sincerely believe to be right - in this there is evidenced moral goodness or virtue. In trying to determine what is right we must have regard, not to so many "prima facie obligations" of varying degrees of stringency, but to a conception of an Ideal Form of Life as it would be expressed in relation to the particular situation.

The fifth and final section of my thesis is concerned exclusively with the religious implications of the notions with which the enquiry has been concerned. I endeavour to draw together the "witnesses" to God as provided by moral experience, and to see what light is thrown by these considerations on the question as to God's nature. It is contended that the initiative for moral effort directed towards a transcendent Good must itself come from "the side of the Eternal", that God is thus revealed in His inmost nature as self-giving, that He may most adequately be conceived as a God of
Love. Further when the religious implications of morality are consciously recognised, the moral life is itself transformed: it becomes infused with a new spirit. With the realisation that moral values are not transitory appearances in an indifferent or even hostile universe, but are actually grounded in the heart of reality, the note of defiance or despair which tends to characterise non-religious morality gives place to an attitude of freedom and graciousness. Thus "for the moralist, belief in the true and living God cannot be relegated to the position of an ' extra ' which we may perhaps be allowed to add to our respect for duty or regard for the good of our fellow-men, if physicist, biologist, and anthropologist will be kind enough to raise no objection. Belief in the absolute reality of God and love for the God in whom we believe, are at the heart of living morality." (5).

I admit once again that there are few, if indeed any, new positions developed in

my thesis. The reasonings employed are nearly all to be found in works of well-known writers on moral philosophy. Yet I do not feel that lack of originality in this respect need be a serious defect: it does not follow there is a complete absence of constructive thought. A certain creativeness is necessitated in the rendering determinate of one's own standpoint, in the effort to gain for oneself a consistent position from the multiplicity of diverse views. In all cases in which I have drawn on arguments from ethical works, I have, I believe, acknowledged the source of these arguments.
CONTENTS

THE MORAL JUDGMENTS AND THEIR THEISTIC IMPLICATIONS.

I

THE JUDGMENT OF ' OUGHT '.

I

THE NOTION OF ' OUGHT ' INDERIVABLE FROM THE NON-MORAL.

i. Criticism of the attitude of psychological hedonism towards the concept of moral obligation ........................................ p.3.

ii. Obligation cannot be conceived as merely the individual's consciousness of the superior power of society or of some supernatural agency ......................... p.7.

iii. Nor can it be regarded as arising from social sanctions by way of 'association of ideas', or as due to the 'internalisation' of public approbation and disapprobation ......................... p.14.

iv. Defects of the view that obligation is wholly explicable on the grounds of the individual's 'organic relation' to society ........................................ p.18.

v. Unsatisfactory nature of Spencer's conception of 'ought' as the 'greater authority' of a 'compound' over a 'simple' interest ......................... p.20.
vi. Conclusion that obligation is indelivably from the non-moral: it is a unique notion - a 'categorical imperative' ................................ p.23.

II

IMPLICATIONS OF THE MORAL 'OUGHT'.

i. The implication of Objectivity ........ p.25.

ii. The unconditional authority of moral obligation implies the possibility of fulfilment of its commands ............... p.27.

iii. Consciousness of obligation is 'Practical' ................................. p.32.

III

MORAL OBLIGATION POINTS TO GOD.

i. The seat of obligation resides not in our own private wills, but in some transcendent source ...................... p.39.

ii. This transcendent source may be conceived as a Personal God ............ p.46.

II

THE JUDGMENT OF 'MORALLY GOOD'
I

'MORALLY GOOD' CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE
CUSTOMARY.

i. Statement of the position that the Con-
ventional is synonymous with the
'Morally Good' .................................. p.52.

ii. Criticism of this position:
   (i). If morality were nothing but
sociality, there could be no protest
against the conventional ethical life
of the ordinary man of the present
day ......................................................... p.53.
   (ii). There is implied a denial
of intrinsic goodness to morally good
acts ............................................................ p.55.

II

'MORALLY GOOD' CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED WITH A SUB-
JECTIVE ATTITUDE OF APPROVAL.

i. Statement of the position ................. p.60.

ii. Criticism:
   (i). Relativity in the sense of
Subjectivity is not necessitated by the
fact of diversity in moral opinion -
such diversity can be explained on other
grounds ...................................................... p.62.
   (ii). The purely subjective view is
itself inadequate to account for the
differences in moral codes ............. p.70.
   (iii). A further series of criti-
cisms:
       (a). Were the purely
subjective theory true, it would follow
that the same act could be both good and
bad ............................................................ p.75.
(b). A further consequence would be the impossibility of genuine divergency of opinion on ethical questions ........................................ p.77.

(c). Moral judgments at least claim objectivity .................... p.78.

(d). Actions are not made good or bad at the time of judging ......................................................... p.79.

(iv) The basic element in moral approbation is a judgment that the act is good, rather than the experiencing of a certain feeling ............................... p.80.

(v). Thus moral judgments must be ascribed not to the emotions but to Reason - though this does not mean that the feelings of approval and disapproval have no place in the judgment, or that the most intellectual man will also be the best morally ....................... p.84.

III

PARTICULAR INTUITIONS OF MORAL VALUE IMPLY REFERENCE TO AN ' IDEAL GOOD ' OR ' BEST FORM OF LIFE ' .

i. In referring moral judgments to Reason, it is not denied that there are particular Intuitions ......................... p.94.

ii. These intuitions are not barely particular - they always imply a Universal ......................................................... p.97.

iii. Universals in turn have reference to a conception of a ' Best Form of Life ' - an ' Ideal Good ' ................. p.100.
IV

THE IDEAL GOOD MAY BE CONCEIVED AS GOD.

i. The Ideal Good is existent .................... p.III.

ii. This existent Good must be conceived as God

........................................

III

THE JUDGMENT OF 'RIGHT'.

I

THE DEONTOLOGICAL CONCEPTION OF A RIGHT ACT.

i. Tenets and implications of the theory:
   (i). Motives are considered irrelevant to rightness ....................... p.II9.
   (ii). A right 'act' may 'coexist' with a morally evil 'action' ............ p.II9.

ii. Criticism of the theory:
   (i). Motives are not to be excluded from rightness on the grounds that they are uncontrollable, while 'ought' implies 'can' ........................ p.II4.
   (ii). Motives must be relevant to rightness, as they are constituents of voluntary action, and not mere antecedents ......................... p.II4.

iii. Conclusion: As motives pertain to rightness, and as they have moral value, it must follow that the question of rightness also has to do with moral value ........... p.II5.
II
DE BURGH'S CONCEPTION OF RIGHT ACTION AS NOT DEPENDENT ON GOOD.

i. The distinction between 'praxis for praxis' sake' and 'action sub ratione boni' does not prove obligation to be independent of good ................. p.I39.

ii. Criticism of de Burgh's arguments denying that obligation can be grounded in goodness:
   (i). Although it is true that the 'Seinsollen' always has reference to the 'Thunsollen', this does not invalidate the position that an act is right because it is good .................. p.I52.
   (ii). From the unconditional nature of the moral imperative it does not follow that obligation cannot be grounded in goodness ....................... p.I56.
   (iii). The argument that the primary implication of 'right' is 'conformity to rule' does not succeed in establishing the independence of right on good ................................ p.I58.
   (iv). 'Good' is not merely 'theoretical': it is also 'practical' .................. p.I60.

III
INSTRUMENTALISM.

i. G.E. Moore's conception of the relation between right and good:
   (i). A right act is considered as the actual production of the best possible consequences in the circumstances, while motives are regarded irrelevant to the question of rightness .............. p.I64.
ii. Criticism of Moore's view:
   (i). Overt consequences are morally relevant only in so far as they reveal the 'inner side' of the act ..... p.167.
   (ii). If the rightness of actions were made dependent on the actual production of the best possible overt consequences, it would follow that there could never be any knowledge of whether an act was right or wrong ............... p.172.
   (iii). By conceiving duty as of this nature the principle that 'ought' implies 'can' would frequently be violated ......................... p.175.

iii. There are other forms of Instrumentalism which do not make right dependent on the actual materialisation of beneficial consequences, and which recognise it is the volition that is the proper object of moral judgment .......... p.176.

iv. These other forms of Instrumentalism are still faulty, however, in that they conceive a right act as a means to an end - there is not appreciated the intrinsic goodness of a right action ......................... p.179.

