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THE Futility of the Kantian Doctrine of Ethics.*

The limits of the present article will only allow of touching on the salient points of Kant's ethical system as contained in the works referred to below, and whether such cursory treatment prove sufficient for the purpose indicated by its title the reader must judge.

Kant's first treatise opens with the inquiry whether it is possible to establish a system of Ethics that shall be a purely rational science, "perfectly cleared of everything which is only empirical and which belongs to anthropology,"—referring in these terms to the current doctrine, received from the Greeks, that a life of virtue is "a life according to nature." That such a rational science of Ethics is possible he takes to be "evident from the common idea of duty and the moral law." This is Kant's starting-point,—the moral law. This simple conception is the one thing in Ethics he distinctly sees; other things, such as freedom, autonomy, personality, he sees indistinctly, like the blind man of the gospel who saw men as trees walking. And so it may be questioned whether the moral law is for him really a starting-point,—whether he ever really gets beyond it. The correlative idea of duty Kant defines as "the necessity of acting solely from respect for the law." An act from inclination, then, is not an act of duty, even if it be such as would be an act of duty were it not for the inclination. To take his own illustration, beneficence is a duty, but if one is beneficent from the pleasure he takes in doing good to others, his acts are not acts of duty. To act from respect for the law is to act simply from the sense of obligation, and that involves acting against our inclination; and so Kant gives us a further definition of duty as "a compulsion to a purpose or aim unwillingly adopted."

Thus the will acknowledges the law to be the sole authority

* "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten" and "Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft."
that should regulate its action. In Kant's words, "every impulse being set aside, nothing remains but the universal conformity of action to law in general." Law, then, confronts the activity of will with its imperative command,—but to do what? What does it command? On the various answers to this question the various ethical systems are founded. Kant, however, gives no answer to the question, or only one that is singularly indirect. He only lays down the formal precept: Act always so that your "maxim"—your rule of action in a given case—shall be such as you would will to become a universal law, or, in other words, such as you judge fitting to become a universal law. This very abstract statement he illustrates by a practical application. He asks: May I ever make a promise with the intention of breaking it? We decide the question when we ask whether such a rule of action can ever be made a universal law, for, while I may will to lie, I cannot will that lying should be a universal law. Why not, Kant does not seek to explain. Fitness or unfitness to become a law does not appear as a result of external considerations, is not grounded in any relation to external interests. A practical universal law, we are told, is such in form only, apart from matter. This does not help us much, for form is defined to be fitness for universal legislation, and we only learn that a law is universal because it is fit to be. Kant says of it that it is purely rational; it would seem more exact to say that it is purely abstract. However that may be, we have here the criterion of all moral action,—fitness to become a universal law. What does this criterion mean? That conduct is right whose working rule is universally applicable, and to be that it only needs to be logically consistent and unvarying,—that is, to admit of no exception, or to be universally applicable. We seem unable to get any farther, and we are moved to ask, how does mere universality invest the law with any moral authority? As the criterion of an act of duty, the principle of universality, taken as purely formal or empty, seems, to say the least, unhelpful.

As such, however, Kant really does not take it. As the sagacious Bunsby has it, the bearing of his observations lies
in the application of them; and when he comes to application, his criterion of right conduct becomes quite another thing, and the fitness of a law for universality, or the universal approval of it, appears to be nothing else than the mark and evidence of its fitness to promote the well-being of mankind. He gives us four examples of ill conduct: suicide, obtaining money on false pretences, non-exertion of one's capacities for usefulness, and indifference to the sufferings of others. In each case the conduct is condemned as morally wrong because it is not fit to furnish a universal law. But why? Evidently because of its effects and consequences if it were to be accepted and acted on by all men; because it would be socially injurious. The fact is, though Kant seems strangely unaware of it, something serious has happened to his principle, and the fitness or unfitness of a "maxim" to become a universal law now simply signifies its compatibility or incompatibility with the general welfare. With this the "Categorical Imperative"—the absolute command of the moral law—descends from its autocratic grandeur to a simple appeal to our instinctive sympathy with our kind and our instinctive desire for the well-being of society, while we for our part turn from the blind worship of that moral fatality to simple Utilitarianism and seeking "the greatest good of the greatest number." Worse than this: in the consideration of the fourth example we are surprised by a Homeric nod. Kant argues that a man cannot will that indifference to the wants and sorrows of mankind should be the universal law, because such a will would contradict itself, for many cases might occur in which he himself would have need of the sympathy and aid of his fellow-men, and of this he would by his own will have deprived himself. Thus all unconsciously the high-souled thinker drops from the transcendental empyrean to the depths of bald self-interest.

