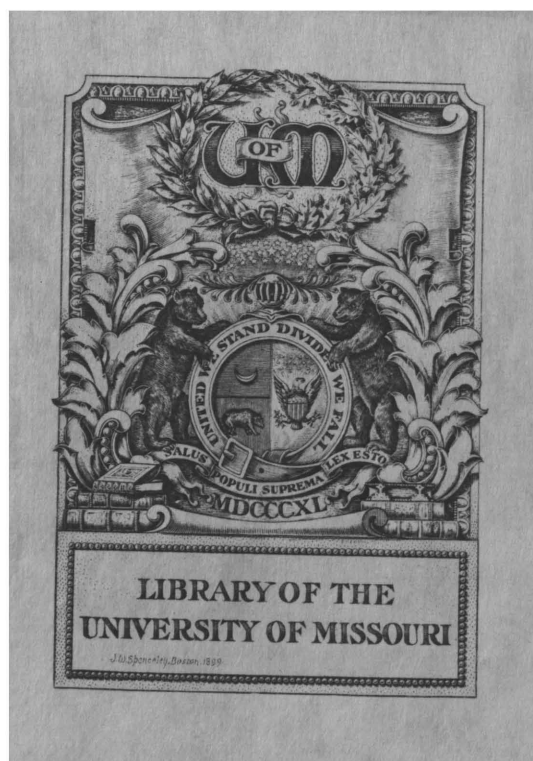


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DETERMINISM;  
AS THE GROUND OF MORAL FAITH.

by

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Determinism; as the Ground of Moral Faith.



**DETERMINISM; AS THE GROUND OF MORAL FAITH.****CHAPTER I.****I.****The Meaning of Determinism.**

May I state that I am far from finding in any single item of my survey in this paper, a view point in which I am willing to claim I have anticipated any one. I have but followed well worn paths of revered predecessors. If in the arrangement of these items they so fall together as to produce a kaleidoscopic pattern of some interest, I shall have accomplished my modest purpose.

Determinism is a theory about the occurring of events, or the existing of Phenomena: and I interpret the theory to mean that all events, all phenomena, occur or exist in a state of necessary dependence on other Phenomena. By necessary dependence I mean a relation wherein one event or phenomenon is caused by other phenomena. There is a popular recognition of this relation. The news of any interesting event such as a fire or a famine is met by the immediate query, "What caused it?" The need of something to stand sponsor is felt in all cases in which the event is not either one whose statement implies its genesis or one arranged to express the operation of natural forces.

The notion of causality has been examined as to both genesis and content. For our purpose the meaning of



causality, the content of the notion, has the immediate value. Hume, in his exposition of Causality as our appreciation of regular temporal succession gave the explanation of the concept in terms of its genesis, denying the form to rightly possess a content other than illusion. In like manner has Erdhardt resolved the notion into the psychological coefficient of effort. Reihl, in finding in the event an example of causation, has turned from the origin to the application of the concept as giving meaning and defines causation as a relation possible only between units of identical nature whose distinctness is an affirmation of illusion; any process of Becoming thus being the one and the only causal process.

The explanations of the rise of the causal notion may be given definite appreciation and the limitation of the causal process to objects of identical nature may be examined at length for verification or disproof, but the meaning of Causality need be changed neither by rejection nor acceptance of the former theories nor by conclusions as to the facts asserted in the latter. The concept Causality has been constructed, on whatever grounds and under whatever limitations of fact, to be a concept whose meaning is precise. This meaning is detailed by Professor Thilly as follows:

"The essential element in the causal form is the idea of ground.....meaning that one phenomenon somehow depends on another.....that one phenomenon



somehow owes its existence to another, that it would not be if it were not for the other. That the two are not merely coexistent or successive, but that one is because the other is, that the first has brought the second into existence, that the latter would not have appeared if it had not been for the former..... Wherever a phenomenon is presented we look for a ground or cause for dependence, we seek to bring it into connection with something else; we are never satisfied with bare fact as such..... If thinking means to relate things in the manner indicated, then we have a right to say that for thought all phenomena are causally related and will be so related as long as thinking is what it is." <sup>6</sup>

The meaning of Determinism is thus seen to involve as part of its significance the extent of its application. Mr. Sidgwick says:

"The belief that events are determinately related to the state of things preceding them is now held by all competent thinkers in respect of all kinds of occurrences except human volition. It has sturdily grown both in clearness and certainty of connection, as the human mind has developed and human experience has been systematized and arranged. Step by step, in successive department of facts, conflicting modes of thought have receded and faded until at length they have vanished everywhere, except from this mysterious citadel of the will. Everywhere else the belief is

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<sup>6</sup> Thilly, Philosophical Review, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Mar. 1907, p. 117.







so firmly established that some declare its opposite to be inconceivable, others even maintain that it always was so. Every scientific procedure assumes it; each success of science confirms it. And not only are we finding every new proof that events are cognizably determined but also that the different modes of determination of different kinds of events are fundamentally identical and mutually dependent; and naturally with the increasing conviction of the essential unity of the cognizable universe, increases the indisposition to allow the exceptional character claimed by Libertarians for the departments of human action."   ♣

There are many, then, who maintain the thesis that all events of the Phenomenal world are in a determined relation to each other with the possible exception of those that are volitional in their origination.

For the validating of this exception there has arisen in the past, the sound of many voices engaged in argument or explanation. At the very present time it may be maintained, I think, that even the ground of the debate, the terms of the proposition no less than the truth of it are still unexhausted issues. We have Professor James' pronouncement: "The quarrel which determinism has with Chance fortunately has nothing to do with this or that Psychological detail. It is a quarrel altogether metaphysical..... We have not yet ascertained whether this be a world of Chance or no, at most we have agreed that it seems so. And now I re-  
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♣ Sidgwick, Methods of Ethics, 4th Ed. p. 63.



peat what I said at the outset, that from any strict theoretical point of view, the question is insoluble." <sup>6</sup>

Professor Scott of the University of Glasgow, referring to the same article of Professor James, says:

"To say with Professor James that the Ego which elected to follow one path could under an exact repetition of the situation choose to follow another, means that the same ego could be two different beings at once. Freedom which depends on this is not merely contradictory to the faith of Science; it is incompatible with the very conditions of thought." <sup>8</sup>

Professor Royce writes: "That the Self whose natural relations have been so definitely admitted, is, like any other phenomenon in Nature, a proper object for the investigations of any external observer who is interested in explaining the occurrences of his life in terms of Causation, is now plain enough.....he will be interested in explaining how any human Self appears as a result of temperament, heredity, training and the rest, and how this life is subject to law..... To an external observer who seeks to win his purposes as a student of Science, the individual Self and all its temporal deeds must be viewed as facts to be explained in so far as that is logically possible, through their causal connections with previous facts and with the whole of Nature. Such an observer in so far as he deals with the World of Description, can rec-

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<sup>6</sup> James, "Will to Believe" - The Dilemma of Determinism, p. 158.

<sup>8</sup> Scott, "Post Kantian Idealism etc.", International Jr. Eth. Vol. 20, No. 3, p. 331.



ognize no deed of the Self as a mere outcome of free will. Every describable character of the Self, its temperament, its motives, its impulses, its training, its knowledge, its deeds, will appear to this observer as causally explicable by heredity and by environment. In so far as these aspects of the Self are not yet explained by Science, they will still be inevitable and proper problems for causal explanation. Science, whether physical, or physiological, or psychological, will remorselessly pursue the end of making man the natural being comprehensible to the understanding of man the observer of Nature. And this undertaking will be strictly rational."<sup>6</sup>

I trust my purpose is inferred. I have sought in as few instances as may be sufficient to demonstrate the truth of my former remark, that the ground of the debate, the terms of the proposition regarding the meaning and scope of Determinism no less than the solution of these questions are issues yet living as unsolved. My present aim is neither an historical resume of these debates, nor a participation in them. To make a logical presentation of a way of understanding Determinism, that shall make it seem itself rational and probable, and to show in the light of that world-view its relation to an Ethical attitude is the sum of my endeavor.

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<sup>6</sup> Josiah Royce, "The World and the Individual." Vol. II. The Place of Self in Being, p. 323, 1st Ed.



## II.

## Determinism and Supra-temporal Being.

What may we say, then, of the relation of the concept Determinism to that pure Being, which to exist, needs only the predicate existence,--what causal relation can we apply to it? Logically, according to our definition, we have transcended the field of its application. There is not anything that can be taken as antecedent to Being--the temporal category does not have significance with reference to it. So, to translate dependence of Phenomena upon antecedent phenomena into the terms, "dependence of Being upon antecedent Being" is futile. Nor is the idea of Causality, stripped of its temporality more successful in finding a foot-hold. The "Ground of Being" has no meaning.

Perhaps it may occur to one that since we can not affirm a deterministic relation of Being, we have found the Type instance of true Freedom. In a later chapter I shall show my assent to this concept of Freedom in the effort to make clear what indeterminism of Supra-temporal Being signifies.

## III.

## Determinism Related to Being as Phenomenal.

One turns to the Phenomenal world: This is the world of our Consciousness, the world with whose facts we come in such contact that there is no line dividing this world and our experience of it. Our experience of it is It for





us; and It as our consciousness is Us. Looking from it to ultimate Reality we affirm it to be Ultimate Reality which has for itself in our consciousness the objective order and the subjective character. This order and character distinguished in our thought as Physical and Mental Phenomena and objectified in space and time are the unexplained accidents of fundamental Being. We experience directly this mystery; and may attribute it only to the nature of pure Being, as a wave is determined to a figure innocent of planes and angles by the nature of water. Being which enters and constitutes the world with which we have to do is Determined first of all to the two-fold aspect of material object and psychic subject; the obverse and reverse of each wave which breaks on our Spatial-Temporal Shore.

#### IV.

##### Determinism Related to Phenomenal.

##### Being as Dynamic.

Examining our Objective Experience, Matter is described as occupying space to the exclusion of other bodies. However, the position of one body to another changes, and the more refined our experience, the more certainly our induction is made that all matter is constantly in motion. Is this motion itself a determined one? We find to the last item of our experimental observation that the determination is absolute for all the material universe within our ken. The laws expressing this determination are



the familiar ones of Physics.

Regarding them as logically separable, what application of the causal category may be affirmed of the reverse of Phenomena--upon the Psychic side? Here, too, we find a perpetual Flux, a melting of wave into succeeding wave of consciousness. Ignoring as beside the present issue the content of these states, we have at least the appearance of a determined succession of states, whose duration is the temporal "now" of human Psychology. The state of the moment appears and is gone, to be succeeded by another, in process seemingly as inevitable as is the flight of our solar system.

#### V.

#### Determinism as Related to Phenomenal Being as an Organism.

The Determinism of the organism on the Material side is admitted in the inclusion of the organism within the material universe--the total of whose energy,--the Physicists say,--is a constant and whose forms are convertible. But our demonstration of the universality of Determinism as a principle receives a check so soon as the principle of conservation of energy is applied to the Psychic aspect of Phenomena. Were we able to reduce mental energy to mechanical the resulting mechanical energy would prove the possibility of interpreting mental process as force. But this has not been done. In other words, no spatial attribute has yet been attached to mental process, hence



measurement of the process in spatial terms is at present impossible. But, the argument runs, if mental process is not measurable the introduction of a new and unconditional process may occur without detection as such.

Introspection seems to fail us at this point. Observing our own consciousness, we certainly find state of consciousness succeeding state of consciousness, suggesting continuity of process. But this continuity is interrupted during profound sleep or in consequence of pathological condition. Taking the content of the conscious states, we find them so diverse in sequence that by no analogy are we able to suppose one of these the conditioning antecedent of another. Cognitive state A is followed by cognitive state B today, but tomorrow a state resembling A may occur and be followed by a state C. The Law of Association which is perhaps as nearly as any in Psychology a formula entitled to the name of Law--how loose and uncertain are its postulated!