IV

CONCEPTION OF THE RIGHT ACT AS IMPLYING GOD.

i. Right action conceived as the expression in a given situation of the requirements of the Ideal Good .......... p.186.

ii. There is implied the imagination on our part of the Will of a perfectly Holy Being - God ......................... p.188.

..........................
IV

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MORAL JUDGMENTS.

I

RIGHT AND DUTY.

i. Criticism of Martineau's identification of Right and Duty - there is a notion of absolute rightness in any given situation as well as that of 'relative rightness' ........................................... p.193.

ii. Defence of the conception of duty as the doing of what is conscientiously believed to be right:
   (i). Reply to Ross's criticism .......... p.199.
   (iii). Reply to de Burgh's criticism ........................................... p.201.

II

THE CONTENT OF DUTY AND RIGHT MAY BE IDENTICAL.

i. Criticism of de Burgh's arguments that we can never know what is right:
   (i). The fact that the Moral Law is Formal does not preclude the possibility of knowledge of some particulars of right conduct ........................................... p.215.
   (ii). Such knowledge would not reduce the moral life to mechanical subjection to a stereotyped code of ethical rules .. p.217.

ii. Criticism of de Burgh's arguments that we can never will what is right:
(i). Wrong action in some instances of conduct does not mean the inevitable besmirching of all future actions ... p.219.
(ii). An act is not wrong merely by reason of its particularity ............... p.220.

III

DUTY AND VIRTUE.

i. Can action from the sense of duty be Virtuous?
   (i). Statement of the negative position - virtue restricted to good acts performed spontaneously .................. p.226.
   (ii). Statement of the positive position ......................... p.228.
   (iii). Criticism of the denial of virtue to action motivated by the sense of duty:
      (a). Action from the sense of obligation can also be 'spontaneous' .................. p.230.
      (b). Virtue is further evidenced in the overcoming of irrational inclinations .................. p.231.

ii. Can virtue be restricted only to such acts as pass beyond the requirements of duty?
   (i). Statement of the positive position ........................................ p.233.
   (ii). Criticism - it is impossible to do more than one's duty ..................... p.234.

IV

DUTIES AND THE IDEAL GOOD.

i. There is both unity and variety in the moral life - the unity being one of prin-
ciple which 'controls and organises life rationally by selection of the better', the variety being determined by the special aptitudes of the agent and the particular situations in which he finds himself ......................... p.239.

ii. Concrete instances so often repeat themselves, or approximately repeat themselves, that various 'prima facie' duties may be recognised ....................... p.244.

iii. The value to the moral life of the recognition of such 'duties' or rules:
   (i). The objectivity of the moral judgment is emphasised - the test of universality is a precaution against self-sophistication ......................... p.246.
   (ii). The 'duties' represent universals as recognised by the highest ethical opinion of our day ....................... p.248.

iv. It is important, however, that a correct attitude to 'duties' be adopted: they must be regarded not as so many unconnected, mutually independent pronouncements on various forms of conduct, but as partial expressions of an Ideal Form of Life ......................... p.248.

...............*................

V

THE THEISTIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE MORAL JUDGMENTS.
I
MORAL EXPERIENCE IMPLIES GOD.

i. Recapitulation of the way in which moral experience points to God ........ p.256.

ii. The nature of God as indicated by moral experience:
   (i). God being not only the goal of moral endeavour, but also its Author and Sustainer, is revealed in His inmost nature as 'Self-giving' ........ p.260.
   (ii). This conception of God is indeed 'anthropomorphic', but anthropomorphism of this kind is justifiable ......................... p.263.

iii. It is not contended that moral experience proves the existence of God, but it is claimed that there is afforded rational grounds for belief ........ p.264.

II

APPENDIX TO I.

i. The witness of Nature to God ........... p.267.

ii. The witness of Religious Experience to God ....................... p.270.

II

THE SENSE IN WHICH MORALITY IS AUTONOMOUS.

i. Moral experience is autonomous in the sense that a man can live the moral life without entertaining explicit religious convictions ................ p.273.

ii. Morality is not autonomous in the sense that it is independent of God - it logically presupposes His existence ....p.275.

iii. Appreciation of the religious implica-
tions of moral experience, does not violate the autonomy of that experience - God is the Moral Law .................. p.278.

III

THE PRACTICAL EFFECT ON ETHICS OF EXPLICIT RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

i. The greater power of religious as compared with non-religious morality:
   (i). Devotion to a person has greater emotional intensity than respect for abstract law .................. p.283.
   (ii). There is the conviction that goodness is grounded in the heart of reality, and that therefore moral effort is not in vain .................. p.285.

ii. Religious morality is characterised by a new spirit - it is 'virtus infusa' .... p.290.
I

THE JUDGMENT OF ' OUGHT '.

The principal aim of my thesis I have described as the attempt to vindicate the persuasiveness if not the necessity of a theistic conception of the universe, this vindication being based on the implications of our moral judgments. It is one of the judgments involving the concept ' ought ' - the judgment frequently made that "I ought to be of a certain character", or that in such and such a situation "I ought to have acted in a certain way". It will be our purpose in this first chapter, not to develop in full what I believe to be the religious implications of the notion of moral obligation, but to prepare the way for such a theistic interpretation by combatting several alternative views - views which if true would render untenable the belief in obligation as pointing to God. The positive aim of the present section will be to reveal the thought.
THE NOTION OF 'ought' INDERIVABLE FROM THE NON-MORAL.

The principal aim of my thesis I have described as the attempt to vindicate the permissibility if not the necessity of a theistic conception of the universe, this vindication being based on the implications of our moral judgments. I shall begin by consideration of the judgment involving the concept 'ought' - the judgment frequently made that "X ought to be of a certain character ", or that in such and such a situation "X ought to have acted in a certain way ". It will be my purpose in this first chapter, not to develop in full what I believe to be the religious implications of the notion of moral obligation, but to prepare the way for such a theistic interpretation by combatting several alternative views - views which if true would render unwarranted the belief in obligation as pointing to God. The positive aim of the present section will be to reveal the 'ought'
of ethics as a unique concept, inderivable from non-moral considerations, a 'categorical imperative' expressing the sense that we have a debt which we are unconditionally bound or obliged to pay. I see no way of proving this apodictically: the moral person, I would contend, directly experiences the ethical 'ought' as of this nature; and the truth of this interpretation can only be substantiated by revealing the inadequacy of alternative conceptions. I shall make it my aim to refer to five such different opinions as to the nature of 'ought':

(a). The attitude adopted by psychological hedonism, (b). The treatment of the notion as merely expressive of a feeling of constraint on the part of the individual by reason of the superior power of society, (c). A modification of this theory by reference to the "association of ideas", or the "internalisation" of social approbation and disapprobation, (d). The view of the conviction of obligation as resulting from the 'organic relation' in which the individual stands to society, and (e). Spencer's conception of 'ought' as due to the 'greater authority' of a 'compound' over a 'simp-
le ' interest.

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL HEDONISM AND MORAL OBLIGATION.

I shall briefly refer to the manner in which the school of psychological hedonism conceived the meaning of the judgment expressing 'ought', for were this view correct it would be purposeless to proceed further with my discussion. The ethical notion of 'ought' is not explained, hardly even "explained away" : it is simply denied. The theory contends that our action, as a mere matter of fact, is always dictated by considerations of personal happiness. To cite the opening words of Bentham's "Principles of Morals and Legislation": "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. .... They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it." If this be true, if all our actions are and
must be directed towards pleasure as an end or away from pain, it becomes meaningless to say that we ought to seek any other end. An egoistic hedonism which merely asserts that we ought to seek our own pleasure, and a Utilitarianism enjoining us to secure the "greatest happiness of the greatest number", alike misdescribe our moral judgments - for by introspection we are convinced we ought to strive after other ends as well as these: but both theories at least recognise that we do make moral judgments of the nature "X ought to do so and so". Psychological hedonism, on the other hand, denies that we ever make judgments of this kind - "I ought to do this" is taken simply as meaning "I shall not get greatest pleasure unless I do this", "doing it is the one and only means to my end". (I).