The general principle of action implicitly referred to in the discussion of the four examples is that of adaptation to an end, although it is one that has been expressly repudiated by Kant as a ground of moral obligation. Indeed, the new principle appears in explicit terms under the third example where Kant urges the duty of cultivating one's gifts on the ground that
"a rational being must will that his faculties be developed, since they serve him for various purposes and have been given him for this end." Now this conception of end or finality as a principle of action is altogether out of place in a system of Ethics whose first principle is moral law as announced in the Categorical Imperative. For here abstract obligation is its own end. The law gives no reason for its command, for then its authority would not be absolute, but would depend upon the reason, or be transferred to it. On the other hand, the end of an action is just this reason for it, and the supreme end or reason of all action is, as such, and is recognized to be, the supreme law of all action. Something of this dawns dimly on the mind of Kant, but still his great Imperative—the foreign despot issuing its unreasoned commands to an unreasoning will—dominates his field of vision; and so the further he proceeds along the line of consideration he seems to have strayed into, the more pronounced becomes the inconsistency of his statements and the confusion of his thought. Thus when he tells us that "rational beings are indicated by nature as ends in themselves, and are consequently called persons," and thence deduces the imperative: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of others, as an end always and never as a means," it is plain that he now asserts what he has strenuously denied, that it is possible to derive the Categorical Imperative from investigation of the constitution of human nature. Moral philosophy, he has contended, does not borrow the least thing from the knowledge of man himself, but gives laws a priori to him as a rational being. That is to say, the nature of man can throw no light upon the ground of moral obligation, for the moral law is self-existent and absolutely binding upon the nature of man. This position, as we see, our philosopher cannot maintain. Though he would reduce duty to a purely formal and abstract relation, he soon finds himself—or rather we soon find him—following the method of psychological analysis which he has insisted must be carefully avoided. In other words, Kant has returned to the doctrine of the ancients, which he began with rejecting, that
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the supreme law of duty is to act "according to nature," and that the end of man's nature and its adaptations can be discerned. This return is unconscious on the part of Kant, because he does not understand what the doctrine is which the Greek thinkers set forth. The principle that every rational being is an end in and for itself is not one, he observes, that is borrowed from experience, but is an original rational axiom. As if any one had ever supposed it was borrowed from experience in Kant's limited sense of that term; as if the nature of man which is the end and law of his action were what Kant calls "empirical," or anything else than human nature in its essential universal rationality.

We find, then, that Kant comes in sight of the principle of finality, but does not reach an insight of the nature of its authority, and consequently does not abandon the Categorical Imperative. On his return to it, however, it seems to wear a new aspect, and he presents it under the new appellation of the autonomy of the will. Yet with the change of name we do not find a change of nature. We have, indeed, a term pregnant with deep meaning, but it seems that we have only the term without its meaning. The autonomy of the will appears only to signify its acknowledgment of the sovereign authority of law, or its constant obedience to duty. It is the direct subjection of the will to the moral law, as contrasted with its subjection to any impulse of desire, which latter is called the heteronomy of the will. If the word autonomy means more than this, there is an end of the Categorical Imperative. If it means what it says, self-government, it means something incompatible with a sovereign authority that gives law to its subjects. And hence the question arises, what, in Kant's view of it, is the relation of the autonomous will to the practical reason and its Categorical Imperative? To this we get no satisfactory answer. In fact, the whole matter is hopelessly obscured by Kant's singularly indefinite use of the term will. Does he mean by the will a faculty of human nature co-ordinate with the faculty of reason, and, if so, what are the specific functions of each? Or does the will include the reason, so that the subject of con-
sideration is the rational will; or is it, on the other hand, the practical reason which has absorbed the will? All we can say is that the reason and the will seem to be blended together in some very mystifying way. And, meantime, what has become of the rational being called a person whom we met with a short time ago?