But Science does not despair. Psychology believes herself truly a science, and finds an explanation for the seeming exception to Law and Order which Psychic processes afford. It is true, she admits, that conscious process A is seemingly not the causal antecedent of a Process B. "But if I can condition A, so that A appears at call, I show it is dependent on something." And she then calls attention to the changes in the physical organism, and their correlation with changes in mental process, and the determination of mental process is conclusively shown. "As for



the relation of A to B and the occurrence of A and C: this is not caprice. I can condition the organism so that once B follows A, and again I can condition the organism so that C follows A. Where the sequence is not understood in the psychic process, you are simply not understanding the sequence in the physiological process. The two are parallel. Every known test has resulted in the conclusion (I) that the physical organism conforms to the laws of Physics. "The sum total of the organism's output (heat, movement, etc.) then must show an energy precisely equal to the same organism's total intake (food, etc)." & (II.) Every known test has also resulted in the conclusion that within the organism, every conscious process is immediately correlated with a physical process. And through this correlation the determination of mental processes is made a necessary conclusion."

No sooner reached--this conclusion--than doubted. The doubter says, "I may regard inorganic matter as absolutely determined in its movement, but in organic forms, the movements are spontaneous. I myself may stand or sit, go forward or backward, at pleasure and no examination of physical conditions will suffice as a ground of prediction as to what my next movement will be."

The reply is: All the conditions are not knowable; nevertheless we believe them to exist, and their issue to be inevitable. I may not know what you will do next, but there is one thing and no other that you will inevitably do. But let us approach the matter differently.

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• Titchner, "Outline of Psychology," p. 362.





Since so much is allowed as the Determination of inorganic forms on the ground that they apparently lack spontaneity, consider the persistence of the preference of a water-drop congealing into a snow flake for the hexagonal radiation. Even within the limitation of that initial choice the snow flake does not lack for spontaneity: what else accounts to you for the fact that the Smithsonian possesses twelve hundred photographs, no two alike, of these hexagonal forms? Is their spontaneity less than the spontaneity of the Protozoan, the activity of which is so completely reflex, that its power to make a single action upon presentation is disputed? Since the evolutionary hypothesis asserts an ascending scale of beings, at what express stage of this chain of developing forms do you propose to us to insert the indetermined and freely spontaneous being?

We then may see every bit of pure Being which manifests itself in Phenomena a temple of Janus whose gates swing synchronously. Laws express the common determination of both Organic and Inorganic forms: determination of structure and of function. On the Physical side these facts, formulated, present Laws of Physics, on the mental side, Laws of Psychology, and taken as one, in the organism, we make observations leading to pronouncement of Biological Law. Everywhere Science finds Phenomena in the state of Determination.

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 6. Jennings, American Journal of Psychology, 1899.



## CHAPTER II.

## FREEDOM.

In presenting Determinism as a concept of relationship of Phenomena to Phenomena, in showing, as well as might briefly be, the very general acceptance of this concept by mankind, and the extent of its application, the way has been roughly indicated through which we may seek to examine the antithetical idea, Freedom. The type-figure embodying Freedom is held by many to be the normal adult human being. The typical activity expressing this Freedom is the activity of the normal adult human being who has in mind the idea of a course of action and the idea of (I) a different course, or (II) relative inaction.

In what way is this activity an Expression of Freedom? Baldwin's Dictionary affords the following discussion: <sup>o</sup>

(A) Volition is free when and in so far as it is due to the character and motives of the individual because it is his action (as distinguished from actions due to the application of external force or to physiological reflex); (B) That the free volition is in some way and to some extent independent of motives being due to a self not entirely accounted for by character, motives or circumstances; (C) That free action means action in accordance with reason, reason being regarded as man's true self. (Spinoza, Kant.)

The same authority defines Indeterminism (I) as the theory according to which mental change or develop-

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<sup>o</sup> Baldwin's Dictionary, Vol. I., p. 395.



ment cannot in all cases be fully accounted for by pre-existing psychological or external conditions; (II) as the extreme form of the free will theory. It represents volition as to some extent, or in certain circumstances, independent of the strength of motives, or as itself determining which motive shall be strongest..... Indeterminism describes best what is also called liberty of indifference, 'a choice between different possibilities that is determined by no causes.'..... Kant says Freedom does not consist in the contingency of the action (that it is not determined by reasons at all) that is not in in-determinism.... but in absolute spontaneity..... The term (in-determinism) is used by William James to describe his own view..... that the causal connection of of psychical phenomena is not complete and leaves room for an undetermined choice of will; and he further allows that this theory of 'indeterminism is rightly described as meaning chance.'"

Professor Henry Sidgwick<sup>6</sup> distinguished "three meanings in which freedom is attributed to the will or inner self of a human being--viz. (I) the general power of choosing among different alternatives of action without a motive, or against the resultant force of conflicting motives; (II) the power of choice between the promptings of reason and those of appetites (or other non-rational impulses) when the latter conflict with reason; (III) merely the quality of acting rationally in spite of conflicting impulses however strong, the non posse peccare of the mediaeval theologians."

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<sup>6</sup> "History of Ethics", p. 261, ed Edition.



Taking these views of the nature and application of Freedom for the moment to be exhaustive, some preliminary disposition may be attempted of these. The first meaning cited by Baldwin may be ignored,--it means no more than the empirical observation of spontaneity of action on the part of the organism, a spontaneity whose nature fails to indicate an indetermined origin. Such a freedom will be freely granted by a strict necessitarian, as a matter of definition merely: between him and the Libertarian there can be no difference on this score. The second distinction (B) above I reserve for further treatment, since it is doubtless the classic battle-ground of the Debate. Regarding the third definition, I have only to quote Professor Sidgwick <sup>6</sup> who says: "In the last chapter I have tried to show that action strictly disinterested, that is disregardless of foreseen balance of pleasure to ourselves, is found in the most instinctive as well as in the most deliberate and self-conscious region of our volitional experience: and the conception of action rationally, as explained in the last chapter but one, is certainly not bound up with the notion of acting 'freely', as maintained by Libertarians generally against Determinists: rational action, as I conceive it, remains rational, however complete may be the triumph of Determinism. I say "Libertarians generally" because in the statements made by disciples of Kant as to the connexion of Freedom and Rationality, there appears to me to be a confusion between two meanings of the term Freedom

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<sup>6</sup> "Methods of Ethics", Chapter V. pp. 57-8.





..... When a disciple of Kant says that a man 'is a free agent in so far as he acts under the guidance of reason' the statement generally wins assent from ordinary readers; since it is no doubt true as Whewell says, that we ordinarily 'consider our Reason as being ourselves rather than our desires and affections'..... I cannot therefore object on the score of usage to this application of the term "free" to denote voluntary actions in which the seductive solicitations of appetite or passion are successfully resisted: and I am sensible of the gain in effectiveness of moral persuasion which is obtained by thus enlisting the powerful sentiment of Liberty on the side of Reason and Morality. <sup>6</sup> But it is clear that if we say that 'a man is a free agent in so far as he acts rationally', we cannot also say-- in the same sense-- that it is by his own "free choice that he acts irrationally, when he does so act; and it is this latter proposition that Libertarians generally have been concerned to maintain. They have thought it of fundamental importance to show the "Freedom" of the moral agent, on account of the connexion that they have held to exist between Freedom and Responsibility; and it is obvious that the Freedom thus connected with Responsibility is not the Freedom that is only manifested in rational action, but the Freedom to choose between right and wrong which is manifested equally in either choice. <sup>7</sup>

I hold that the above argument seems just; and passing to the definition of Indeterminism, the first

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<sup>6</sup>Italics mine.--R.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Seth, "Principles of Ethics", pp. 378-9.



(I) practically coincides with the second descriptive of Freedom (B) above; the second (II) seems to me to add nothing not already implied and assented to as inherent in Freedom; hence we may waive the Kantian protest as having been answered by Professor Sidgwick and note in conclusion Professor James' frank avowal of the identity of the result of expressed Freedom and what appears objectively as Chance. There may be taken for reviewing the three historic meanings of Freedom recounted by Professor Sidgwick in his History of Ethics.    & He remarks of the third "that it is rather an ideal state after which the moral agent ought to aspire than a property which the human will can be said to possess"; and to the second the lengthy criticism which I have quoted from Professor Sidgwick as applying to the third Baldwin definition here equally applies. The first, the only remaining meaning, coincides with the second (B) Baldwin definition, and these seem to be the descriptions of Freedom which alone can be an object for disproof to the Determinist, or one of value to the Libertarian.

The meaning of volitional Freedom may then be defined for further discussion as:

I. "The free volition is in some way and to some extent independent of motives, being due to a self not entirely accounted for by character, motives or circumstances."

Or,

II. "The theory according to which mental changes or development cannot in all cases be fully accounted for by  
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pre-existing psychological or external conditions."

Or,

III. "Volition (is represented as) to some extent or in certain circumstances independent of the strength of Motives or as itself determining which motive shall be strongest."

IV. "The general power of choosing among different alternatives of action, without a motive or against the resultant force of conflicting motives."

Aside from the meaning of Freedom as expressed in human volition, a general significance is noted by Baldwin, as follows: "The conception Freedom seems to imply, first the absence of external constraint, and second, positively, the power inherent in the object called 'free' of following the laws of its own nature.

A man released from jail is 'free' in the first sense. The second is but a repeated variant on the theme 'Spontaneity.'

## II.

Freedom as an Attribute of Supra-temporal Being.

In the first chapter we found Determinism a concept inapplicable to pure Being as such. We conceive Being as logically uncaused and all inclusive: to posit a relation of it is meaningless. To speak of Being as Free is



a positive expression of our former negation of it as Determined. On the other hand an independently positive meaning of Being as Free is difficult to attain. Freedom from constraint implies, to complete the concept, a source of a possible constraint of which the particular free object is independent.

"The power of following the laws of its own nature' is a form of Freedom, which may possibly be properly affirmed as belonging to pure Being, saving a necessary exception. The usual meaning of 'law' must be extended.

Any activity of pure Being must perforce be an instance of its own nature in activity, were the particular form of activity to occur but once; and in no human sense is a "law of action" deduced from a single instance. Moreover such

Freedom as this is not Freedom for objects in the Phenomenal world, since to follow the laws of its own nature is to a Phenomenal object a necessity rather than a power, and a completely Determined object cannot otherwise be described as action. Except the 'laws' be regarded as self imposed plans or rules of action, Being is not free, in following rules. Self-determination of Being as Phenomenal in two Aspects, material and psychic, has previously been posited as the primary activity. So long as Being is conceived as a unity, Freedom in the sense of self-determination is a necessary complement of any concept of Being as dynamic.

Freedom as self-determination of Being is a fundamental principle of the Pluralistic Ontology of Professor Howison. Since this freedom of Beings "takes on the





added traits of (I) an empirical alternative and (II) power to decide this in favor of the Eternal Good by a resort to the changeless fountain of reason which every spirit is at core" it is a Freedom whose growth, rooted in metaphysics, develops in Ethics; it is a Freedom which, existing in a transcendent world, encompasses the Phenomenal, and determines the latter for the Purpose of Freedom. In many respects Professor Howison's metaphysical system seems an outgrowth of his wish to find a ground and authority for moral philosophy; the latter conforming to historical lines of structure. I quote directly:

"I aim to show that the eternal world is a world of minds falling under the two heads of (I) God and (II) non-divine consciousnesses who yet in their eternal aspect constitute with God and with each other and indivisibly harmonious whole. The characteristic difference between God and all the other minds, I find to lie in the possession by the latter and by them only of a sensuous consciousness, rising everlastingly through a serial being in time and in space toward a complete harmony with the eternal ideal that is the changeless essence of each mind, and whose proper and only real object is God. In short the new system refers the entire being and linkage of nature to the minds other than God so far as concerns efficient causation..... As a final cause however, or attracting Ideal, God has, according to this view, absolute and immutable living relations to the being of all other minds (as these also, reciprocally, -----  
 & "The Limits of Evolution," 2d Edition, p. 387.



have to God's own being), and likewise to the being even of Nature; so that Nature takes its supreme law, the law of Evolution from God's existence as the eternally realized Ideal of every mind. Hence as Final Cause, God is at once (I) the Logical Ground apart from which, as Defining Standard, no consciousness can define itself as I, nor, consequently, can exist at all; and (II) The Ideal Goal toward which each consciousness in its eternal freedom moves its merely natural and shifting being, in its effort after complete accord between the two phases of its nature, the eternal and the temporal, the rational and the sensuous..... Between mind and mind, between God and all other minds there is no causation but Final Cause; the sole realm of Efficient Cause is the realm of Nature, whether physical or psychic, objective or subjective; efficient causation operated from the non-divine minds to their natural (or phenomenal) and sensuous contents, or else in a secondary manner between the serial terms of these."