(I). Such a conception of 'ought' is held, for example, by Abraham Tucker (a writer of the 18th century). Cf. p.145, Vol. I of his work 'The Light of Nature Pursued' (6th. ed. 1842) where the psychological hedonist doctrine that pain and pleasure are the sole determinants of voluntary action is accepted. The acceptance of this position leaves Tucker to offer the following moral advice: "Let every man by my consent study to gratify himself in whatever suits his taste and inclination, for they vary infinitely; onethan's meat, another's poison; what this person likes the (P.T.O.)
view the notion of moral obligation - of the sense of a debt which we are rightfully bound to pay - is bereft of all significance. To quote Carritt on this point: "If hedonism asserts, as it does, 'that we ought always to satisfy the desire for the greatest pleasure', the only objection is that we none of us feel any obligation to do so. But a theory which asserts that we cannot help doing what we think will bring us most pleasure has precluded itself from asking or answering any question about what we ought to do. It can only discuss the wisdom of our forecast." (2).

I think, however, it is now almost universally agreed among moral philosophers next may abhor; what delights at one time may disgust at another.... " (But as) "desire often defeats her own purpose, either by mistaking things for satisfactory which are not, .... or by .... apprehending gratification to lie at a single point, whereas this .... consists in the sun aggregate of enjoyments .... " (men should be advised) " not to take a little in hand in lieu of more they might have by and by. " " Thus the very interests of our desires sometimes requires self-denial, which is recommendable only on that account: nor would I advise a man ever to deny himself unless in order to please himself better another time." Op. cit., p.208. (2). Cf. 'The Theory of Morals', p.13.
that the 'ought' of ethics cannot be dismissed in this high-handed manner. It has been amply revealed how psychological hedonism itself rests upon a fallacy, the fallacy involved in the confusion between the affective tone of conation and the object of conation. The satisfying feeling accompanying successful striving is identified with the end towards which the striving is directed. Such an identification is manifestly impossible: a desire cannot be aroused or created by the anticipation of its own satisfaction. When this distinction between the affective tone and the object of desire is appreciated, it becomes apparent that we need not always desire pleasure; indeed it may be said that we very rarely do desire this, for it is only a jaded and unhealthy appetite that desires first pleasant feeling, and then considers which course of action would most effectively afford such feeling. (3).

(3). On this fallacy involved in the hedonistic psychology, see Rashdall, 'The Theory of Good and Evil', Vol. I, pp.15-20. "There is undoubtedly pleasure in the satisfaction of all desire. But that is a very different thing from asserting that the object is desired because it is thought of as pleasant, and in proportion as it is thought of as pleasant. " Op. cit., p.15.
If, then, the theory that all our actions are and must be directed towards pleasure as an end or away from pain, is itself unsound, we are not forced to accept the conclusion that there is no place in ethics for the notion of moral obligation. As there are other ends of action than pleasure, it is intelligible to say that we ought to seek some in preference to others; psychological hedonism has not succeeded in showing this 'ought' to be meaningless.

ii. **MORAL OBLIGATION CANNOT BE CONCEIVED AS THE CONSCIOUSNESS ON THE PART OF THE INDIVIDUAL OF THE SUPERIOR POWER OF SOCIETY OR OF SOME SUPERNATURAL AGENCY.**

The consciousness of moral obligation which filled Kant with the same reverential awe as did the "starry heavens above" is considered by some naturalistic writers as nothing more than fear on the part of the individual of social disapprobation, of legal punishment, or of divine retribution. This conception is integral to relativistic theories in ethics: if morality
is nothing but a means to an efficient social machine, then the sense of obligation may be considered as the individual's awareness of the power of society to impose its will upon him. This, I take it, is the view of Westermarck. In his 'Ethical Relativity' he writes: "The authority assigned to conscience is really only an echo of the social or religious sanctions of conduct: it belongs to the 'public' or the religious conscience, 'vox populi' or 'vox dei'". (4). It is my belief that such an interpretation of moral obligation is incapable of accounting for its authority: that the attempt at explanation serves merely to 'explain away' the notion. I shall endeavour to reveal the respects in which I hold this naturalistic account to be inadequate.

Consider first the view that the sense of duty is nothing more than the individual's consciousness of the coercion with which society is armed against him. If this theory were

true it would follow that obligation would be restricted merely to what society expects us to do or refrain from doing. I think it evident on the contrary that duty is a 'positive' notion, 'positive' in the sense that it furnishes an ideal for the moral life (5): the fulfilment of one obligation itself leads to the clearer discernment of others, by responding to particular obligations in specific situations we see more clearly the nature of that life which we ought to live. The conception of 'ought' as fear of public opinion, is incapable of accounting for this 'positive' nature of duty.

Further, I would maintain that we feel obliged to do certain actions whether or not society will approve or disapprove. We are often conscious of numerous duties despite the fact we are fully aware society would not disapprove if we were to refrain from fulfilling them; we may even know that we should incur popular dislike by performing our actions, and yet still be unmistak-

ably convinced of our obligation to do them. This, as Sidgwick has pointed out, is a crucial experience proving that for people conscious of such obligations exceeding or even violating social expectations, duty cannot mean merely what society will disapprove of them for not doing. (6).

Another defect of this view as to the nature of the moral 'ought', is that it takes account only of a feeling of constraint. While certainly such a feeling is included in the sense of obligation, it by no means exhausts the whole meaning of the notion; indeed it misrepresents what is actually experienced unless understood as implying that the feeling corresponds to our awareness of an objective situation which constrains us, and it does this by reason of its rightful authority. (7).

(7). The truth of this is clearly vindicated, I believe, in the distinction between moral and quasi-moral sentiments. In cases where we are conscious of these latter, we have a feeling persuading us against the performance of a certain type of act, but the feeling though possessed of constraint has no rightful authority. We recognise that our present disinclination is due to a previous erroneous view as to the moral quality of the act, and that (P.T.O.)
social sanctions view of obligation could explain why an individual feels himself the lesser power, but never why he should confess inferior right. (8). I would admit, indeed, that consciousness of 'ought' may involve the imagination of others condemning us if we fail to fulfil our duty, but we have this imagination only because we should also be self-condemned - self-condemned as failure means disloyalty to what we had seen to be right. It is this sense of the rightful constraining power upon us of some ideal, which I take to be the very essence of the notion of moral obligation: the derivation of 'ought' from fear of social disapproval ignores this essential character.

The attempt to account for the moral 'ought' as resulting partly from legal sanctions is as unsatisfactory as the deduction of obligation from popular approval or disapproval. It is open to precisely the same objections. Perhaps

I may briefly dismiss this treatment of 'ought' by quoting a few sentences from John Grote in which he is criticising Mill's conception of Justice.

"If, as is Mill's view, we have no notion in the first instance of justice (which is surely the same idea as the idea of that which we ought to do) beyond that of conformity to law or command, how can we ever from this make the step to the notion that one law ought to be rather than another? If the notion of 'command' goes before 'that which ought to be', where is the command in virtue of which the laws which ought to be, ought to be?" (9).

The third influence generally recognised by naturalistic writers as contributory to the effect of popular and legal sanctions in the inculcation in a person of a sense of duty, is the fear of punishment by some supernatural agency for any violation of the social mores. The inadequacy of this view is, I think, manifested simply by the reflection that there are many people who do not be-

(9). See Grote: 'Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy', p.158.
lieve in the existence of such agencies, people who are yet moved by a sense of obligation. And with those who do believe in divine retribution, 'ought' does not express fear of penalties. As Sidgwick states: "... Even in the case of many of those who believe fully in the moral government of the world, 'I ought to do this' cannot be identified with the judgment, 'God will punish me if I do not', since the conviction that the former proposition is true is distinctly recognised as an important part of the grounds for believing the latter." (10). It is not that I object to the view of duty as expressing the Will of God - on the contrary it will be my purpose to sustain this position - but I would contend that we arrive at this belief through first experiencing the unconditional nature of moral obligation and through our reverence for that which constrains us. This is a vastly different conception from that which regards the consciousness of 'ought' as mere fear of supernatural penalties.

iii. MORAL OBLIGATION CANNOT BE CONCEIVED AS ARISING FROM SOCIAL SANCTIONS BY WAY OF 'ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS', OR AS DUE TO THE 'INTERNALISATION' OF SOCIAL APPROBATION AND DISAPPROBATION.