Not troubling himself with these questions, Kant goes on to tell us that the ground of the autonomy of the will is in its freedom,—which, indeed, is what we should expect. Here, again, we have a great word, and one that stirs the heart, but again we find Kant's notion so defective that the freedom he announces is freedom of a very limited description. The will is free, he says, in that it is independent of any agency foreign to itself,—or in that it is free. By any foreign agency, however, Kant means the emotions and desires; the will is free from the determinism of sensuous impulse. This freedom we are not directly conscious of, but it is a necessary inference from the Categorical Imperative. The response to that command is I ought, and this implies I can. This "can" is freedom; or freedom is simply the capacity to obey the law. So far as the will acts in response to the commands of reason, it is called free,—that is, free from sense and selfish motive; and this freedom would never have been dreamed of but that the moral law enforces obligations which necessarily imply it. It will be noted that all along freedom is viewed metaphysically, or simply as an unconditioned fact, implied in the moral law, which is the basis of all a priori knowledge; and we find Kant insisting that they who explain freedom on empirical principles and treat it as a physiological fact thereby deprive the soul of all knowledge of a supersensible or noumenal world. Still, he so far psychologizes in the matter as to make the dogmatic assertion that "man judges he can do a certain thing because he is conscious that he ought, and thus he recognizes that he is free, a fact which but for the moral law he never would have known." What warrant is there for this order of sequence which makes the consciousness of freedom derivative from the consciousness of obligation? It is easy to reverse it and say that, as matter of logical pri-
ority, man first knows himself free, and thereupon knows the "ought." Of course, Kant must hold that freedom cannot be a fact of experimental knowledge, because for him experience is always sensible, and empirical implies contingent; and, therefore, if freedom were given in consciousness, or were not a priori, it would not be unconditioned, or it would not be freedom at all. The simple fact is, however, that freedom is integral with self-consciousness; my self that I am conscious of is self-active, or free from external determinism. The trouble with Kant is, as Hegel remarks, that he persists in occupying the point of view of consciousness as distinguished from self-consciousness; that is to say, he never really frees himself from the old sensational philosophy, with its postulates of dualism and mechanical connection.

And so it is with the dualism of the moral law and the will that is free to obey it that Kant begins and ends his system of Ethics. When he inadvertently makes the consequences of conduct the criterion of duty, and so is brought to end or purpose as a principle of action, he does not even see that he has entered on a path that will lead him to wider horizons; and the new ideas he encounters of autonomy and freedom he drags back under the despotism of the Categorical Imperative to mutilate on the Procrustean bed of its fixed limitation. It is true that now and again he emerges from his shadow-land of unreal abstractions and touches the realm of the actual, but here he does not find himself at home, and he soon returns to the more congenial habitat. In one of these excursions he comes to a late and partial recognition of personality as "a faculty of a being free from the mechanism of nature but subject to special laws given by its own reason, so that the person as belonging to the sensible world is subject to his own personality as belonging to the intelligible world." Even thus defined as a "faculty," personality has revolutionary implications, and it is allowed to disappear from view after inspiring sundry eloquent passages which occur as obiter dicta in the exposition of the Kantian Ethics.