It is quite beyond the province of this paper to present in any degree of completeness this very interesting system: or any extended criticism of it as such. On the other hand its Ethical implications are so inherent in its every part that to separate them, for discussion, from the body of the work is impracticable. As a system of Absolute Idealism it has impregnable aspects. The question of Pluralism only indirectly concerns the



Freedom of Being; my objection concerns the nature and definition of this Freedom as asserted in this system. I feel the difficulty of maintaining the Freedom of an indefinite number of Beings is greater than the difficulty, if any exists, in the conception of Monistic (Idealistic) Being as Free; the ground of the difficulty lying, to my mind, in an account of their relationship, such that the fact of relationship shall not interfere with this hypothetical freedom. I do not find in Final Causation such a required satisfactory account. For in Final Causation as the Relation of God to the non-divine consciousness as Ideal, the modus operandi in psychological terms is through a motive of desire--the desire of the individual for the Ideal. But the motive is itself an efficient cause of the activity of the individual. If it be said that explanation in terms of efficient causation is inapplicable to operations in an 'eternal' realm the reply is that other operations of the eternal realm (such as the eternal progress towards a perfect One) are interpreted to us in terms of psychological import, terms of 'development' and of 'progress'. Hence, to complete our interpretation by the introduction of what is, in the temporal world efficient causation, involves no new contradiction.

The extirpation of efficient causation in an eternal world is, of course, but a way of asserting the freedom of the non-divine consciousnesses. This Freedom is expressed by their one all-inclusive form of activity, progress



towards the Ideal . This Harmony of aim is Spontaneous Harmony; not a pre-established Harmony. It is, however, a Harmony, and such an one in the natural world fulfills all the conditions of a state which we regard as Determined. However free by definition, the innumerable Beings present to us the appearance of obedience to a uniform law of conduct. "Non-compulsion is certainly one element in the notion of Freedom but it is not the whole notion..... there is, as Professor James insists, an additional and no less essential element in the notion of Freedom--viz., the element of "contingency" or "chance." Absolute uniformity would be, no less than compulsion, the negation of Freedom."<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps in constructing his system Professor Howison has presented to us the best possible attempt at a concept of Free Being: yet these to me seem free only by definition, not by Logic.

In "The World and the Individual" Professor Royce denies Freedom to the individual of the Descriptive World. There is however a limited Freedom belonging to a metaphysical individual, and to a consideration of this limited Freedom we may now turn. Professor Royce conceives his individual differently from the individual of Professor Howison's Plurality. All the individuals are real parts of God, in place of being distinctly separate non-divine consciousnesses. They are also unique parts: and as for dependence on God--well, God would not be God if they were not they. And their uniqueness and freedom is in this, that

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<sup>6</sup> Seth, "Study of Ethical Principles", 1st Edition p. 356.





part of the consciousness of any one of them is determined by nothing in all of God's life which is outside of this self which any one possesses. What this element is, is his ideal, attentively selected. We mortals in Nature have something identical with this element when we have Attention that is rationally significant. We men are metaphysical individuals if we have a conscious rational purpose, not otherwise. As such individuals "our current consciousness of our empirical freedom to do this or that is no doubt largely--yes mainly--illusory, our very existence as Selves is the embodiment of the Divine Freedom. So that, once more the individual can say to God: 'Were I not free you would not be free'."

In the development of this concept Professor Royce makes statements whose consistency with a doctrine of Freedom has been challenged. It is not essential for the principal purpose of this paper that the validity of such criticisms should be either affirmed or denied. Admitting the Freedom of the Roycean Individual amounts to re-affirmation of the Freedom of Pure Being. The slenderness of the approach of this Freedom to the world of Space and Time justifies our provisional assumption that the burden of proof of its inherence there is to the Libertarian. In proceeding to a consideration of the Individual in conduct as free I pass from the Eternal to the Temporal world, from the metaphysical Self to the empirical individual, from Being as such to Being in Phenomenal aspects,-- to the Plain Man and his ethical concepts.



## III.

## Freedom of the Individual in Conduct.

Freedom of volition, I have considered in the previous section in the various meanings in which the phrase has had service. I have excluded by presenting authoritative and convincing objection: freedom as freedom from external constraint, such as bodily coercion or imprisonment; freedom as internal if of the form of mere spontaneity; and freedom as the expression of a peculiar form of consciousness as opposed to expression of states of consciousness inclusive of all aspects, that is, freedom of rationality. The first is, to review our ground, a use of the word unethically, common to Determinist and Libertarian alike; the second is admitted by the Determinist as the equivalent of the truism that activity is a functional characteristic of organic beings; the third is rejected for two reasons, (I) that it is irrational to suppose a being free through but a single aspect of his consciousness, (rationality) and that the one not in our experience even associated, as principal precondition, with activity; (II) because through this form of freedom one is free only to do the right, never to choose the wrong, which is the equivalent of Determination to the good. There remains, we found, as the real issue, the question, are we able at the moment of deliberate choice to act independently of the strength of our motives; have we truly the freedom of the alternative?

I discover myself in an anomalous situation.



If I address myself to one familiar with modern ethical science I fancy I hear him say--"Am I supposed to suffer myself dragged over the ground of a debate historically closed; to be interested in an issue which in the terms stated, is no issue at all?" I have sought a single ground for supposing any interest in this question, in the particular form to which I have narrowed it, among proficient students of Ethics and I find this ground in the fact that no cause is lost when yet brave defenders remain. However it is not in the idea of informing a student of Ethics still less is it in the idea of defeating Libertarianism or of confuting its chief modern Defender<sup>o</sup> that I persist in my review. My primary object is to place before a class unversed in ethical science, a view of Determinism as a ground necessary for one's ethical attitude, if that attitude is to be logically justified. The anomaly of my position now appears in that the audience I aspire to retain is less likely to be patient with me than is the student of Ethics. In approaching this indifferent and too commonly scornful hearer the constructive treatment of Determinism would, if used, imply or assert all that may be destructively posited against "Freedom of the Will"; nevertheless I imagine until the latter is made by radical, forceful criticism less a dogma fundamental to his thought, less one supposed by him to be fundamental to my own, there is little he will derive from a positive consideration of Determinism. The scientist's grounds for abandoning, if

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<sup>o</sup> The late William James.



ever he maintained, it, the notion of Freedom as valid for human action is not held to be a necessary part of any man's education, save he be a scientist. Were this notion of Freedom an assumption of the very plain man only, it might be to me a matter of some indifference. It is, on the contrary, a notion startlingly prevalent among men of parts--among men of professional training, often, men who are more or less reflective; whose notions are certain to be the inheritance of the succeeding generation. The statement 'No man--even a plain man--really believes in freedom, he may say he does, but he does not really' expresses an undoubted fact, it means precisely that the plain man will admit a practical calculation with regard to his friend or neighbor which on analysis will prove inconsistent with freedom. But the truth is quite obvious that if a man sincerely says he believes what he logically should not believe, on account of other facts of his cognition, he is a man who must be inefficient just to the extent of the practical effect of conflicting beliefs, that is, to the extent that he is an irrational man. And, I reiterate, this conflict of conviction is very common among men who, from their position and responsibilities, are leaders among the plain people.

To such an one then I address myself in the task of reviewing those classic criticisms of the notion that a man confronted by an alternative can, by the activity of a free will choose either course of action.

I. My first objection is the rather fundament-





al one that a man does not, so far as is demonstrable, consist of his consciousness plus a will. The form of the assertion of Freedom antedates modern Psychology. The Psychologist will explain the genesis of all action in terms which will not only exclude a Will but even a will-element of conscious states; that is, he may deny the third conscious element.<sup>6</sup> "When we have taken the sensations and affection from the 'activity experience' there is nothing left. There is no evidence of the third conscious process, however often we may analyze and reconstruct in our search for it..... effort furnishes no evidence of a third conscious element, the supposed elementary process of activity... .. There is no trace in attention of a third elementary conscious process co-ordinate with sensation and affection," says Professor Titchener. We must begin then by recognizing the metaphysical character of the popular idea of a permanent unitary, spiritual, "Will" that resides "in my mind", or is the real "Me",--which 'has' 'my' ideas and is always busy 'opposing' or 'yielding voluntarily' to desires and appetites. The Self of our introspection is a succession of consciousnesses, revealing two process aspects, cognitive and affective, knowing and feeling. The state of conation or the state of active attention is not constitutionally different than the state of imagination or perception. Conclusively the "Will" is not free, it is not at all; Freedom, if it is a perquisite of man must inhere in some way in his being which is on the one hand, body, and on the

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<sup>6</sup> Titchener, "Outline of Psychology.", Chap. VI, par. 36-39.



other states of consciousness. I am my thoughts, and they think themselves. Above all, is it pertinent to our inquiry to consider, that the states of consciousness described as desires and appetites are at the time of occurrence really me, I am them as they exist, I cannot be said to 'have' what I am.

II. Psychological criticism has not made, however, a fundamental difference in the reality of the issue as regards the moral aspect of deliberated action. The "actor" may be other than a naive thought esteemed him, without altering the practical aspect of the question of Freedom. A man actually hesitates over a choice or decision no less for realizing the nature of his phenomenal Self. His question is not primarily how one is to think of the Self that chooses, but rather what is the true nature of the Choosing. "Am I able to choose x or y of x and y, or is my choice inevitably x? Up to the moment of my decision neither you nor I may surely predict what my choice will be. I myself feel that I am able to choose either alternative" one may say.

This consciousness of Freedom is held by Professor Sidgwick to be the "one opposing argument of real force." I reserve to another division an analysis of this state of mind with the passing statement that I do not myself experience it. I experience deliberation, the coming and going of contrasting ideas, ideas of an act 'x' and an act 'y'. Presently I experience the continued presence of the idea of act 'x', I recognize 'x' as 'my' act and that



recognition is contemporaneous with bodily movements performing the act: I certainly never feel free to perform 'Y'. Nor is 'x' distinguishable before deliberation as 'my' act, neither if it is the right nor if it is the wrong, since I daily perform acts that are right and others that are wrong and many that are, so far as may be, unmoral.

Notice, now, with me, that there are consequences ensuing from this dictum of "feeling of freedom". It may mean(I) when the ever present active principle reflects on itself it feels itself free, or (II) it may signify that 'you' feel the presence of an active principle 'in you' at such times as it is awake and busy. In the one case (I) you are the "Will" with a power not only of doing but of seeing or feeling yourself doing in addition to seeing the everyday ordinary 'you' of ideas and emotions, or (II) the you is made up of ideas, feelings and will, one of the former being the idea of this internal will, and the second partly experiences of the active will as a separate entity inside of 'you'; one that is quiet on ordinary occasions, since no one claims to feel freedom except when the will is active in choice. Furthermore let me point out that in ordinary acts of will you do not 'experience freedom'; the question of freedom is not in mind, it is only on being asked to see if you feel freedom that you make the introspection. You then discover what you seek. This further complicates the matter, for if (I) as above, you are, primarily, active principle in the form of pure Will, whatever that may mean, the freedom



of will ought to be a constant experience present to every moment of self-consciousness; or (II) the will 'in you' ought to produce the feeling of freedom whenever the will is active, just as you experience a peculiar quality of pain every time you 'have' a toothache. The Libertarian will need to explain why the quality of freedom is discernible only when looked for in the condition of activity; and the further fact requires explanation that so far from observing this quality of 'freedom' the trained introspector fails to find a 'will' process of which freedom might conceivably be a sensible characteristic.