I would conclude that the 'ought' of ethics cannot be reduced to the apprehension on the part of the individual of sanctions—whether popular, legal, or religious. Moral obligation does not signify mere fear of incurring punishment: it refers to some objective situation rightfully requiring of us a certain response. And a transition between these two views cannot be made, as has sometimes been attempted, by way of 'association of ideas'—that is, for example, from the desire not to receive punishment by performing an act, to the desire not to do that act under any circumstances, even when there is no possibility of detection and disagreeable consequences. On reasoning of this kind, as Carritt has observed, (II), we should have to conclude that the miser's love of money would

be a moral judgment that he ought to amass it. Between sense of fear and consciousness of rightful authority there is a complete gulf - the latter cannot be reduced to the former without depriving it of all moral significance.

Equally unsatisfactory is the attempt to effect a transition between these two conceptions by consideration of the intimate relation in which the individual stands to society. The consciousness of 'ought' and 'ought not' is viewed as resulting from the *internalisation* of social approbation and disapprobation. This, for instance, is the account of moral obligation as presented in James Mill's *Fragment on Mackintosh*. (I2). Sanctions are devised by society in order to elicit from the individual only socially useful acts. But the individual is himself a member of the public body, and is accustomed to pass the same censure on other people's conduct as social opinion passes on his own analogous acts. "When therefore an action which

he would condemn in another proceeds from himself, he not only sees what it will bring upon him from its witnesses, but, as one of these witnesses, shares their displeasure and is self-condemned. Hence, the feeling of compunction and remorse, on the one hand, of self-satisfaction and self-applause on the other, are but a personal loan, for private use, of the public sentiment embodied in the established rule; and by the agent's application of it in his own case it becomes an internal law, by which he can administer the affairs of his own commonwealth of thought and desire. " (I3). I would admit, indeed, that this view is not so crude as those I have hitherto considered - the element of self-condemnation resulting from the violation of duty is at least recognised, and an explanation attempted: the consciousness of 'ought' is not regarded as simply fear of external sanctions. Yet it is still hopelessly inadequate. Content of obligation would be restricted exclusively to what society ordains, these ordinances being

confined solely to social utility. There is no thought that both the individual and society should remould themselves after an Ideal Form. Further, it is impossible to account for the inner constraint as resulting from social imposition of an outer restraint. As Martineau observes in this connection, such an 'explanation' of the sense of duty is at least hypothetical, and it would be just as plausible to maintain that the law we impose on others is the externalisation of that which overawes ourselves, as vice versa. "The truth is .... that both factors, the felt inner binding on ourselves and the enacted outer restraint upon our fellows, are parallel and concurrent expressions of the same nature; neither is before or after the other; and so long as we dispute whether it is the individual constitution that makes the world, or the world that makes the individual constitution, the controversy will spin an endless round. The action and reaction are infinite; and the real question is, how is constituted and with what inspiration is endowed, that humanity which has its unity and completeness, not in the lonely mind, but only in the individuals of a kind.
raised by their whole system of relations into types of the nature which they represent. " (I4). Thus it is impossible to appreciate the full meaning of moral obligation by conceiving it as the internalisation of social sanctions: an account of this nature doubtless portrays some of the processes which do actually mingle with our moral experience, but they are not its 'constitutive essentials', only its 'subsidiary accidents'. (I5).

iv. THE CONCEPTION OF MORAL OBLIGATION AS RESULTING FROM THE INDIVIDUAL'S 'ORGANIC RELATION' TO SOCIETY.

According to this theory, obligation is due not simply to the superior 'power' of society over the individual, but to the latter's interest in the observance of social laws owing to his own 'organic relation' to the public body. This view may be represented by Leslie Stephen. In his 'Science of Ethics' he contends that "moral

laws are statements of essential conditions of social welfare ", and their 'authority' as felt, depends upon the agent having 'certain instincts', namely, a reverence for social welfare. Without this he may obey extrinsic interest or coercion, but owns no moral authority. (I6). This reverence for public good is possible as society is not a mere aggregate of individuals but an 'organism'; that is to say, the individual does not realise his own 'totality of functions' except in relation to the whole. His own welfare is consequently dependent on social welfare, and must include this as its most essential condition. (I7).

This account of obligation I would regard as open to at least two objections. In the first place, although it is doubtless true that the individual does not attain his 'totality of functions' except in relation to the whole, the nature of such dependence does not warrant the con-

clusion that society is an 'organism'. If a man is at the same time a member of a certain political party, of a certain religious denomination, and of a certain scientific association, we may well ask: what is the 'organism' in which he is an 'organ'? To conceive the relation between the individual and society so intimate as to be called 'organic', is to ignore the fact of individual personality. Secondly, the explanation given does not touch the essential point of moral obligation - its rightful authority. The theory, as Martineau points out, could "explain the growth of social affections parallel with the personal instincts of self-conservation, and capable of transcending them", but "it leaves the question between them in case of conflict, to be one of strength alone - without other authority to decide the alternative between self-preservation and self-sacrifice. " Moral obligation, on the contrary, so far from expressing the superior strength of one interest over another, always has reference to superior right.

v. SPENCER'S CONCEPTION OF 'OUGHT' AS DUE TO THE
Spencer regards the inherited effects of sanctions - social, political, and religious - as partly contributory to the sense of obligation. But he recognises that this is not a sufficient explanation - indeed in so far as it is urged that duty originated exclusively from fear of departed ancestors and supernatural beings, the theory, if true, would undermine the belief which it professes to explain. For in so far as a man comes to believe that the feeling of awe with which he contemplates the idea of failure in duty is due solely to the inherited terror of now powerless chiefs or of ghosts which no longer walk the earth, that terror must tend to vanish. (I8). Realising this, Spencer conceives the element of constraint due to such unfounded fears as only a part of the notion of obligation - indeed not the chief part: it is only temporary, sure to retreat and disappear. The most significant idea in

obligation is not that of compulsiveness but of authority. This would be very well were it not for the manner in which Spencer considers in what the authority of one course of action over another resides. He argues that accumulated experiences have produced the consciousness that guidance by feelings which refer to remote and general results is usually more conducive to welfare than guidance by feelings to be immediately gratified. " For what is the common character of the feelings that prompt to honesty, truthfulness, diligence, providence, etc. which men habitually find to be better prompters than the appetites and simple impulses? They are all complex, re-representative feelings, occupied with the future rather than the present. The idea of authoritative-ness has therefore come to be connected with feelings having these traits: the implication being that the lower and simpler feelings are without authority. " (I9). That is, the remote outlook and the more comprehensive motive is found to be the safer guide to self-preservation, and this prepossession on its be-

half constitutes its authority. The impossibility of identifying such a conception of authority with the authority revealed in moral obligation is surely apparent. Spencer's view merely presents us with the difference between long and short-sighted prudence: it is a difference which would have place in a rational constitution purely immoral; it has nothing to do with the ground of duty. (20).

I would conclude that the notion of moral obligation cannot be either denied as by psychological hedonism, or derived from non-moral considerations - whether such a derivation be attempted by reference to the external restraint of sanctions, to the direct interest of individuals in public welfare due to their presumed 'organic relation' to society, or to the superior 'authority' of complex over simple interests by virtue of the greater conduciveness of the former to self-preservation. If obligation is denied, ethics is bereft of all meaning (21); if it is explained in terms of the non-

(21). Cf. Grote on this point: ".... all moral science must begin with assuming that (P.T.O.)
moral, there results a description of the moral life which is little more than a parody. It must be recognised that 'ought' is a unique notion - a 'categorical imperative' denoting unconditional obligation. Certainly it may be difficult in any specific situation to determine what precisely is my duty, but when once determined, it, and it alone, is what I ought to do. (22). Such absolute authority, I would contend, cannot be accounted for in the various attempts to explain the notion in the light of pre-moral antecedents.