That Kant should hold to the Categorical Imperative and the autonomy of the will as the two metaphysical foundations
of morals,—that a mind so acute as his should fail to see the utter incompatibility of these two principles—if autonomy is to mean autonomy—shows strikingly the blinding power of an obstinate preconception. Let us be honest with the Kantian dualism and not play fast and loose with it. It comes to this: The moral law imposes upon the will the obligation of obedience, and hence the law, whencesoever derived, is an authority over the will and foreign to the will. We confront an antithesis: on the one hand is the naked command of authority, on the other the volitional capacity solicited by the promptings of desire. Thus what ought to be done is a constraint upon the doer. Duty, as Kant says, is always a compulsion to an end unwillingly adopted. One of two things: the will must either disregard and defy the law, or it must efface itself and reluctantly submit to it. In the Kantian morality this antithesis is persistent and its elements are held apart in perpetual isolation. And hence under this despotism of the law all talk of the freedom or autonomy of the will is idle, unless these terms are to be eviscerated of their meaning, as in fact by Kant they are. For the moral law taken by itself is a necessity external to will, or laid upon the will; autonomy is an internal necessity, or the self-necessitation of the will; and this only is its true freedom. Now, autonomous will, or will in the whole truth of its nature, is the latent unity of the dualism of law and immediate (unmediated) will, and it comes to view as that dualism shows its dependence upon it. Let us see how it does so: The law of Right simply asserts itself, producing no credentials. It claims sovereignty over the will, but gives no hint of the grounds on which it rests the claim. Thus unexplained and unaccounted for Law is evidently an abstraction; that is, as the word imports, a severance from something—a part of a whole. To find, then, what Law is and why it is Law,—that is, to explain it and account for it,—we must find the whole of which it is a part; and to do that we must find the other part. But this latter is already found, for evidently it is the other abstraction of the moral antithesis, immediate will, or self-will. And the whole, the concrete unity of the abstract dualism, is not far to seek.
In the antithesis, abstract liberty and abstract law are opposed to each other as mutually exclusive; but a closer scrutiny discovers them to be correlative. Look at them: the first appears as an independent faculty of willing, of choosing,—an unlimited potentiality of action. Now, in order to be itself, to fulfil itself, a capacity of choice must choose something, a power to act must act somehow. That is, the immediate will require mediation; it implies an object, an end to determine it, if it is ever to choose or act at all. So, on the other hand, Law appears as the universal rule, or determiner of action, and, therefore, it requires for its own fulfilment an independent power to act. It imposed duty, or prescribes an "ought," and that is to imply a free agent. Thus each of the abstract elements is what it is only in reference to the other. To state one is to imply the other, and whatever their opposition in the antithetic statement, the underlying implication reveals their mutual dependence. Each of these opposites needs the other to complete itself, and viewed in their organic relation they are seen to be complementary factors of one concrete unity, Free Will.

To reach this unity we have started from its separate elements, and hence it may appear to result from their correlation. On the contrary, however, it is their prius, and that in which alone they have reality. This will be evident if we substitute analysis for synthesis and begin with the unity. First, then, Will appears immediately as bare capacity of willing; but as simply this it is evidently incomplete. As it is entirely independent, it is also entirely indeterminate. It is like a boat's rudder, swinging loose without a steersman. For want of specific direction of its activity, its power of willing everything in general remains an impotence to will anything in particular. Thus any usurper may seize the empty throne, and the control of action fall into the hands of a succession of fugitive desires. And so, secondly, in order to determine itself or realize itself, in order to exert its dormant energy, Will from simple unity falls into duality and apparent contradiction, through relation to that which shall determine it, that which appears in this antithesis as an external obligation, the moral
Finally, the antithesis is resolved by this, that all along there is only one thing under consideration, namely, Will. From within this unity the antithesis develops, and therefore into the unity it must return. The law of Right is the determiner of Will; but Will is *en natura* self-determining; therefore, the law of Right is itself the Will. When it wills the Right it wills itself—wills Will; and, hence, then only it is free. When it wills what is not right, it wills what is foreign to itself; and that is to be subject to a foreign control. Thus righteousness is autonomy, or freedom, for these are precise synonyms, and there is no liberty except liberty to be the law unto oneself.

So, then, on the moral plane righteousness appears as the law *for* will—a positive law; on the spiritual plane it is seen to be an organic law; that is, it is the law *for* will only because it is the law *of* will, the will's own law or nature. With this, law, as positive, is done away; that is, not what the law commands, but that it should *command* it. One who is obedient to the Right, as to an authority set over him, is *obedient* from unconsciousness of his essential nature; let him see that righteousness is the very nature of spirit, and for him what was obedience becomes freedom. In Kant's abstract view of moral consciousness there are two principles—subject and object—mechanically related; in concrete reality there is one, a self-determining power. Will is that single energy whose subjectivity is volition and whose objectivity is righteousness; and thus human will is made in the image of the divine.