III. Let us turn from the unsatisfactory results of examination of direct experience of the will, to a consideration of what it means to a man to be free. The most difficult meaning to keep steadily in mind is that of freedom to do wrong as well as freedom to do right. So long as the alternative is unmoral, for example, the choosing of a path to the town, freedom of choice of A path or of B path indifferently is stoutly maintained. Then in case a moral choice has been made wrongly, one stoutly asserts "he was a free moral agent, and free to choose the right," forgetting he as a free moral agent must have been free to choose and must have freely chosen the wrong. Since the free will is the agent of the act good and the act bad, equally, there is nothing in the will's "freedom" which makes for righteousness and it is troublesome to see wherein for righteousness sake a 'free' will is more valuable than a determined one. A will 'that does the work of acting' or to speak in





more exact language if acts occur, the world's work is going to be accomplished; how it is done, what acts occur is a totally independent question.

There is certainly a way to avoid this conclusion. It is to regard one's self as spontaneous in all evil acts, to which we may be held to be inclined by an inherent grossness of nature; just as water runs down hill, yet must be pumped up if it is to be gotten up at all. To get man up the moral hill he has freedom, which means that if he wills hard enough he is able to vanquish 'natural' tendency and achieve the Right. He has a will strong enough to do the Right if he will only use it; it is his birthright.

IV. It is difficult to see in what sense a will is free which may be used by me, or not as I will. What will is that with which I will to use the free will? If I do not will to use my free will is it powerless to perform the deed? Does the free will I do not choose to use know about the case in which I do not will to use it? What is a free will like when not in use? In case I fail to do a right act is it on account of the failure of my will which should have willed to use my free will, or is it the fault of the free will which was too weak for the task?

V. This leads to a question about weakening the will. A man is held morally responsible. He protests, "I tried to do Right. I willed all I could but failed." Perhaps you reply: "Still you are responsible, since once your will was strong enough for all your needs, and by in-



dulgence in vice you have weakened it." "I recognize that each concession to vicious desire makes the difficulty of resisting it greater when the desire recurs," says Professor Sidgwick.<sup>6</sup> This is an experience familiar to all, but the question to the Libertarian is, how is a 'free' man affected even the first time by desire. It is the function of the free will to choose irrespective of feelings, indeed, what can a 'free will' know of a feeling? For that matter is there any mental process which affects or controls a will by definition 'free?' Can there be any?

VI. The answer to this is, Free will is the agent of reason; free will is intended to enable us to do Right, hence it is conscious of the object of choice and leads us to the right object. Very good, but since we do not always choose the 'Right' object, on account, as we say of evil desires, it appears after all, that evil desires control, constrain, or limit the free will--in which case, it cannot be oblivious to evil motives--that is, as a rational free will it is irrational, hence not a rational will nor a free will.

VII. Finally, it may be sufficient for the present division of this paper to note what is not, it is true, an argument for disproof of Freedom, but an arraignment of it on the ground that it means nothing of value. "If we always can do anything or nothing under any circumstances, or merely if of given alternatives we can always choose either, then it is always possible that any act should come

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<sup>6</sup> "Methods of Ethics," Chapter V. Par. 3.



from any man.δ ..... In short the irrational connexion, which the Free will doctrine fled from in the shape of external necessity, it has succeeded only in reasserting in the shape of chance."

#### IV.

#### Psychological Freedom of the Individual.

##### A.

#### Genesis of Volition.

That the adult human being performs acts and that the theory of Freedom is an unsatisfactory explanation of the rationale of these acts is now, I believe, fully established. The explanation of conduct remains then to be put in some sort of light--and the Libertarian is certainly justified to demand of the Necessarian a theory of conduct. If the king is dead, we need an heir, and the Necessarian is Royal Herald.

Absolutely nothing, I hold, can be done towards explaining volition if the discussion is to deal with human activity of any period of a concrete human life as a primitive form. We cannot explain the earliest activity of the human organism, the most reflex of reflexes, in terms of itself, and any theory of getting conscious volitional action as a development from an automatic or a reflex form is the attempt to get something from something it is not. The most elementary type of voluntary activity, known to the adult experience is in no sense a simple form of volition.

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δ Bradley "Ethical Essays," p. 11.



That is, volition itself is not a simple process. "All the actions which we experience are actions whose conscious conditions include the memory of past action.....--and it is plain that there must have been action before the memory of past movements had been acquired."¶

The nature of primitive movement, then, is the real object of our inquiry, and it means, moreover, primitive movement of Primitive organisms. Here we observe a condition analagous to the naive conception of our nature as spontaneous towards evil; the apparent spontaneity of activity of primitive protozoan. Now no one can be a one-celled organism and introspect its psychosis; but close observation and reasoning by analogy lead to the conclusion that the primitive characteristic of organic life is the tendency of the organism to move on the simple psychic condition of attention. That is, the object of cognition is the object of approach, viewed externally; while to the organism, "sensory change means movement," would probably express its experience. The situation is thus described: "Action of this rudimentary kind may be termed action upon presentation. A stimulus was presented; it attratted the attention; movement followed, The animal had never formed any idea of its own movement, because it had never moved voluntarily before; it did not know what sort of mental process would be set up by movement, it did not know that it was going to move. But so soon as the excitation corresponding to the idea of the stimulus had been reinforced by -----  
 ¶ Titchener, "Outlines of Psychology," p. 250.





other excitatory processes--so soon as the stimulus was attended to, motor excitation was set up, and a movement made. In action upon presentation we have the germ of all the types of action found in concrete experience. We can never be sure that any animal movement, however rudimentary the organism, is a pure action upon presentation. It is possible that we have an instance of such action in the movements of the simplest uni-cellular organisms, e. g. the amoeba, toward a fragment of food stuff, or away from a drop of acid. The object if edible, gives rise to a vague idea, vaguely pleasurable. The rudimentary attention involved is the psychological condition of a movement of the total organism; the amoeba flows towards the fragment, pours itself out, so to speak, in this or that direction."ô

This primitive form of action develops into a secondary stage because of the plastic nature of protoplasm, The renewed situation of proximity to food or other formerly cognized object, recreates, of course, the former condition of attention, but now something additional is present. The sensing of the food may be accompanied by a recollection of the sensation of movement which the organism experienced on the former occasion; movement is anticipated, the organism attends to the idea of the food and to the idea of movement necessary to approach it. Also, the idea is the idea of the right movement; in such case the shortest approach, since it is the pleasantest idea. The idea of the food is vaguely pleasurable, the idea of movement is fairly definite, -----  
ô Titchener, "Outlines of Psychology," p. 250.



and the whole association is pleasurable. The idea of the result of the movement is now possible, from memory of past experience. We have the fully developed impulse, of which in its completion "it is sometimes difficult to say, from introspection, whether the ultimate psychological condition of the action is attention to the object, or attention to the result of the movement. It seems that the idea of result tends more and more to replace the idea of the object, as consciousness advances in complexity."<sup>6</sup>

The third stage is the modification of the impulse for the purpose of simplification. The often repeated event creates in the impulse a perfectly clear idea of movement but the elimination of tendency to other movement by the set of the organism makes attention to the idea unnecessary and the latter dies out. Later the sensing of the stimulus may start off the appropriate movement when the idea of object as source of the stimulus, and the idea of result are both undeveloped and, finally, the stimulation of an end organ may set off the movement by short circuit, eliminating the sensory consciousness of the stimulation. "Reflex action then is impulsive action which has become a matter of course and therefore indifferent."<sup>8</sup>

The instinctive movement in its general form is similar to the reflex and is similarly a degeneration from the impulse. When the movement occurs, however, its organic sensations are agreeable, and are pleasantly sensed.

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<sup>6</sup> Id. p. 254.

<sup>8</sup> Id. p. 261.





This insures repetition, and in adult human life, becomes instinctive action, with a conscious condition, ideas of object, result, and movement; that is it is an intense and large-areaed impulse.

Returning to our impulse, as consisting of idea of object, idea of movement, and idea of result, the latter affectively toned pleasantly, and carrying this arrangement into adult human consciousness, we find it often happens that the coming of a second impulse prior to the performance of the first creates a situation in which action is conditioned by alternate attention to the first and to the second impulse. In such case, the impulse favored by mental constitution, that is, the impulse which is best reinforced by associated ideas and affective tone "whose cortical excitations are reinforced by a bodily tendency," wins. This is an account of selective action.

There may arise an impulse which is not acted upon owing to a set of ideas which create an alternative, the one set including an idea of movement, the other not. "Which complex gets the upper hand--whether action or no action results--depends upon the capacity of each to hold the attention."¶ In conclusion these forms, selective and volitional degenerate into Ideo motor and Automatic forms, similarly to the degeneration of the Impulse into the Reflex.¶

In conclusion, I have to write a warning

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¶ Id. p. 267.

¶ See Table of Action.



against a very possible difficulty We find the course of action bound to ensue whose complex of ideas about it "hold the attention." This is an instance of the powerlessness of speech to avoid metaphor. There is nothing actually 'held' by the complex, which is labeled "attention," when complex "A" is in consciousness, that is 'state-of-attention A' and when "B" is in consciousness that is 'state-of-attention-B'. To be in attention means to be the 'focus' of consciousness, the clearest part of consciousness. We are the complex "A" or we are the complex "B". One of these becomes 'x' of the 'x' and 'y' of alternative, by associative increment such that 'y' fails to reappear. In case "A" becomes 'x', we perform "A"; in case "B" becomes 'x' we perform "B". X, then, the surviving complex, fulfilled in action, is the new Self I each psychological moment am; the only possible self able to become, as heir to the self that immediately was.

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#### TABLE OF ACTION. (Titchener).

Action on Presentation.

I  
I

Action upon Representation.  
(Impulsive Action.)

I  
I

|                |                      |            |
|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| I              | I                    | I          |
| Ideomotor      | Instinctive Movement | Selective  |
| I              | I                    | and        |
| Reflex         | Instinctive Action   | Volitional |
| I              |                      | I          |
| Involuntary(?) |                      | Ideomotor  |
|                |                      | I          |
|                |                      | Automatic  |





## B.

## The Ground of the Illusion of Freedom.

I have previously indicated that the illusion of freedom is not one necessary to human mind; being myself an example of an individual who in no degree possesses it. As we shall presently see, however, a large number of people may be found who admit, or rather assert very positively, that the theory of determinism is incomprehensible to them, on the very ground that it contradicts their immediate experience. They have, that is, an experience, a feeling which they identify by that name with unfailing immediateness; moreover an acceptance of the Necessitarian theory on logical grounds is said by some to have failed to remove this feeling. "The admission therefore that my conviction of the possibility of my action in accordance with reason may be illusory, is an admission that can have no practical effect; I must use, in thinking about action the only conception of human volition that is now possible to me, and this is strictly incompatible with the conception of my choice between rational judgment, and irrational inclination as predetermined."<sup>6</sup>

It is probable that one who made the introspective analysis I have indicated, as my own customary reaction, when asked if he experienced freedom would not possess the illusion; but such an one, even, may recall for analysis what is his unreflective consciousness at

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<sup>6</sup> Sidgwick, "Methods of Ethics, Bk. I. Chap. V. p. 68.



the moment of choice; since what he then experiences is likely very similar to what the plain man experiences (unreflectively) and subsequently miscalls the feeling of freedom.

I. One very vivid element of this mental complex is the sentiment of doubt. The object of deliberation is to form an ethical judgment of rightness or wrongness, say: and if the alternative happens to be one we call moral, Rightness has a richer content than mere expediency. At the present moment I am not making the judgment: I examine the alternatives to see which better satisfies the 'form'; which will admit of the label 'right'. Now, so long as I do not know which one is going to be the one that I call right, I experience doubt. Either may be the one, either may therefore be the one I am going to do. That is I may be going to do either; that is, I can do either; I am free to do either.

II. A second explanation of the feeling of freedom is to be found in the sense of freedom from constraint. Every adult human being was once a child subject to coercion; the thoroughness of this coercion is practically forgotten when once it is a past experience. But at the time of adolescence when parental direction concerning one's coming and going is gradually withdrawn the transition from the habit of asking another to the more immediate questioning of self "what shall I do," is marked by a very great change in the nature of one's con-



scious states. One feels free--in a very literal and bodily way. The element of doubt is no longer doubt as to what our guardian will permit. All the issue is felt to be in one's own grasp: and commonly the choice is made without long deliberation, hence with little effort, and with practically none of the tempest-tossed feeling common to persons who suffer from anxiety as to the outcome of their choice. The experience of 'freedom' to the young is likely to be bouyancy of spirit,--the effect of organic results of activity, largely pleasurable in affective tone. "Now I am grown up, I can do as I please," says youth, forgetting to ask if he can please as he pleases.