There is something imperative upon us to do, or desirable for us to do; we must begin, that is, with an ideal. If it does not make this assumption, its real course is the exceedingly unphilosophical one of beginning with describing what man does do, and then, by degrees and unauthorisedly, altering its language and speaking of this as what he should do or ought to do. " ( 'Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy' : Introduction, p.3.) It has been this conviction of the indispensability to morals of an indervivable 'ought', which leads Grote to insist that a true ethical system must be 'Idealist' and not a form of 'Positism'. (22). See de Burgh: 'From Morality to Religion', p.53.
II

IMPLICATIONS OF THE MORAL ' OUGHT '.

In the last chapter I endeavoured to show that 'ought' was a unique notion inexplicable in terms of the non-moral - it is a categorical imperative expressing unconditional obligation. It will now be my purpose to emphasise what I believe to be some of the implications of this concept - in particular those of objectivity, of the possibility of fulfilment of its commands, and of its 'practical' nature.

1. THE IMPLICATION OF OBJECTIVITY.

In the unconditional authority of moral obligation is implied what may be termed its 'objectivity'. By this is meant that the judgment 'X ought to do Y', if true at all, is true for all rational beings. I have indicated in the discussion on the authority of obligation in the previous chapter, how such authority attaches not to the
mere sentiment of 'compulsiveness' as such, but to a judgment of rightness implicit in the sentiment. (I). And such a judgment - like all judgments - will be valid for all minds unless erroneous. It follows that the judgment expressive of 'ought' is not, as Bentham would maintain, the mere play of opinionative despotism: it is valid not merely for the individual that affirms it, but for all similar persons in similar circumstances. To quote Sidgwick: "The authority of moral obligation is not merely subjective: ... it essentially claims to be 'independent of the individual's idiosyncracies' just as the truths of mathematics are." (2). Such objectivity does not of course mean that one man's duty must be identical with another's - as I shall later insist in this thesis, the content of duty varies with the abilities and circumstances of the person. (3). It does mean however, - and this I consider as important - that "conscience does not

(2). Cf. 'The Ethics of Green, Spencer, and Martineau', p.346.
(3). See later, p.240 seq.
frame the law, it simply reveals the law that holds us. " (4). The significance of this is that it is at least suggestive of what I shall later maintain to be the religious implications of the consciousness of obligation.

ii. **THE UNCONDITIONAL AUTHORITY OF MORAL OBLIGATION IMPLIES THE POSSIBILITY OF FULFILMENT OF ITS COMMANDS.**

What we judge ought to be done is always thought capable of being brought about by the volition of any person to whom the judgment applies. (5). In Kantian terminology, ' ought ' implies ' can '. This implication, it appears to me, follows directly from the authority of the ' ought ' - we could not feel unconditionally obliged to do that which it was impossible for us to do. The principle, however, has been questioned by some moralists - for instance by Laird. He instances the view of many theologians that the Moral Law commands us to do

what of ourselves we cannot do, and therefore Divine Grace must be given us. (6). But I would not regard belief in the necessity of Divine Grace for moral progress as incompatible with the doctrine that 'ought' implies 'can': the theologians themselves would probably say that grace to do right, humbly sought, is always given, and we can and ought to do our part to seek this.

Laird further argues that "if the maxim 'ought' implies 'can' is interpreted voluntaristically, it must be taken to imply that no one ought to do what he believes he cannot do. And this proposition is not at all obvious." For ".... what if our beliefs are mistaken? Might it not then be our duty to do what in fact we can do although we believe we cannot, or to avoid doing what in fact we cannot do, although we falsely believe we can do it?" (7). To this argument I would reply that if any agent sincerely believes it completely impossible for him to perform a certain action, then he is not obliged to do it; if however he is aware of there

(7). Ibid. p.69.
being any possibility of success, even of imperfect attainment of the end envisaged, then he is obliged to strive to the very best of his ability to effect fulfilment. The maxim that 'ought' implies 'can' is on this view not violated.

The doubt of some as to the validity of this principle is due, I believe, to a certain ambiguity in the term 'ought' as used in ethics. The concept may signify that of moral obligation - and it is with this sense that my discussion has been concerned - or, on the other hand, it may express some 'ideal pattern' which we 'ought', in the first sense, to endeavour to attain. This dual significance of the term is recognised by Sidgwick. To cite a passage from 'The Methods of Ethics': "... It is important to note and distinguish two different implications with which the word 'ought' is used: in the narrowest ethical sense what we judge 'ought to be done' is always thought capable of being brought about by the volition of any individual to whom the judgment applies. I cannot conceive that I 'ought' to do anything which at the same time I judge that I cannot do. In
a wider sense, however, - which cannot conveniently be discarded - I sometimes judge that I 'ought' to know what a wiser man would know, or feel as a better man would feel, in my place, though I may know that I could not directly produce in myself such knowledge by any effort of will. In this case the word merely implies an ideal or pattern which I 'ought' - in the stricter sense - to seek to imitate as far as possible. " (8). This second use of 'ought', that is to say, really means what is 'morally fitting': it designates a norm to which it is obligatory we approximate. By the recognition of these two significations of 'ought' - as a categorical imperative and as an ideal giving rise

(8). Cf. Op. cit., p.33. It may be admitted that frequently when we say 'I ought to know what a wiser man would know' or 'feel as a better man would feel', there is implied culpable failure in the past to have taken full advantage of opportunities of gaining wider knowledge or controlling our feelings. I think, nevertheless, we sometimes do use the word 'ought' without implying any previous neglect of duty. For example, I could say 'I ought to have an appreciation of good poetry and music', meaning by this that it is desirable for me to have such an appreciation: the judgment could be made even though I recognise I have had few opportunities in the past for the cultivation of right judgment in these spheres.
to such an imperative - we are enabled to maintain
that 'ought' as used in the first sense does imply
the possibility of fulfilment of the obligations
under which we are placed. For we are not obliged
to be ideally perfect here and now, but to attain
such a state of perfection - and this effort we al-
ways can make. (9) & (10).

(9). For defence of this position see later, Chapter
on 'Right and Duty', pp.I9I-212.
(10). In an article in 'Mind', Jan. 1939, Ewing
recognises two such meanings of 'ought' but he
attempts to define the first in terms of the second.
He suggests that we might analyse 'X ought (first
sense) to do this', as meaning: (a). 'X ought
(second sense) to do this', i.e., it is fitting
that he should do this, and (b). 'If X does not
do this he ought (second sense) to be an object
of the emotion of moral disapproval.' I cannot
myself agree to this reduction to other terms of the
categorical imperative - it seems to me that we can
experience by direct contact the reality of the Moral
Law unconditionally commanding us to act in a certain
way, and this cannot be adequately interpreted as the
consciousness that if we do not try to do what is
fitting, it will be fitting that we be an object of
moral disapproval. I do not deny that this con-
sciousness may be present with the notion of moral
obligation, but there is in addition to this the con-
viction that we unconditionally ought to do what we
believe is fitting in the given circumstances. In-
stead of reducing the one notion to the other, I would
regard the two as correlative.
iii. CONSCIOUSNESS OF OBLIGATION IS 'PRACTICAL'.

The consciousness of moral obligation is itself, as Richard Price and (more recently) Sidgwick have insisted, a motive. It is this which is meant by calling reason 'practical'—that is, by itself it moves the will to action. (II). The practical nature of reason is implied in the description of the awareness of duty as an 'imperative', and in the ascription to such consciousness of unconditional authority. To use Rashdall's words: "In claiming for the idea of duty not merely existence but authority, we have implied that the recognition that something is our duty supplies us with what we recognise upon reflec-

(II). Cf. Price: 'Review of the Principal Questions in Morals', pp.197-8. "Wherever there is obligation there is also a motive for action." p.323: "The perception of right and wrong does excite to action, and is alone a sufficient principle of action." (Quoted by de Burgh: 'From Morality to Religion', pp.58-9.) Cf. also T.H. Green's 'Introduction to Hume, II'. It is here Green's main criticism of the ethical systems of Locke and Hume that they involve no recognition of "the work of reason in constituting the moral judgment ('I ought') as well as the moral motive ('I must, because I ought')". - 'Works of T.H. Green' (ed. Nettle-ship 7th. edition) Vol.I, p.328.
tion as a sufficient motive for doing it, a motive on which it is psychologically possible to act. The recognition of the thing as right is capable of producing an impulse to the doing of it. " (I2).