To speak of human will as by the law of its own being essentially righteous is, indeed, to regard it in its ideal perfection. Yet it is something to know that this ideal is not the unattainable beyond of the "infinite progress" that Kant makes it, but the potentiality of human spirit, for the potential is the actual in germ. Perfection is no dream of extravagant aspiration, but the fulfilment of a latent capacity; to become divinely good is within the power of the child of God, and his life is this becoming. That law merges in the larger truth of freedom, and that to realize this ideal freedom is the end of human life, we are taught explicitly in part and everywhere implicitly by the Christianity of the New Testament;
and Kant's study of the Scripture must have been superficial, indeed, to allow him to say of its moral teaching that "by its suitability to the limitations of finite beings it brought all the conduct of man under the discipline of a duty, plainly set before their eyes, which does not permit them to indulge in dreams of imaginary moral perfection; and thus set the bounds of humility to self-conceit as well as to self-love, both of which are ready to mistake their limits."

And, now, if theoretically the Kantian doctrine of Ethics turns out incomplete, inconsistent, and unsatisfactory, practically it encounters these two objections, that it aims only at a spurious righteousness, and it fails even in that aim. Kant lays it down that "pure reason must be able to determine the will by the mere form of the practical rule, without supposing any feeling;" again, "What is essential in the moral worth of actions, is that the moral law should directly (exclusively) determine the will;" and again, "The objective principle of determination must alone be the subjectively sufficient determining principle;" and once more, "Practical reason forbids us to place the subjectively determining principle of right actions—that is, their moral motive—in anything but the law itself."

Here we are in the moral antithesis, where the law assumes an authority over the will which it either defies or submits to. Suppose it obeys, what is the character of such legal righteousness? Kant has told us that acting from the sense of duty, or obligation, means a reluctant obedience to the right. In fact, law does not consult the inclinations, and does not care about them. It imposes an obligation, and it does not allow the will to have a will of its own. It is plain, then, that law cannot make the will a good will,—cannot in any way affect the will itself. The righteousness of the will, the agent's own righteousness, law cannot secure and does not seek. That men shall do right, not that they shall be good, is the law's concern. As the direct opposite of spontaneity, it seeks to subject the will, not to reform it; to regulate conduct, not to educate character; to compel good deeds, not to make good men. No system which begins and ends with duty, whose one principle is imperative obligation, and its one virtue
unquestioning obedience, can get further than this. And so "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;" for though the subjection of conduct to mechanical control produces a superficial rectitude, the inward springs of character, the quality of the being that we are, remain unchanged.

The second objection to the Kantian Ethics is that practically it will not work, and since ethics is eminently a practical affair, this is a serious objection. Take this doctrine into the streets, preach it to ordinary men, and what effect will it have? Say to them, you ought; that is the supreme law for your action. _Apres_? What then? Is this going to suppress the multitudinous motions of self-will, the insistent claims of passion? "The law is weak against the flesh," a saner psychologist has told us, for a mere moral imperative supplies no power to fulfil its behests. You may lay a railway track to a distant city, and place a locomotive on the rails; they will guide it to its destination, but you must start your locomotive. So you may lay down rules of action that you trust will guide a human life to the heavenly city, but you must furnish motive power to the will. Ethics may be called the science of life, and he who is instructed in ethics knows he ought to live. But after all, such knowledge is neither very difficult nor very valuable. Ethical truth is the simplest of all, and the least helpful. Matthew Arnold has said, "The object of systems of morality is to take possession of human life, to save it from being abandoned to passion or allowed to drift at hazard, to give it happiness by establishing it in the practice of virtue; and this object they seek to attain by prescribing to human life fixed principles of action, fixed rules of conduct. Thus human life has always a clue to follow, and may always be making way towards its goal." If only the matter were as simple as that! Human life has scarcely justified this innocent confidence in rules and regulations. Portia is a better moralist: "If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. I can easier tell twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching." The truth is, life, as an affair of practice, is rather
an art than a science, and in all art the first thing is power—power of soul. If it is the energy of creative imagination that produces immortal art-work, and not careful adherence to fixed rules, so it is with the art of living. Life means spontaneous initiative, and it is this that distinguishes vitality from mechanism. And so, "if there were a law that could give life, verily righteousness should be by the law;" and this was the aim of the most helpful of moral teachers, that men might have life, and have it more abundantly. He went direct to the heart of man, out of which are the issues of life. He saw that conduct is a result of the inward disposition, and He made that His chief concern; for could He reach and influence the sources of action, action might be left to take care of itself.* Therefore He sought to kindle an aspiration towards an infinite ideal which should work a transforming change of the inner man.† He sought to overcome the evil passions of men, not by restraint, but by a new and more powerful passion which should make His followers enthusiasts for goodness.‡ And so when the Christians appeared in a heathen city, it was not as persons of well-regulated conduct, but rather as fiery revolutionists, and men cried in alarm, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."