III. This experience is one common to the mass of people, hence arises a common conviction which constitutes a ground for the Illusion of Freedom. Freedom as an attribute of the self is asserted or implied in the hearing of each man from his youth up. The angry mother who asks her son, as a preliminary to retributive punishment, "Why did you disobey?" speaks, and is felt by the boy to speak on the assumption that he was free not to offend, even if the "Why?" in other relations implies a reason not understood. She would moreover stoutly maintain this thesis, and if she admitted that her prohibition was actually a determining factor in his conduct, would do so on the ground that he was more wilful than she had imagined possible.

Of the emphasis of Theology on the dogma of



Freedom I need not speak.

How widely spread is the adherence to the doctrine of Freedom I hope now to illustrate by reference to statements elicited from mature persons in various professions and stations in life. We will consider these in the following section.

### C.

#### The Adherence of the Plain Man to the Theory of Freedom.

In beginning the present inquiry I found it impossible to separate the question of human volitional freedom from the broader question of Indeterminism: besides, I hold a theory regarding the negative ground of a belief in Freedom which I hoped to verify. I therefore selected four Cases; and examined each observer regarding each case as to the condition of the Event.

#### CASE I.

A pebble lies on the end of a plank which forms part of the floor of a bridge. A violent clap of thunder makes the bridge tremble and the board is so shaken that the pebble falls down. Now there has all day been floating down the stream a log, which reaches a position beneath the bridge such that the falling pebble strikes the log.





Do you explain the fact that the pebble hit the log in either of the following ways?

(1). The event occurred because God willed it should occur, and willed it at the time.

(2). The event occurred because God willed it should occur, but willed it at the creation of the world.

(3). The event occurred by God's will in the sense that He willed a certain kind of world, whose events occur by necessity under uniform laws; and without his particularly foreseeing or willing this particular event, it was nevertheless inevitable that is, it had to happen.

(I allow in this case that God may be interpreted as liberally as desired, as First Cause--or otherwise.)

(4). Or did the event occur by chance, fortuitously, in the sense that it was not inevitable and did not have to happen?

## CASE II.

A is going down Conley Avenue on an errand, when he meets at the corner of Maryland Place, B, who is going on an errand. A and B are strangers. They had no notion of meeting when they started. Explain as in CASE I under (1), (2), (3), or (4).



## CASE III.

It is Saturday.. I am going to Mexico, Missouri, from Columbia, Missouri, to visit my sister, on the next day, Sunday. I begin to think whether I shall go at 9 A. M. or at 1 P. M.

(1). Do you feel before I have decided that my decision is an evitable one--that is, there is one of these alternatives, x, which I shall inevitably choose? (Here I wait for a reply.)

I decide to go at 9. My reason is, if I go at 9, I shall reach Mexico in time for my Sunday dinner with my sister who is a very fine cook. On the other hand I thought of going at 1, because in such case I should get a longer morning nap on the Sunday morning.

Since I did decide to go at 9, I must have gone then because that alternative had the strongest motive.♠

Now, (2) do you feel that my choice of 'going at 9' was inevitable for me under those circumstances?

## CASE IV.

A and B are freshmen at college. B has at home a sweetheart who writes him long letters. B reads

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♠ I am aware of the criticism of this statement. I used the argument to see if my observer would detect any difficulty. In no case did he. Rashdall in the "Theory of Good and Evil", p. 306, says: Nor ought there to be any hesitation on either side to admit that it is always the strongest desire that determines action. It need not be the desire which seemed strongest to the man at the moment before he acted, but when he acted, that fact shows, that the desire which prevailed was the strongest.



one of these letters in the presence of his room mate, A. After reading it carefully he puts it in his coat pocket. A little later he hangs the coat in the closet and goes off to play tennis. A is a very curious youth; his mother was a woman possessing an insatiable curiosity regarding neighborhood affairs, and A is very like his mother in some respects. He has, however, heard his English teacher in High School state that it is dishonorable to read any private paper of another. He realizes "some of the fellows" would scarcely be guilty of such an act.

(1). Do you regard his decision to be inevitable, is there an 'x' of the alternatives 'y' and 'x' which this particular boy at this particular time must select? (Here I wait for a reply.)

He reads the letter.

(2). Again, do you feel this selection was inevitable?

(3). Do you feel it is wrong to read another person's letter under such circumstances?

(4). Was the boy Morally Responsible?

(5). What is the ground of this responsibility, and exactly what do you mean by the phrase?

#### CASE V.

#### Four Reasons for Objecting to the Theory of Determinism.

I. As the ground of a theological doctrine predestination to eternal punishment.



II. As contradicting the experience of freedom of choice.

III. As a ground making invalid the judgment of Moral Responsibility.

IV. As false, to the person accustomed to priestly admonition and exhortation on the grounds of volitional freedom.

#### CASE VI.

##### Two Reasons for Adhering to Determinism.

I. In the outer world events are regarded as determined because occurring with sufficient regularity to suggest the formulation of the law of their occurrence. A similar condition for man satisfies the instinct for law and order.

II. As the logical Deduction from the theological dogma of the omnipotence and omniscience of the Deity. Satisfaction of the desire to properly acknowledge these Attributes, as an act of Piety.

In most cases the replies to these questions in CASES V, and VI, were made as a simple negation or affirmation.

Persons examined, thirty in number, were of the professions, arts and trades. Twenty one were males. Average age of the males, 32, of women 37. All save two were optimistic of temperament. Nineteen were church members.





In replying to the set of six tests twelve individuals made characteristically Libertarian replies. The Deterministic reaction was complete as given by six persons.

Examining the results in the first four Cases, ignoring CASE V and VI, I find that taking the 120 decisions between a Libertarian and a Deterministic explanation there is a total of seventy five Libertarian as opposed to forty five Deterministic opinions.

From among the list of Libertarians I select for a fuller report the case of No. 16. My choice is based upon the fact that I seek an instance where the replies were given with complete certainty of feeling, by a person of such scholastic ability that the issue in each case was fully and immediately grasped. I do not mean that the person evinced a familiarity with the issue such as suggests training in systematic ethics. On the contrary, each Case was faced with considerable naivete. This gentleman gave his age as forty five. His profession is that of Education, his position Superintendent of Schools in a town of some ten thousand inhabitants. He reported himself as member of a Protestant church (Presbyterian) and optimistic of temperament. His appearance is exceptionally distinguished and by private inquiry I have ascertained that he is successful in his work as Superintendent; having held the present position some twelve years.

Upon stating CASE I, No. 16 replied at once:



"The event was mere chance and did not have to happen."--

"CASE II was mere chance and did not have to happen."--

"In CASE III, the choice of a train was not an inevitable choice for that person." The argument from motive made no difference to No. 16. IN CASE IV, involving a moral issue, No. 16 asserted:

I. The choice was not inevitably one rather than the other of the two alternatives.

II. After hearing the act of the boy B, he still regarded the event as not an inevitable one.

III. The act was bad.

IV. The boy was morally responsible.

V. Because he makes a choice.

Question: "I have an orange and a banana. I choose. That is making a choice. Am I morally responsible?"

Reply: "I mean 'a bad choice'."

Question: "I choose a horse, one of two, each valued at one hundred dollars. I take the poorer horse, am I morally responsible?"

Reply: "He is morally responsible because he knows the act is wrong."

Question: "Did he perform the act because it is wrong? That is, do you regard all evil doers as people who deliberately choose to do the wrong act for love of doing wrong?"

Reply: "No. In this case curiosity led him to do the wrong act."



Question. "Still understanding his motive, and the predisposition through inherited trait, you hold him morally responsible?"

Reply: "Do you mean then that no one is morally responsible?"

Question: "The consequences of a theory are, you know, no valid objection to the theory except they involve a contradiction. There would be no contradiction in relieving every one of Moral Responsibility. However, you still hold that the boy is morally responsible, meaning blameworthy?"

Reply: "I do."

Regarding V., No. 16 asserted he objected to determinism as (I), leading to a theory of predestination to eternal punishment (some reservation as to the nature of this punishment), II., contradicting his personal experience of freedom, III., contradicting or making valid the theory of Moral Responsibility. IV., contradicting his teaching in churches and elsewhere. He asserted of VI. that (I) did not incline him to accept Determinism and he did not (II) need the theory of Determinism to make logical the theory of Divine omnipotence.

In contrast to this Report, I insert the following of No. 30. No. 30 is a student of some training in Philosophy, aged 24, member of the Methodist church, optimistic.



In CASE I., No. 30 replied without hesitation:

"The event was inevitable and had to happen." CASE II.,  
 "The event was inevitable and had to happen." CASE III.,  
 "The choice, x, was inevitable and could not have been the  
 alternative." CASE IV., (I), "The decision and act is in-  
 evitable"; (II) "Yes, the act was inevitable." (III) "Yes,  
 the act was wrong." (IV) "The boy was morally responsible."  
 (V.) "My ground for the judgment? Well, I hardly know, so-  
 ciety would be right to punish him."

Question: "Do you hold him blameworthy in the  
 sense that people usually mean by morally responsible?"

Reply: "No."

Regarding V., the replies were in order (I.),  
 No; (II.), No; (III.), No; (IV.), No; and under VI.,  
 (I.), Yes; (II.), Yes.

D.

#### The Plain Man and Determinism.

It is doubtful whether the attitude of the  
 plain man toward Determinism as a concept applicable to  
 non-voluntaristic being is conscious attitude at all; the  
 concept being one he does not clearly grasp. I believe  
 experimental observation will establish that the plain man  
 often interprets a deterministic explanation of occurrence  
 as meaning merely creationism or fatalism. To say that an  
 event was inevitable, means to him, to refer it to the fore-





knowledge or previously exerted purposive will of God, There is a curious aversion to this concept if applied to human events, an aversion, I venture to affirm, totally illogical taken in connection with theological tenets of accepted meaning and avowed value. "Thy will, not mine be done," seems to signify acquiescence to divine predestination and the text asserting that not a sparrow falleth and that the hairs of the head are numbered should obviate any objection to a theory of divine cognizance.

No. 26, being asked definitely his conception of Fatalism replied that what I meant by Determinism he called Fatalism.

#### DISCUSSION.

I will call No. 26 A and myself B.

A. "To say the pebble had to hit the log is Fatalism, if it means God planned it all out."

B. "Let us select an event which may be regarded as Deterministic but not Fatalistic. Can I say if God willed the earth to be round that it was then determined to be round and had to be round?"

A. "It had to be round if God willed it, but it was not determined to be round in the sense that God had to will it to be round, for he could have willed it to be square."

B. "But calling "Determined" that which is as it is by God's will, the earth is determined as to shape?"



A. "Yes."

B. "Determined just because it is so by God's will?"

A. "Yes."

B. "Is man's shape determined?"

A. "No, God could have shaped him otherwise."

B. "But as in the case of the shape of the earth, if we mean 'made so because of this shape's being God's will, it is determined?"

A. "Yes."

B. "And is determined just because God willed his shape?"

A. "Yes."

B. "But if a pebble hits a log, to say God planned it is not Determinism but Fatalism, or that Determinism in that sense is Fatalism."

A. "Yes."

B. "Or if a man is struck by lightning, and dies, to say God planned it is Fatalism."

A. "Yes."

B. "But the shape of the earth is according to God's plan, and this is Determinism, while the manner of man's death as God's plan is Fatalism?"

A. (Replies nothing.)

B. "Since both are by God's plan, presumably, what is the ground of distinction?"

A. "Well, I do not believe in Fatalism."



B. "Why is what you call Fatalism not reasonable?"

A. "A man is not like the earth, that God should take care of him."

B. "But our whole hope and faith in God asserts that he does hear our prayers and take individual care of us, judging us after death, etcetera."