While consciousness of duty is in itself capable of producing a motive for doing what we ought, it of course does not follow that this always prevails over other possible incentives to action. In human beings it is only one motive among others which are liable to conflict with it; it is not always - perhaps not usually - a predominant motive. (I3). Such a possibility of conflict is implied in the characterisation of duty as an 'imperative', and in speaking of the 'dictates' of reason. In Kantian phrase: "Obligation indicates the relation of an objective law of reason to a will which from its subjective constitution is not necessarily determined by it." (I4). 'Ought'

always seems to imply at least liability to disobedience.

From this admission it is false to conclude that duty is therefore always performed against desire. Liability of conflict is not the same as necessity of conflict. The positive aspect of obligation - the imperativeness of the 'ought' - is its most significant character, and this can be recognised even when there is no conflicting inclination prompting to a course of action incompatible with the performance of duty. I would agree with Ross when he states that "the sense of duty really means the sense that we ought to do certain acts **whether or not** on other grounds we desire to do them, and no matter with what intensity we may desire, on other grounds, not to do them." (I5). Certainly the overcoming of rival desires in contributing to the doing of what we ought, is indicative of the strength of our devotion to duty, but this devotion may be equally strong

(I5). Cf. 'The Right and the Good', p.158.
when resisting inclinations are feeble or even non-existent. I see no reason why we should not admit that we can actively desire to do our duty. (I6). That this is possible is shown, I believe, by the spontaneity which may characterise action motivated by the sense of obligation. On discerning what is right in a given situation we may immediately desire to do all in our power to effect this; we may even be possessed of a dominating sentiment to live our lives in the discharge of duties as they arise. (I7). John Grote who certainly cannot be charged with minimising the element of restraint and submission implied in the consciousness of 'ought', is yet

(I6). It should be remembered that although Kant initially disallowed this position, he later admitted in his 'Metaphysic of Morals' that reason has the power "to infuse a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction in the fulfilment of duty." (Op. cit., p. 97 - trans. Abbott - ) Such an admission does not result in 'heteronomy' of the will, since the 'ethical pleasure' is not the original motive to the doing of what we ought, but an effect of habitual devotion to duty.

(I7). What I have termed a 'dominating sentiment' always to do the right, should perhaps more accurately be regarded as the organisation of our moral sentiments into one comprehensive system centred upon a supreme object - the doing of what is right. I have in mind what Bowman in his book, 'A Sacramental Universe' calls the affective correlate of a good man's 'policy'. Cf. Op. cit., p. 389 & p. 397.
fully alive to the possibility of obligation assuming a predominantly positive character. To refer to his writings: " .... Yet in the worthier temperaments of mind the feeling of duty has a constant tendency to blend itself with the feeling of enterprising freedom, almost self-willidness, which I have described as belonging to virtue. From this blending it catches a life and flame which carries it far beyond rule and may even give it an enthusiastic character; as we see in the old chivalric idea of 'devoir', the very essence of which was the most complete spontaneous and putting forth of individual force and will, joined at the same time with the feeling of the absolute impossibility of acting in any other way. The idea is that which is expected of us, that which we are trusted to do .... and, on the other side, of the wish to justify such expectations and trust. " (I8). When this positive character of the sense of duty is appreciated, it becomes impossible to conceive it as exclusively manifested in conflict with desire. Its

(I8). Cf. 'Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy', p.166.
most significant aspect is revealed as the consciousness of some power which by reason of its rightful authority constrains us to act in a certain way.

It will now be my aim to reveal the manner in which the judgment of ' ought ' points to the consciousness of some power which by reason of its rightful authority constrains us to act in a certain way.

Pareto has said: ' We know that it is impossible there is no passage from ' is ' to ' ought '. Whatever ethics we adopt as the touchstone of the rightness of an action, the ultimate judgment which decides the realization of that standard must contain an unconditional and irreducible ' ought '.

(1) See ' The Lectures on Politics ', p. 13, 45.
It will now be my aim to reveal the manner in which the judgment of 'ought' points to God. In thus maintaining that moral obligation has ontological implications, I am not violating my previous contention regarding the indefinability of 'ought' from the non-moral — that obligation cannot be determined by philosophical world-views in which the moral has not itself been included. I reassert this former position. As Pringle-Pattison has said: "Here Kant's position is impregnable; there is no passage from 'is' to 'ought'. Whatever scheme of ethics we follow, whatever standard we adopt as the touchstone of the rightness of an action .... the ultimate judgment which enjoins the realisation of that standard must contain an unconditional and irreducible 'ought'." (I).

However, just because obligation has this irreducible character, it must also serve to throw light on reality as a whole. Being itself a most vital element in human experience it must contribute to the full interpretation of that experience. Accordingly I regard it as not inconsistent to contend that the irreducible 'ought' of ethics has ontological implications. (2).

i. THE SEAT OF OBLIGATION RESIDES NOT IN OUR OWN

(2). Cf. Sorley. In considering the problem of the contribution which ethical ideas have to make to the view of the world as a whole, he writes: "In its mere statement the problem inverts a traditional and customary order of thought. It is the more usual, as it seems the more obvious course, to explain ethical ideas by reference to the nature of things than to take them as a clue for the interpretation of reality. But we have seen the difficulties of the former method. In it the characteristic notion of ethical valuation is never deduced; it is only introduced surreptitiously. From 'is' to 'ought', from existence to goodness, there is no way that logic has not blocked. The other method, however, remains open to us. " ('Moral Values and the Idea of God', p.183.) " .... Moral experience, and the moral order of which we are conscious, are part of the material which we have to take into account before we have a right to accept any philosophical theory or to adopt it as an adequate point of view for the interpretation of reality as a whole." - Op. cit., p.5II.
the play of opinionative despotism. " (3). Thus it must be concluded that the dictates of the moral consciousness are not to be ascribed to our own private wills.

Yet there is a ground on which this conclusion may be questioned. It could be argued that the objectivity of 'ought' could be acknowledged without denying that the source of obligation resides in the self - the authority of moral commands may be conceived as the dictates of a higher to a lower self. The exponents of this view attempt to split the mental constitution into a plurality of principles or faculties, and obligation is then regarded as a relation between 'its superior and inferior parts'. (4). However I cannot myself consider this a satisfactory solution of the matter. I would contend that the unconditional authority necessitates that we conceive the source of obligation as not in my higher self, but in a source higher far than this. For "if the sense of authority means any-

thing it means the discernment of something higher than we, having claims on our self - and therefore no mere part of it; - hovering over and transcending our personality, though also mingling with our consciousness and manifested through its intimations."

(5).

There is another consideration which renders impossible the ascription of moral authority to a higher self conceived as uninfluenced by a source transcendent of it. And this consideration is, that were our higher self morally legislative, then it would be expected that we could know what is right in specific situations more frequently than we actually do. Further, doubt as to the right course of action would be removed solely by

(5). Cf. Op. cit., p.97. Cf. also Pringle-Pattison who identifies this 'higher source' of obligation with God (a position which I shall myself try later to defend): "The authority claimed by what is commonly called the higher self is.... only intelligible if the ideals of that self are recognised as the immediate presence within us of a Spirit leading us into all truth and goodness. Consciousness of imperfection, the capacity for progress, and the pursuit of perfection, are alike possible to man only through the Universal Life of thought and goodness in which he shares." - 'The Idea of God', p.37.
theoretical reflection, by more comprehensive self-knowledge. Moral experience testifies to the falsity of this conclusion. Fuller insight as to our duty is acquired not merely or even mainly by theoretical reflection as to ends of conduct: it is gained principally by being faithful to the Moral Law in those instances where we do discern the substance of its commands. In Taylor's words: "It is only as we become more and more personally moralised by faithful performance of already known duties that the full demand of duty upon us is progressively disclosed. We learn what the law of the moral life is by obeying it, clear knowledge does not precede performance, but follows upon it." (6). This being so we are compelled to conclude that "the 'reason' which in the last resort prescribes the law of duty is not ours in possession; it is a reason which is only communicated to us in part and gradually, and that in proportion to our faithfulness to the revelation already received. We do not make the law, we discover it and

assent to it. " (7). Taylor points out how it was Kant's failure to realise that the morally legislative Reason is one into which we grow, and not our own in the sense of being eternally in our possession, that accounts for the barrenness of the 'categorical imperative' when considered a sufficient moral criterion as distinct from the very different conception of it as the supreme principle of right action. The fact that moral experience proves continually the falsity of Kant's singular contention that no honest man can ever be in doubt or perplexity about the path of duty, is itself evidence that it is not our self-existent reason which is the source of obligation, but a Reason more extensive than ours - in which Reason, in so far as our moral discernment is true, we may be said to participate. (8).