So, then, what steam is to the locomotive, that the roused and energized emotions are to the will. And here we come to Kant's πρωτοψευδος, his initial and colossal error. He assumes that the feelings, owing to their instability, are incapable of any such fixed relations as involve universal principles, and so his purely rational science of ethics, which is to be cleared of everything empirical, excludes them from the realm of moral activity. This is to render such a science worthless, for a science must take account of all the facts presented to

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* "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."
† "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."
‡ "When a strong man armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils. . . . "The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."
it; morals must deal with the whole of human nature, and not rule one-third of it out of consideration. And if you do rule it out, it is there all the same. You do not extinguish a man you find objectionable by telling him that you propose to consider him as non-existent. The opposition that Kant sets up between the sensibilities and the practical reason, or the rational will, is one of those multifarious abstract distinctions by which he cuts up the spiritual organism into separate independent pieces, destroying with its unity its life. The element of feeling is contingent and variable, and Kant will have none of it. Well, "souvent femme varie," but we should be sorry to lose her. Human emotions are subject to whim and caprice, inconstant as the lawless wind, and so there shall be no more high affections inspiring to noble action, no more self-devotion of the patriot, no more religious enthusiasm calling the missionary to hardship and peril, no more eager thirst for knowledge such as makes Kant a life-long seeker of the truth. So far as affection prompts the devotee of duty to good actions, so far the morality of his motive will be vitiated. "It is a very beautiful thing," our philosopher remarks, "to do good to men from love to them and from sympathetic good will, but this is not the true moral maxim by which we pretend with fanciful pride to set ourselves above the thought of duty, like volunteers; and as if we were independent of the command, to want to do of our own good pleasure what we think we need no command to do. Duty and obligation are the only names that we must give to our relations to the moral law." Such extravagant austerity seems a reduction to the absurd, or at least to the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; we prefer the latter teaching that love is the fulfilling of the law.

And if Kant's law-worship recalls that of the Pharisees, it is because he, like them, has lost sight of the giver of the law. What is the moral law, taken by itself? It is the indicator of right and wrong, the standard and rule of action, as a pair of scales is an instrument for measuring weight. When you give short weight to your neighbor, that is an offense against him,—not against the scales. You owe no duty to the scales.
And why should we feel remorse for a sin against the law? It has no blood in its veins, no sensibility; it is as impassive, as lifeless, as the scales. The truth is, there are no moral relations that are not personal relations; and unless we speak in metaphor, hypostasizing a simple thought-object into a fancied personality, we cannot speak of the authority of a law or command; the authority belongs to the person who issues the command, and it is to that person we are under obligation. Man's relations of duty are his relations to God, to his fellow-men, and to himself. His relations to others are essential to man's being, but his whole being is not in those relations,—or out of himself,—as with the finite thing. In his religious dependence he still maintains his independence, for it is in his self-consciousness that he is conscious of the Divine, and it is himself he finds in organic unity with God. So with social membership. If the social environment is the essential condition of human existence, so that taken out of society the individual loses his humanity and lapses to the animal; if, in a word, individuality is only realized through organic relation to the social whole, it is because in that relation the individual is related to his true self.* When, however, man comes home to the inner being of his moral consciousness, the "other" has left him, and he stands alone in simple self-relation. In his freedom of self-determination he gives law to himself; he can obey or disobey himself, and punish or reward himself with condemnation or approval, thus binding himself to acts and feelings which he acknowledges to be right or wrong. He can propose to himself an ideal end, and in responding to it impose it on himself as law, freely choosing it to rule his life because his soul sees that it is good. And as he learns to reverence his conscience as his king he finds that in his duty to himself all others are included.