A. "My real objection is, it is false, the man died by accident. He did go to the barn to let out the horses, but he could have stayed in the house; it occurred without God willing it, and it occurred without having to."

B. "Do you have a sort of feeling that God's knowing the hour of your death makes it more terrible because more definite?"

A. "I just don't think he does plan it."

B. "What feeling have you? Please introspect and express the feeling of aversion in ideas, if you can."

A. (A burst of frankness.) "If the time were fixed I would have no possibility of living any longer than that time. If the time is not fixed, by obeying laws of health I feel I could lengthen my life and learn to escape accident. If the time were fixed I would have no desire to obey laws of nature of keep out of accident..... I want to believe as I do, for a man who believes it, takes a great many-fool-hardy risks and is killed on account of that belief. He is careless. It is therefore best for the race not to believe in Fatalism."



## CHAPTER III.

## MORAL RESPONSIBILITY.

## I.

## The Meaning of Moral Responsibility.

The phrase "Morally Responsible" is used to signify a relation of a person to other persons or to the world as a society of persons. Were there but one person, it is doubtful whether moral responsibility could have much meaning.<sup>6</sup> The little possible should necessarily arise from a subjective separation of the "I" from the "Me's".<sup>8</sup> Man feels morally responsible to some one for something-- some act or some efficient phase of his character which has won the disapproval of his neighbor.

Subjectively, being morally responsible means more than being a person whom another judges morally. Objectively, it means more than a person one so judges; namely it means of a person being one whom another has a right to judge or one whom it is even his duty to judge; also that an erring one owes someone or society reparation for the wrong done by the act, or for the effect of the bad character. It is also doubtful whether the plain man would agree that the fact of reparation made under coercion of legal judgment removed the stigma felt to lie in the condition of being morally reprehensible. That is, the responsibility is more than mere legal responsibility and legal

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<sup>6</sup> Riehl, "Science and Metaphysics", p. 242.

<sup>8</sup> James, "Primer Course in Psychology", Chap. XII, p. 176.





responsibility and legal reparation and restitution does not quite cover the case. Witness the attitude taken by a village community towards a villager returned from penal servitude. If his crime was a moral shock to the community, and feeling was deep, the performance of the legal penalty is regarded only as ground of tolerance and the offender is held morally responsible still, in the sense that public distrust is justified and he has only himself to blame for its existence.

Moral responsibility, being a concept owing its existence to social conditions, and implying relation of one individual to another, cannot be taken as an attribute of Supratemporal Being. It is free, uncaused, and unrelated; its activities are all the activities incident to expression of its own ultimate nature. The expression of the nature of the whole objectively in the Phenomenal world causes the inclusion of Moral Responsibility within it, as a relation of Phenomenal Individuals to one another. Just as a type of Moral Responsibility is conceivable on the basis of a solitary human being, by psychological separation of the Person into subject and object, so the Eternal Whole may contemplate the Phenomenal world as its objective Self and know Moral Responsibility as existing in it in a supernal sense, of which we may conceive, but which we may not imagine. The attributes, uncaused, self-existing, free, and irresponsible seem thoroughly compatible.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Id. p. 240; also Stephens, "Science of Ethics", Chap. VII., II., 19.



## II.

## The Individual and Moral Responsibility.

"Morality stands, and determinism is a scientific truth, demanded by reason and confirmed by experience; morality must be possible, then, along with determinism."--  
Riehl.

The wide acceptance of the notion that Moral Responsibility rests necessarily upon the validity of the concept of the individual as Free, may well cause to hesitate one who should have reason to evade the consequences of this necessity; and it is obvious I am such an one. Having before me the dictum that a denial of Freedom involves a denial of Moral Responsibility, I am confronted by the apparent necessity of denying the latter, since I have maintained at length the universality of causation in human activity. I am ready to assume responsibilities arising in consequence of my thesis, but of any asserted consequence, I have a right to reasonable proof that it rests upon the ground assigned. In the present case I might declare that my denial of freedom involved a denial of Moral Responsibility in only an untrue meaning of the latter--and proceed as many Determinists have done (I), resolve it into what is known as Legal Responsibility, or liability to correction for prevention of future offense, and show this meaning to be compatible with, or even dependent upon Necessity; (II), declare another meaning to be a 'figment' arising from emotions, chagrin, thwarted intention of self interest. I



might further show that retributive punishment primarily requital, taking the form of payment for injury,--a squaring of accounts by concrete compensation, and only by reflective derivation signifying the according to the agent as is his Desert. I believe a consistent Determinism may admit, moreover, the translation of any element of vindictiveness into an ideal illumined as by a categorical imperative through a virtuous sympathy, and Retributive Justice to have thus lost any offensiveness that might wound the most refined morale. If the original demand for restitution received the sanction of revered earthly judges, the sacred character accruing to all custom was certain to obtain, resulting in the reference of the Sanction to the Decree of the Judge Most High. In such case we have present the inner assent making valid the code, while the concept of retributive justice receives reflected glory from the fact of its codification; Retributive justice is the business of the Supreme Judge--"I will repay, saith the Lord." Translating into a ground for my judging my brother; "Whom I see liable to the retributive punishment of God, shall I not even as a pious duty hold rightfully as an object of my reprobation?" I am therein expressing my spiritual assent to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" . . . . . Else shall I countenance sin, and in failing to hold my erring brother blameworthy, I fall under the dread pronouncement, "He who is not for Me is against Me."



But whither have we arrived? Starting from the critical arraignment of the notion of Moral Responsibility on the part of the Determinist we have emerged at, I hope, a notion of Moral Responsibility which, without introducing any significance disallowed by the Determinist, may be taken to express the estimation of it appropriated by the most ardent Libertarian. That is, while allowing on the one hand the possibility maintained by the Determinist of genetically accounting for the notion of Moral Responsibility, I see in that possibility, and in that accounting not all a reason for discounting what moral responsibility presently means. On the contrary, these accountings are but added reasons, if any were needed, for the right esteem of this concept.

It is true at the present day men are more concerned with preventing crime than with blaming or holding blameworthy perpetrators of it; moreover it is undoubtedly true that men read the text with a significant emphasis--"I will repay, saith the Lord," whereupon it appears more and more that retributive justice is the business of heaven, and man as heaven's agent a disputed issue. On the other hand, the feeling by man of liability to the blame of one's fellows is observed frequently to be a determining deterrent, and the instinct to blame a useful one, so long as social coercion remains necessary to mankind. Shame at censure has played also its part in the genesis of conscience; in short I submit, or rather assert





the reasonableness of all that the Deterministic school of ethicists and scientific observers vouch for concerning the nature and teleology of the notion of Moral Responsibility. And if to these presents there be added by Libertarians, a meaning of Moral Responsibility over and above all that I have recounted, and a potency over that I have imputed, I would be reminded thereof, that I may, if I can reasonably, affirm my acquiescence. All that Moral Responsibility means, I mean it shall mean, save only this; I deny that it, a valid concept, depends upon Freedom for its validity. One will now be reminded that I've an alternative to denying Moral Responsibility while denying Freedom; namely to deny their necessary connection.

There are two hypothetical facts which I hold can be shown to depend entirely upon Freedom as ground. The first is this, that, possessing Freedom of Indifference, it follows I am equally liable to perform either A or B of my alternatives. The second is, that I am not able, nor is my best friend able to predict anything but the alternatives concerning my conduct in any situation. But the uncertainty is not limited to the chance between two issues; the uncertainty is increased in those cases where I am confronted by three or four or by many possible procedures, since to be truly free I must be equally liable to all. Such are the complexities of our lives, that possible courses of conduct ('possible' to the Libertarian) are very numerous, at every moment of our waking existence. So that my own and



and my friend's uncertainty regarding my conduct must not be merely great on occasion, but constantly very great. As for my friend, he must know that besides all the 'possible' courses of action which occur to him as present to me, there are others which do not, for lack of information or imagination occur to him even as 'possible.' What is true looking from him to me is equally true looking from me to him. I am constantly in the greatest possible uncertainty as to what he may be about to do next. The same relation of uncertainty obtains theoretically between all persons whatsoever who are aware of each other.

Practically, then, one of the logical consequences of freedom is this condition of doubt as to all my own or my friend's future actions. This condition is the very 'alter' of a freedom. And on account of my being subject to the liability of acting out any one of a very large number of 'possible' acts at each moment, it is obvious that I am actually in the position that I am liable at every moment to immediately incur my friend's severest censure. One's moral responsibility is constant just in the sense that one is constantly about to act, hence is constantly liable to censure. But this condition of liability to do acts that are censurable is one in which the Determinist equally with all mankind may claim to find himself. Constant liability to censure then is as logically the perquisite of a Determined as of a Free person.

Obviously in spite of my pains, I have somehow



missed the mark. Is the difficulty perhaps in this question? "Why, on account of my being subject to the liability to act out any one of a very large number of 'possible' acts at each moment ought I be liable also to incur, at any moment of performing one of these acts, my friends' severest censure?" We have seen the logical necessity of this connection; we have found it a hard, unpleasant fact, true of all men--but, as I understand the matter the Necessity is felt by some individuals to be a moral necessity--also. It is not merely asserted that the free man, as well as a determined man, is constantly liable to censure, but that the determined man ought not to be liable, and that the free man ought to be liable just because he is free. This amounts to placing a premium on being at any moment liable to any sort of act; and again the logical necessity of this is at once apparent; society has need to keep such an one under surveillance. However, the censure, when applied to me as free, should scarcely be because I am free. I am constantly by hypothesis free-yet not constantly censured; and were I, I might justly argue, "My freedom at least is not of my doing."ô

We see, of course, that it is upon the occurrence of an act which does not suit my friend's idea of what act I should perform, that censure actually arises, though again, it is not the quality of the act, if for it-

ô Nor any one's doing, for it is a contradiction to say one is 'made' free by another. Nevertheless, if a free uncaused being were reproached for being free as I have suggested, it would be difficult for the free person to argue his accuser justified, or any ground of his in his position.



self an end, nor for the end the act determines, for which censure pronounces. The ground of censure is said to lie not at all in the act but in my freedom, the existence of my freedom as producer of the act being the sine qua non of morality. But if I am not able myself to predict even the instant before the choice what the choice is to be, I must realize myself constantly in peril of precipitating censure--a state of affairs, which, if I really mind censure, must be distressing enough. It would seem that with experience, fear of occasioning censure might be a deterrent from acts liable to incur it; I say this only to remember that so the Determinist holds. But just so far as my choice is made, if such a thing could be, by me, through fear of censure, and not by my free will, so far is the act determined by desires; not grounded in freedom, hence not moral.

I remarked above that it is upon the occurrence of acts which do not appear to my friends the act I should perform that I incur censure. It remains to be pointed out that I may perform such an act and that said act may be really the Right act. Here then is a situation; an act properly grounded in freedom, conforming to the abstract from Right, yet censured. This is a situation all reformers are familiar with, the point here being not at all the injustice of the censure, which I freely admit, but the fact that there is not actually by any necessity that connection between wrong acts freely done and





Moral Responsibility, so rigorously insisted upon--since the censure arises without the specified stimulus. I am quite at liberty from a scientific standpoint to declare the necessary relation between free wrong acts and Moral Responsibility an obvious illusion.

Let us now assume a case in which I have freely chosen an act which I judge to be wrong. The completion of the case is at hand. I may receive, not censure, but hearty praise. Or if censure occurs, my reply may be; "I acted freely. The situation is therefore moral. If it is an immoral moral, what will you? Will you have acts always morally moral? If mine are to be so, and all others', so you destroy all morality. I shall then be as impersonally active as the sun shedding rays, or the Gulf stream carrying warm currents. This my free wrong deed is the logical cause of the moral world, it is the general condition of all good; it is ideally free, and hence wholly to be commended."

To which the reply is ready: Not at all, as a Libertarian I expressly deny the moral situation to lie in the result of your act; the fact that the whole existence of morality depends upon the existence of at least one wrong deed, does not justify the one wrong deed, for the express reason that it is your will that is to be justified, and you do not show that you did the deed for the good purpose of creating a moral world.