(7). Cf. Op. cit., p.159. Cf. also p.153: "The moral law by which our conduct is to be judged is not, from our birth, written in indelible characters on the tables of the heart. It is gradually disclosed as we gradually grow into humanity. Its primal seat, then, cannot be in a reason which is already ours by possession, but must be in that 'reason' into conformity with which we are slowly growing." (8). Cf. Op. cit., pp.150-9.
I would regard the correctness of this conception as vindicated by the attitude of reverence which is experienced by the soul responding to the moral law. If it were true that obligation resulted from the dictates of a higher to a lower self - the first self regarded as insulated from any influence superior to it - then such reverence would be tantamount to self-worship - a "peculiarly detestable kind of idolatry". (9).

True reverence is only possible because my individual will is not wholly autonomous: it presupposes the seat of obligation as other than and higher than my own will. As Taylor says: "It is just because the reason which is the source of the moral law is not originally mine, nor that of any man or all men, that I can reverence it without reservations." (10). Thus I would see in the attitude of

(10). Cf. Op. cit., p.152. Cf. also de Burgh: "We are indeed self-legislative in moral volition, for the command speaks from within; as the voice of practical reason, it constitutes, in Kant's language, our moral personality. But the autonomy and the personality are alike defective." It is impossible to say "that the authority is relative only to our lower nature. It is recognised by reason (P.T.O.)
worship felt towards the 'legislator' of our duties, evidence confirming the conclusion that the seat of obligation resides not in our own private wills, but in some transcendent source.

ii. **THE TRANSCENDENT SOURCE OF OBLIGATION MUST BE CONCEIVED AS A PERSONAL GOD.**

The point I have last mentioned - the reverence experienced towards the moral law - has further significance: it not only shows that it is from a source higher than ourselves that our moral obligations flow, it also throws light on the nature of this source - the Reason which is the moral law is revealed to be one with the God of religion. This identification follows from the nature of worship. For, "we cannot worship that which is no richer in quality than our own self; we can only worship that which is already all, and more than itself, which, as is implied by Kant's language .... bows in adoration before the sublimity of the law. To warrant such recognition, the law must be conceived as not merely immanent, but as transcendent. " - 'From Morality to Religion', p.216.
all, we mean when we speak of ourselves as living, intelligent, moral and personal. .... That which we worship must be capable of continuing to sustain our worship, however much further we progress along the road which has already led us into such personal moral life as we enjoy. " We are justified, then, in viewing the source of the Moral Law as a "living, spiritual, and personal God." (II).

I believe that this interpretation receives support from reflection on another element of moral experience - the sense of sin. In the consciousness of moral failure or guilt, there becomes most apparent the 'intention of the soul'

(II). Cf. Op. cit., p.159. Compare also Martineau. I have followed his argument that the authority of obligation cannot be attributed to the influence of a part of ourselves over another part, but must be ascribed to something higher than we, having claims on our self, and therefore no mere part of it. Martineau continues: "If I rightly interpret this sentiment, I cannot therefore stop within my own limits, but am irresistibly carried on to the recognition of another than I. Nor does that 'other' remain without further witness: the predicate 'higher than I' takes me yet a step beyond; for what am I? A person: 'Higher' than whom no 'thing' assuredly - no mere phenomenon - can be: but only another Person, greater and higher and of deeper insight." - 'Types of Ethical Theory', Vol.II, p.97.
towards a Person rather than to a law. Such consciousness is different in kind from any discontent with our surroundings - there is a dissatisfaction with self, a self-condemnation. And the poignant shame which goes with the sense of sin, precludes our accounting for it as due to infractions of impersonallaw: it indicates rather an unfaithfulness to a person who merits our trust. To quote Taylor on this point: " ... When we feel as we ought to feel about the evil in ourselves, we cannot help recognising that our position is not so much that of someone who has broken a wise and salutary regulation, as of one who has insulted or proved false to a person of supreme excellence entitled to whole hearted devotion." (I2). The sense of sin requires that the Moral Law be conceived as a person being - a Being of transcendent purity and holiness of character - God. (I3).

(I3). It must be acknowledged that it has been denied that the sense of sin is a feature of the moral life. de Burgh, for instance, while recognising that the consciousness of sin is characteristic of religion, maintains that morality has (P.T.O.)
I conclude that the judgment of 'ought', the notion of moral obligation, may justifiably be held as pointing to the existence of God. The unconditional imperatives of obligation cannot be regarded as dictates of the natural self, not even of the 'higher' self, unless this be viewed as our apprehension of a Reason itself transcendent. And the unqualified reverence we have for this Reason, the sense of sin when its dictates only to do with faults or vice. (Cf. 'From Morality to Religion', pp.26-8.) Thus in regard to Taylor's analysis of the idea of guilt - (i). Self-condemnation, (ii). Indelibility, (iii). Ill-desert calling for punishment, (iv). The sense of polution, and (v). Personal treason against a personal and living God - de Burgh will allow that only the first and third characteristics - self-condemnation and the recognition of ill-desert - are properly ethical: the appreciation of guilt as an offence against God, he regards as falling wholly within the province of religion. I would myself maintain that the nature of self-condemnation is itself such as to warrant the conception of 'vice' as an unfaithfulness to God. I do not think that the spheres of ethics and religion are so sharply separated as de Burgh considers them. A morality inspired by any ideal higher than 'respectability' has itself religious implications, and the difference between 'mere' morality and the 'virtus infusa' of the saint (Cf. Op. cit., pp.236-61) lies in the degree of explicitness with which these implications are appreciated, and in the extent to which such appreciation affects the nature of our actions.
are disobeyed, suggest that it can only adequately be conceived, not as abstract law, but as a personal Being, the source of all goodness - in short, the God of religious worship.
THE JUDGMENT OF 'MORALLY GOOD'.
I

' MORALLY GOOD ' CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE CUSTOMARY.

I shall turn now to the second form of ethical judgment I have mentioned, namely the judgment that such and such an action is ' morally good '. I will be my purpose to maintain the position that a morally good action is intrinsically good - by virtue of its inherent nature: that such goodness is recognised ' intuitively ' by reason, and not ' read into ' the act by the appreciating subject. I shall further contend that our discernment of moral goodness always has reference to some conception - however vague this may be - of an ' Ideal Good ' or ' Best Form of Life ', and that this Supreme Good may most appropriately be regarded as a Personal God. I admit I do not see how the truth of these positions can be definitely proved: as in the treatment of the notion of moral obligation all that can be done towards establishing the validity of any tenet, is to
show that it accounts more fully for the facts of moral experience than any other interpretation. I shall begin, then, by considering some alternative views as to the meaning of 'morally good', and endeavour to reveal in what respects they appear to me as inadequate. First I shall refer to the identification of that concept with the 'customary'.

i. STATEMENT OF THE POSITION THAT THE CONVENTIONAL IS SYNONYMOUS WITH THE MORALLY GOOD.

"The close connection between manners and morals, the obvious origin of the former in social tastes, and provision in the latter for social needs, the apparently equal variation of both with change of time and place, have naturally suggested the idea of their virtual identity, and of the expression in both of them of nothing more than the wishes of the majority." (I). Such a view is in line with the conception of moral obligation as the consciousness of the individual of the coercive

force with which society can impose its wants upon him. Just as the conviction of 'ought' is held to be derived from the individual's relation to society, so his knowledge of what ought to be done, what ought to be, what is morally good, is regarded as resulting from his acquaintance with social demands. His moral sentiments are considered "simply as an adoption of the public wish, his conscience, an appropriation of its pleased or displeased moods". (2).

ii. CRITICISM OF THIS POSITION.