"This above all—to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night and day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

* It may be added that in both relations dependence is mutual. As a sun, to be a sun, must have its planets, so we are as necessary to God as He is to us; and but for its individual members there could be no social organism.
Such as these, the most intimate of moral relations, can have no existence save in the experience of a personal being, nor can they exist in their highest form save where personality is most consciously and vividly intense.

That Kant's exposition of moral authority and obligation should ignore personality altogether, and for the true law-giver in morals substitute an abstraction whose reality is a figment of fancy, is only what must follow from the agnosticism which cuts him off from recognizing any other than a phantom Ego hovering beyond the limits of the knowable. And with agnosticism we are left at the end. The resort to the practical reason for the certainties refused by the pure reason recalls the clever feat of the man in the nursery rhyme who scratched out his eyes by jumping into one bush and scratched them in again by jumping into another. In Kant's case, however, it appears that eyes cannot be regained by any such second jump, and, like Rasselas, the "Critique of the Practical Reason" concludes with no conclusion. It tells us that the reality of our ethical beliefs is rooted only in our own conviction of their practical importance; and so far from restoring the truths that escaped the grasp of the speculative reason, it can only bid us forbear their quest and console ourselves for hopeless ignorance by looking up to the starry heavens above in wondering worship and down to the moral law within in reverent faith.

The truth is, Kant initiates a great movement of transition in philosophic thought which he does not carry out to its completion. Hence, while in relation to his successors his historical importance is of the greatest, the value of his actual achievement in view of its final result—or lack of result—is relatively small; and on the whole it must be said of him, as Arnold said of Maurice, that he passed his life beating the brush without starting the hare. Or we might liken him to a great captain who invades a land lying under the powers of darkness. By deep-laid strategy he gains the key of the situation, and the road to the capital lies open before him; when with a strange fatuity, blind to the significance of his own achievement, he renounces the conquest already within his grasp and concludes a peace with the enemy, by the terms
of which he retains the restricted territory he now occupies in the character of tributary vassal to the defeated sovereign.

F. A. Henry.

Washington, D. C.

The Peace that Cometh of Understanding:

A Discourse for Necessitarians.

I trust I may find favor with our scientific friends if I begin with a large assumption. I assume that from the planets in their orbits to the street-cabs in the thoroughfares the Universe is ruled by Law, and that though "Chance," "Contingency," "Caprice," and many another word still do duty in literature, they are recognized as but a decent veil for human ignorance, and not as implying a serious belief that at any given point, even the most insignificant, Law will be found to fail. I assume, by consequence, that every thing and every person are but "retainers to the rest of Nature," and stand indissolubly related by the ligaments of Law to the Cosmos in which each fills its insignificant yet indispensable place.

This assumption made, we may go on to consider the consolation it affords, for it is to be feared that the champions of Free Will sometimes do scant justice to the necessitarian. Terrified at the very thought that Freedom may be in danger, they seem quite to forget that a doctrine of necessity, whatever tidings of bondage it may seem to carry to the Will, brings, and brings just in proportion as it is thoroughgoing, nothing but encouragement to the understanding. It tells us that our actions, like all other events, are rigorously due to causes. Be it so. Just for that reason are they capable of explanation. Just for that reason can the understanding find in human life, as it has so often found in Nature, a new world, in the conquest of which it can attain a fuller development and a deeper satisfaction. Who will say that this is a little thing? Is there in all the round of man's endowments one