To this my rejoinder: "Then if I do a deed



and prove or show my motive to be a good one, I am justified, and only in such case. In that I find my reason for regarding Determinism as the ground of the moral judgment, since the deed done from a good motive is not a deed done freely, but determinately. My objection to a person acting from a bad motive is not that he acted freely, but that he was determined by a bad motive. The distinction between the good man and the bad man is that the one is conditioned by good motives, and the bad by bad motives. Subjectively, my responsibility becomes the ground of a most valuable determination. That I, in all the future am to be judged by my enlightened fellow man on the premise that my acts indicate whether bad or good motives appeal to me, is if I care to be the kind of man my fellow man approves, a motive added to all immediate motives which range themselves on the side of the Good. In the end my responsibility is to myself and in so far as this is true, Responsibility is in no danger of becoming on account of consideration of the voice of the people, a super-motive towards evil. On account of the untrustworthiness of popular judgment, I must finally appeal to my own, to answer the question, 'here does my Responsibility lie?' The approval of conscience no less than the praise of my good friend is the condition of sane existence."

My conclusion, then, is that Moral Responsibility can be fairly held applicable only to persons capable of being motivated by it, hence my denial of an intelligible connection between Freedom of indifference, and this concept.



## III.

## Determinism and Moral Responsibility.

We saw in the foregoing division, the unsatisfactory result of the conjunction of Moral Responsibility and Freedom of Indifference, with the incidental fact that if Moral Responsibility is to have a value, it must have it as a determining motive or concept. The demand therefore that the notion be taken in connection with a Deterministic view of human activity has emerged. The only trouble is, I fancy, that I have not converted, though I may have logically convinced my reader. Like the needle to the North, I imagine, does he turn to the query: How can one justly blame a man for what he cannot help doing, and what will be the practical result of ignoring or condoning evil?

Well, once again, the result at least of blaming a man who is determinable is likely to be some improvement of his future conduct while the result of blaming an undetermined person is already known to be nil. If I were forced to justify blame, admittedly unjustifiable except for its efficacy, I should do so on the ground that the end justifies the means. This might answer but not satisfy, yet the real answer lies nearby: an analysis of what we do when we hold another responsible, and how, if at all, this is different from merely blaming him, will clear up some of the difficulties.



Now, only the unreflective blames another for his deed; only when the results of the crime stir our deepest emotive nature, that is, only when we think least and feel most is our feeling projected against the sinner, and my notion of him as blame-object comes into existence. This instinct to attack is racial; it has been highly self-preservative, hence it remains rooted within our inherited self from the set given it by those attacking and surviving forebears of ours. As a defense it is still of use, the glance of scorn, or even the withheld look of approval are felt as whips upon our object.

But, the better it is understood that a man's choice of action is a part of the universal activity, the further is one who fully knows this from blaming another. 'Blame' no longer expresses his attitude toward the offender. This is a fact, empirically observable. Settlement workers, pastors of city churches or missions, lawyers, judges, and physicians will agree that in the main they feel more strongly the Responsibility of Society to the Individual, than the blameworthiness of the criminal. The line between the Insane degenerate, abnormal, eccentric, undependable, unethical, occasionally ethical, normally ethical, highly moral,--that is, the old fashioned idea that some are at all moments responsible and others never so, is not drawn--is not maintained--at least not in the sense that some are persons who should be blamed and others are persons who may not be. I protest this amelioration of the meaning





of Responsibility is Society's own work. She who fashioned the old notion is modelling it into the new.

What, then, is the attitude assumed toward the criminal? Not at all a mawkish sentiment, nor any impractical commiseration. Ask men who at all reflect concerning any conspicuous criminal whose crime betrays full deliberation and clever plotting: after he is caught and imprisoned the public comment is less his blameableness, than it is an expression of wonder that a man could have overlooked the ideas which seem to you potent to prevent the offense committed. What profiteth it if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul? He is the loser, the unfortunate, the foolish one, if you like, and even were he free from society's institutional constraint to enjoy ill gotten gains you would not change places with him.

Moral Responsibility is a judgment concerning individuals in social relations; and as society is better understood this judgment is altered to remain valid. But the conservatism of the masses, so useful to civilization, preserves the old form and much of the old content of the Judgment, after the understanding of the few has reconstructed it. Time, phrasing and theology have made this act of judging a more or less fixed reaction, requiring little reflection and no nicety of application.

The kernel of truth in the judgment is demonstrated in the fact that the Determinist does not assume, what the Libertarian assumes for him, irresponsibility.



The fault another disavows in me, I equally disavow of myself--and this without repining at my own determined state. The remedy is at hand: Acknowledge the deed as wrong, make my sincerity evident by reparation, if possible, and create out of my present discomfort a deterrent for the future. The benefit I derive from my assertion of determinism is not my irresponsibility but that I do not waste energy in morbid remorse--nor do I as a Libertarian logically might, futilely wish I had chosen differently since nothing determined my choice. On the contrary, retrospection but arouses regret that to the present time I am an individual to whom such a reaction is necessary, and regret for the immediate consequences of my wrong deed. Looking to the future I am comforted--for I see more clearly, more potently, my Ideal self brought nearer to me by the present difficulties--I see the result of my past act, however dreadful it may be, melting into the great sea of process, overcome by the counteracts of my fellows: "The actions of bad men produce only temporary evil, the actions of good men only temporary good and eventually the good and the evil (of deeds) altogether subside, are neutralized by subsequent generations absorbed by the incessant movement of future ages."o

One possible objection, I conceive, yet remains. "Nevertheless that I am to find no greater difficulty concerning deeds already committed, shall I not still -----  
oBuckle, "History of Civilization in England," 2d Ed. p. 163.



find the theory of Determinism a serious impediment to an ethical life? If all is to be a certain way, let me cease to strive, for, for all my striving I attain only that which lies waiting in the future, whose seed is already sown in the past."

To which my answer: If you really can make that argument a ground for inactivity, I can only agree. See how you are determined by the power of a concept! You are truly caused to be such a man as you describe--a throw-down,--one who quits. Such a view of Determinism is the only one possible to one of your determined nature; you are not merely determined in general, but in the very particular of reaching such a conclusion. As for me, I have all sorts of ideas of things I want to do, I am determined to all kinds of activities. And, I predict, if you only look you will find yourself always doing something, though it may not be at all what I approve.

The stimulus appropriate to cognition is the ground of all activity. We are as organisms such stuff that as we think and feel so we act. All this strife about wills free and wills determined may be taken as the use of metaphor. I have entered the lists and grabbled with the Dragon on his own terms, lest I be charged with such summary as to be equivocal procedure. It is now my assumed privilege to be as summary as I please. Every idea is a condition of an act. What you are as idea, clearly given, that is you, on the psychic side. What act ensues on the idea clearly given,



that you dynamically are as space occupying being.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### The Object of the Moral Judgment.

In the previous chapter, in a dialogue between the writer and the Libertarian, the latter is represented as asserting that the object of the Moral Judgment is the will. The justification of a will was stated to be its determination by a good motive: but what are good motives? It was developed that Moral Responsibility is valuable as a formal motive and it was asserted that I am morally responsible in a final and real way to myself only and in the sense that a comparison of my-self as evinced in the past act and myself as an Ideal-self I should wish to be is accompanied by a desire to alter the former to resemble the latter upon the next succeeding occasion. It is a logical conclusion that to be a moral being means, as one essential, being able to have an Ideal for the Self..... In connection with this view of the object of the moral judgment it is held that to be moral in act, an individual must not only cognize the act as 'right' or 'wrong', but he must be such an one that the alternative of the act must present itself to consciousness with some motive force. It is my purpose to examine these proposed delineations of the moral object.

To take the first: An individual must be aware of his act as 'right' or as 'wrong' if he is to be moral in doing it, and his criterion of it as right or





wrong is its making for or against the preservation of the self as approaching the Ideal; the actor is the individual who is active with reference to an Ideal. It is a truism that the content of the Ideal is a variable; it is individual; hence it is the possession of the Form 'Ideal' which is the real condition of being a Moral Being. It follows directly that any judgment based upon a variable content must itself be variable as to content, whenever, as in the case of the moral judgment, there is an alternative; or, in other words, the whole issue of classification of situations as good or bad has none save the formal validity. It follows we must conclude, as we survey the evolution of the ethical aspect of the world, that everlastingly the question vital to the individual has been, "Is the application of the term 'right', to this special situation a valid judgment?" while in reality his conclusion has been of absolutely indifferent import; the fundamental Fact creating the moral world being that judgments of Right and Wrong are made and acted upon. It is a legitimate deduction that it is the Dynamic function of the Ideal and that it is Judgment as a Discriminative function resolving the alternative and clearing the way for the 'fiat' and not the content of the one nor the validity of the other which gives either value.

This deduction once allowed as the extreme conclusion from the original thesis defining Morality as the Attribute of a person acting with reference to an ideal, some, I fancy, as I myself, have an experience comparable



to lifting a large vessel and finding it unexpectedly light. What have we said in fact? Man is moral in that he judges himself by the light of his Ideal, this Ideal has a variable content, a content individual from man to man; his judgment of himself as right-acting depends from moment to moment on the content of this Ideal, (I am disregarding as irrelevant to the present discussion the variation of the individual Ideal from time to time) his resulting activity 'x' as determined by the Ideal as motive is the correlative of my activity 'y', the formal conditions of 'x' and of 'y' being identical and the acts themselves the one the negation of the other. In building as Self according to one's Ideal one may indeed be building a Self, but the overt acts of construction may negate or conflict with my neighbor's building. There is no a priori ground for assuming any Harmony of ideals which should obviate such negation or contradiction; more over we empirically observe this conflict.

But let us not be led to repudiate a theory because of any difficulty as to practical consequences. If it holds together consistently, practice we may deem, like time, to be made for slaves. In building for eternity my acts and your acts may be objectively the negation one of the other; if our concern by the approach to our Ideal, it suffices that my Ideal seems to me to be good in itself. If the Ideal has value objectively as motive to activity, its evaluation as such is to be referred to Ultimate Being whose nature it is to be active. That I value the Ideal as good in itself may be a trick played upon me by Ultimate



Being, that I, this integral part of Him, should be 'pleased with a rattle, tickled by a straw.'

However, the second limitation of the moral situation obscures the clearness and simplicity of our conclusion. This thesis is that not only am I to know 'right' and 'wrong', have a form with which to label my activity, but that on the eve of the action I must feel a motive opposed to the motive provided by my ideal. Were I to act immediately according to my ideal, without a struggle of "Will", without a moment of indecision, there would be no moral situation at all. But this simply negates the former deduction that Insurance (by the Ideal as a motive, and through the Judgment as a discerning agent determining the choice at the moment of the alternative) of Activity is the Final Cause of the moral order. We must now admit Being has no mere desire for activity: rather it appears that either the unpleasant feeling-tone incident to or constituting the state of indecision must have the absolute value, or, since the state of indecision is one of inaction, its apotheosis might mean the very opposite of our first conclusion: the progress of the absolute toward inaction might appear the aim of the Moral Order.

I believe I need not have pursued to this dolorous end our chain of logic. The thesis defining the moral situation as essentially grounded in the conscious process of unpleasant vacillation between alternatives is a deduction from the theory of Indeterminism in its alleged relation to Moral Responsibility. The Libertarian's concept



of the moral is ever referable for its validity to his demand for the censurable: his whole scheme of things the apotheosis of the opportunity to go wrong.

I think there is no doubt that a formal motive of great strength is the motive of the Personal Ideal. One does measure his deed to his ideal self; and one is consequently determined by that idea. There is no effective coercion save the coercion of the Idea of the sort of person I wish to be. It is true that what I fundamentally desire is an ideal self; but it is also true that what I sometimes desire very much to do is for the moment 'Right' in the light of some Ideal. This is the more difficult for the Plain Man to observe, since reflection convinces him he could not have judged the act 'right' by the light of the Ideal Self. It has been answered that he forgets his experience at the moment prior to action; that at the moment it seemed right: I have to add, 'Right' in the light of a criterion slightly other than the light of merely an Ideal-Self: For, the explanation of the moral order in terms of an Ideal whose content is determined by experience and in terms of a Judgment which lends the Form 'right' to any kind of deed whatsoever unto its accomplishment, the new deed forming our Experience and ultimately modifying our Ideal--this explanation can explain nought but a chaos, and no sort of order whatever.