(i). IF MORALITY WERE NOTHING BUT SOCIALITY THERE COULD BE NO PROTEST AGAINST THE CONVENTIONAL MORALITY OF THE ORDINARY MAN OF THE PRESENT DAY.

My first criticism of this view is that were it true - were our ideas of 'morally good' determined solely by what society demands of us - it would be inexplicable how we could ever have ideas of a greater or truer good than is ex-

pressed in the lives of those among whom we live. Yet the manifest fact is that moral men do have such ideas. It is indefensible to say that notions of a 'better' merely represent the demands of some new social group which is growing up within the old: the conventions of some newly dominant social class may be recognised by the individual as either morally better or worse than those of the class superseded. Moreover an explanation of this nature would ignore the fact that higher moral ideas are often first evident to some single person, and that they are subsequently appreciated by other men, not because this person can impose his will upon them, but because the ideals he proclaims are recognised to be truly higher. The teachings of the great moral leaders of the world do not merely reflect the conventions of some newly paramount social class.

Further, supposing the difficulty in accounting for the presence of higher moral conceptions surmounted, it would still follow that there could be no obligation for the individual to try to give effect to such ideals. To be charged with remaining satisfied with a conventional morality
could never be a mode of reproach. The identification of morality with custom would practically rule out the possibility of moral progress. For progress always has reference to a good which so far from being already attained, is not even a 'relatively better', but an 'absolutely best'. In Taylor's words: "All the progress of individual man, or of societies, has found its inspiration in a 'divine discontent', a sense of best which is beyond all the good which has so far been achieved. It is the men who will be content with nothing but the best whom we have to thank for every serious advance which man and society have actually made towards even a moderately 'better'". (3). A conception of morality which identifies the good with the customary can find no place for such a 'divine discontent' - it would simply have to condemn it as immoral.

(ii). THERE IS IMPLIED A DENIAL OF INTRINSIC GOODNESS TO MORALLY GOOD ACTS.

My second main criticism of

this identification of the morally good with that which is socially enjoined, is the implied denial of intrinsic goodness to morally good acts. Moral approbation and disapprobation are regarded as a device of society for eliciting from the individual socially useful acts. They are conceived, as Martineau words it, as "an artificial mechanism invented as a bribe or threat to stir a will which would otherwise fail us." (4). Judgments of good and bad, in fact, would actually mean what it is mainly convenient to approve or disapprove. So far from this being true however, these judgments really designate objective characters of actions. We generally (5) approve an act because it has merited such commendation, it is in itself good by virtue of its volition, apart from the goodness of its results. And it is this inherent goodness

(5). I include the qualification 'generally' as we must acknowledge that sometimes praise and blame are used merely to encourage or discourage a man's efforts. (See below, footnote (7) p.57.) But when praise and blame are employed exclusively for such a purpose, I would not regard them as denoting moral judgments.
which we have in mind when morally approving - we are not thinking that the sole reason for our appro-
bation is the encouragement of similar acts in the future. I may cite Grote on this point: "Though (our ideas of action as honourable and worthy) may be connected very much with actual estimation, and in this respect with opinion and praise of others, it does not depend upon this: the feeling or action is felt as having a value on which the praise-worthi-
ness follows; and a value in itself, besides what may be given it by its result, by the good it does."
(6). Were the contrary true, that is, were judgments of good but a means of promoting serviceable acts, then it would follow, as Martineau observes, that moral judgments would most abound where man was most vicious by nature - for it would then be necessary to eke out socially useful actions by increased ex-
ternal pressure. (7). It is hardly necessary to

(6). Cf. 'Examination of the Utilitarian Philos-
ophy', p.115.
(7). This conclusion is actually admitted by Abra-
am Tucker. Cf. 'The Light of Nature Pursued', Vol.I, p.194: "... Though honour depends upon use, nevertheless everything useful is not laudable: because where we discern the use, and are (P.T.O.)
point out how completely experience reverses this relation. It is customarily not approbation that elicits moral goodness, but moral goodness which elicits the judgment of approval. (8).

moved by it to exert ourselves, there is no use for honour. Therefore we do not lavish our applause upon things we find men willing to do themselves, however beneficial they may appear. ..... Bakers, shoe-makers, and tailors, are very serviceable members of society, but who ever rose to honours by exercising these trades? for why? the prospect of getting a livelihood holds them tight to their work, without any other spur to assist it. But upon boys being first put out as apprentices the master finds it useful to encourage them by commendation, because they have then none other inducement to do their duty besides rewards and punishment. " In regard to these observations I would note that although doubtless it is true that we are not accustomed overtly to praise a good tradesman, while we do often praise children learning some new task, these facts do not in themselves show that approbation is nothing more than a means of encouraging useful conduct. We rarely praise a conscientious tradesman explicitly - for to do so would be to assume a patronising attitude - but we still admire his industry; we recognise that it deserves commendation. And although we may praise the efforts of children simply because of the psychological effect of such praise, it yet remains a permissible question whether such praise is merited or not. Sometimes we may praise a child in the hope that he will do better, even while recognising that so far he has not done as well as he ought.

I conclude that the 'morally good' is not synonymous with what is customarily expected of persons by the society of which they are members. Society does not make acts good by its praise of them, and what is good cannot be restricted merely to what is socially sanctioned - we may discern a goodness which as yet only receives but imperfect expression in the lives of those among whom we live.
'MORALLY GOOD' CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED WITH A SUBJECTIVE ATTITUDE OF APPROVAL.

i. STATEMENT OF THE POSITION.

The second conception of the judgment of moral goodness which I shall consider, is that which regards the judgment as merely expressive of a subjective attitude of approval. For a person to judge that a certain action is good, is to signify that he is experiencing towards it a feeling of approbation - nothing more than this is implied. The reference of the moral judgment is to a state of the subject who passes the judgment, not to a character or predicate of the action independent of the subjective attitude toward it. (I).

(I). I do not wish to imply that an action can be morally judged in abstraction from the agent doing it, e.g., in the manner in which Ross conceives 'right acts'. (See later, p.120.) I would maintain, however, that when we do judge the concrete action inclusive of motive, we are judging of the character of the action and not simply expressing a subjective attitude towards it.
This, I take it, is the view of such moralists as Westermarck and Gizycki. To cite in illustration a sentence from Westermarck: ".... The predicates of all moral judgments, all moral concepts are ultimately based on emotions, and .... no objectivity can come from an emotion." (2). From such a position it follows that the same action may be both good and bad according to the subjective attitude towards it of different persons, or of the same person at different times. It is true that our moral judgments have an apparent objectivity, but this, in the view of upholders of relativism, is only illusory. It can be explained, according to Westermarck, as due to the popular prejudice that any opinion differing from one's own is erroneous, (3), and partly to the comparatively uniform nature of the moral consciousness as resulting from common influences upon individuals in the same society - the authority of parents, laws, public opinion, and religion, serving to foster the erroneous conception of objective validity. (4). But in reality, it is

(2). Cf. 'Ethical Relativity', p.60.
(4). Ibid., pp.50-I.
contended, normative ethics is false: there is no ideal good, which is good irrespective of whether it is recognised as such by different persons; to predicate goodness of an action is but a mode of asserting the experiencing a subjective attitude of approval.

ii. CRITICISM.

(i). THE PURELY SUBJECTIVE VIEW IS NOT NECESSITATED BY THE FACT OF DIVERSITY IN MORAL OPINION.

The plausibility of such a view arises, I believe, from its claim to account for the diversity in moral codes between different societies, and the contrariety of moral judgments among persons of the same society. Were it not for this claim, I think the theory would carry but slight conviction, so alien is it from the commonsense point of view. In my attempt, then, to show its untenability, I will begin by endeavouring to account for differences in moral opinion along lines compatible with the objectivity of moral goodness; if this is possible there should be removed the principal argument