But there is a moral order to be explained. Both the Ideal Self and the Moral Judgment are factors of the





Moral order, the ultimate criterion is the Ideal-World. I desire not merely to be myself a certain kind of Person but that others shall be the kind of person conforming to my Ideal for them. I do not believe it can be argued that I desire the goodness of others merely because it is an attribute of the kind of person I wish to be that one should desire the goodness of others. I think I desire the goodness of others directly; it is valuable to me to observe in others the qualities I hold belong to the Ideal of them which I possess. It is but a step from the Ideals of my fellows to my Ideal of the world of Mankind, and but a further step to the Ideal of the Universe.

The imperfection of my knowledge, the imperfection of my World-Idea accounts for the deed which at the moment of the fiat seems to fit an aspect, not, as I have said, of my Ideal Self, but of the Ideal World. The reference to a criterion is not subjective but objective. The moment of remorse will if analyzed, show not merely the sense of outraged personality but the realization that the world was not adjusted by the deed of violence, or in common speech, two wrongs have not made a right. The Ideal World of which the Ideal-Self is an infinitesimal part, has been outraged.

My regret for the Ideal determines me for my future as did my judgment according to a momentarily misinterpreted Ideal my past act, so it is established that the thesis an Ideal may be an element of the moral situation is valid. There remains to be considered the invalidity of the



second thesis, namely that an act is non-moral except it is done in the presence of an alternative with motive force.

In so far as 'moral' describes the situation in which the World Ideal is consciously regarded acts may always be said to possess the negative alternative of inaction, with the force of inhibition, and the thesis offers no addition to the distinguishing marks of the object of controversy, the Moral Situation. Popular thought makes no real distinction between the positive alternative and the one proposed, that of inaction. But I see no reason for limiting the meaning of 'moral' to acts preceding which the World Ideal is posited as the criterion of Judgment. The Ideal may be essential to the situation without being held in consciousness, just as a man may work more faithfully after marriage without every moment innervating his activity by the judgment, "This is better work than of last year, as befits a man with more responsibility." I maintain that any person who has performed any act at all in the service of the World-Ideal is a moral being, and as such his whole or his inner existence is a moral situation. Subjectively the World-Ideal is the ground of his activity; in so far as he has a conscious object in the act, the Ideal is it, and in so far as his acts are unconscious they are his phylogenetic and his ontogenetic possessions, degenerates of conscious acts. Man, capable of the World-Ideal expresses it as truly in the reflex as in the selective act. There is no real antimony between the object of the moral



judgment as actor and act, for the generic result of all acts and the aim of all actors is expression.

It is in its service to the World-Ideal that I see in the act of perfect adjustment its moral aspect. The man who walks straightly where indecision is mine is certainly none less moral than I if the World-Ideal contains--any why should not it?--the 'man who walks straightly.' There can be no logical quarrel on the part of the ethicist with either the moral impulse or the moral reflex. The promptness of reaction consequent upon perception of situation is an inevitable result of the recurrence of essentially similar situations. If the reaction is conscious, that is, impulsive, its distinguishing mark, its local sign is 'This is the situation in which duty dictates the reaction x.' Now duty performed for duty's sake is the Intuitionist's criterion of moral conduct. On the other hand, vacillation of purpose marks the unusual situation to which a man is incompletely adjusted, his perception of the situation is followed by, more than a single tendency to action, tendencies which are associated to the situation, belonging respectively to various familiar elements within it, tendencies which mutually inhibit until one or another dies. It is this vacillation which has been regarded as the characteristic essential to the moral situation by many. It is observable that persons maintaining virtue to consist in duty done for duty's sake often also hold to the theory of moral conflict as



the essence of the moral; yet the notion duty for duty's sake logically precludes a virtue of hesitation once the form 'duty' has been applied. The two criteria are mutually exclusive if either is taken to be an essential mark of the moral situation.

Why should man in the impulsive act be held to be non-moral? Professor Fullerton<sup>6</sup> has considered that at all events we do not consider such acts to be praise-able, pointing out that to praise a good act performed as a matter of course is to imply a criticism of the one acting. He says of acts that are accounted creditable, "We think of an action as creditable when we recognize the presence of warring impulses and regard the good decision as a victory over a more or less redoubtable enemy. The more evenly balanced the force in the field the more creditable we consider a choice of the right." Professor Fullerton explains this largely by noting that we give praise in such cases (I.) because we feel the person needs encouragement, (II.) and in case the person is under our tutelage, and we owe him "payment in coin of some sort." Professor Fullerton finds our inclination to praise is always based upon some relation of guardianship.

With this account of one's interest in the acts of another I have no quarrel, aside from claiming the privilege of interpreting our guardianship as the

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<sup>6</sup> Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 59, p. 526.





guardianship of our World-Ideal instead of a guardianship of the Individual. What I do object to is to the acceptance of, as if it were reasonable, the theory that praise is properly to be accorded not merely where conflict exists but especially where "forces in the field" are "more evenly balanced." It is as if it were reasonable to be as stupid as many doubtless are, namely, to require the good to be imperiled before one should appreciate its performance. The moral struggle does not argue the presence of anything so worthy of praise as seems to be popularly supposed. I shall presently try to make this clear. And as for the fact that I may resent praise for acts performed impulsively, what are the grounds for my resentment? First, the ground is not that I regard the act as non-moral. Second, it is not that I suppose he who praises me has believed I am incapable of this particular right deed. When an act done as result of moral conflict is praised we do not hold that any element of the praise is surprise at the moral victory. And if the difficulty lies in the fact that praise implies it was a moral struggle to do right in the given instance, what has one to object to in being thought to struggle if it is creditable to struggle--nay, I may say if only acts done as result of struggle are moral, why should one resent being esteemed moral in the given case? I believe this analysis makes it clear that without consciously thinking it out, and in defiance of the popular thought



which argues the man moral only in the act which is the result of struggle, we do hold a much finer Ideal of good conduct (the Moral) a higher standard of morality, namely, that the highest virtue consists in perfect adjustment to situation, the best conduct is the impulsive or even reflex response to stimulus, in the way held to fulfil the Ideal-World.

I cannot admit that anyone's readiness to praise a struggle whose outcome suits his Idea, and his curious indifference to that impulsive act which conforms to the same Idea deprives the latter mode of activity of all "benefit of clergy." Since the immediate reaction to the situation without struggle argues a person to have frequently made those adjustments to situations which conform to my Ideal and since the impulsive nature of the reaction is a guarantee that it is deeply rooted in the constitution of the acting person, my sentiment is one of admiration for such an one who loses no time in vacillation and betrays no inclination to that violation of an Ideal I esteem holy. On the other hand, if I observe a person vacillating between courses of conduct, the good and the evil, it is evident to me my Ideal is not secure in so far as in him lies it to secure it. He is one who is not perfectly adjusted to the moral situation of our present world and I am obliged to reflect that even if he acknowledges his obligation in the present instance, he is a person to whom evil motives so appeal that he cannot be predicted for the future opportunity.



A confirmation of the justness of my view may be found in an examination of the 'bad' act as reflexly performed. Only examination of individuals could determine whether he who clamors against the morality of one in the performance of a conforming reflex is he who argues the non-moral significance of the non-conforming, i.e. the 'bad' impulse. But either such an one must account for the fact that we regard the man who robs a baby of a nickle with an immediateness which shows that to be the only reaction the situation suggests, as yet more 'moral', that is more debased than is the man who sees the honest alternative and struggles long to adopt it. According to the popular logic we have been combating, the longer one resisted the idea of the theft the more moral, that is, the more wicked, he must be considered to be. I have not been betrayed into assuming any such alternative as that the reflex is more a moral situation that is a selective or voluntary reaction. I regard all men as moral in all activity, in that through it they conform or not to that Ideal-World which I, equally with all men, find implied in every moral judgment. Every human movement is at least genetically an act. "The classification of actions, to be complete, takes us beyond individual development to social evolution."♣

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♣ Titchener, "Text Book of Psychology," p. 451.



## CHAPTER V.

## MORAL FAITH.

It has now been argued: that all Phenomena, both static and dynamic, occur as caused; that all acts of human beings conform to this rule as to the appearance of Phenomena; that the efficient cause of volitional or selective action is motive; that the ultimate motive is the World-Ideal; that the Form of this motive is native to man and distinguishes him as ethical; that the Content of the Ideal is determined by Experience, and may be as simple as the simplest conscious concomitant of a movement; that man is 'moral' in every form of activity since in all action he achieves the Idea of the moment directly, or acts according to an idea belonging to his species; that Moral Responsibility is self-judgment, the comparing of the self as active with the Personal Ideal; and that the object of the moral judgment is the changing, acting self as object, in its place as part of the Phenomenal world, effecting through each movement and action the Phenomenal expression of the consciously conserved and valued World-Concept of the judging Subject.

I have now to conclude that man's Moral Faith is practically based upon, and logically depends upon the theory of Determinism.

By Moral Faith I mean the assent to the proposition that one's own World-Ideal is ultimately to appear as the essential mold or feature of Phenomenal appearance





as object.

Those who claim to be confident that all things will prove ultimately to be "for the best" have moral faith; since we may translate "for the best," into "according to my World-Ideal" without violence.

The normal reply to the inquiry, "Why do you believe all things will ultimately be for the best?" I find to be that all things taken largely do seem to end so; the normal person appeals directly to experience. Urged to account for the usually beneficent completion of affairs, the reference is immediate to the Determining Power, "Because all things are in the hands of God." In this it is observable that the determinism of the Universal Fate by God's direct intervention is not felt to be Fatalism, even by those who object seriously to the determination of their own individual destinies from moment to moment. It would therefore seem, since the shaping of Universal Destiny involves in a degree the individual destinies of the Whole, that the Libertarian, whose World-Ideal is somewhat loose-jointed should be reconciled to the ultimate loss of some of its members. Only an extended questionnaire would serve to indicate whether this logic actually prevails. I am much inclined to believe that among the persons of the Deterministic camp there are found those who are obliged to relinquish the World-Ideal in the form of a World in which all individual evil is eradicated as seen in the light of the all-seeing Eye; and these may



well ask of Experience, "Why is one moment less fortunate than another in being the carrier of my destiny. Why shall one instant be the hand-maiden even of a thousand years?"

But however our present form of existence determines our Ideal, it is certain the introduction of Freedom is no help. We depend upon the forces of nature and their determination of physical events for our present life, and if one were told with authority that a number of events were to happen from time to time which should occur by pure, uncaused, free and spontaneous self-origination, the gravest apprehensions would ensue. As a person of my acquaintance, remarked, "That would be sufficient ground for the greatest disquietude."

Certainly our faith in the consummation of things in the form of our Ideal must become hope, merely, if we are to accept the momentary probability of the Event not related to those whose origin lie in the comparatively innocuous ones of our experience. Our faith in the ultimate realization of all our present eye sees as "the best" is based upon our experience in making that Ideal real. It is because we see ourselves determined by the dearest of all and observe our acts, so determined to accomplish this Ideal that we have moral faith at all. Were we observers merely, not experiencers, the deeds of man would be inexplicable; indeed so various are they, taken concretely, I doubt if we found them intelligible; one could well believe in their self-determination or





inherent freedom. But as we never act but by the way of reference to "that-which-ought-to-be", our experience demonstrates how immutably does the Ideal work in Phenomena. Only he who denies the worth of the image of the world which he holds can cease the active building of the good.

General Optimism and desire to live for something is then Moral Faith; in so living we declare our belief that what we most desire to be done in the world is performing itself through us, and that the whole world is in reality the fulfilment of our dearest desire. When we observe ourselves acting other than in terms of the World-Ideal which we individually possess, we shall be, not free for that is a concept inapplicable in any case as a predicate of man, but we shall be indeed possessed of a Demon, whose synonym in the language of Ethics is not other than Freedom.

Finis.















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