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CHAPTER II

THE NATURAL STATE OF MAN IN REGARD TO MORALITY

Opposite theories—

1. That man's nature is favourable to morality. The Stoics. Pelagius. Rousseau and his followers	133
2. That man's nature is unfavourable to morality. The idea of an inborn inclination to sin among the Hebrews and the Pagans of the ancient world. St. Augustine. Calvinists and Jansenists. Hobbes	133
The two theories are not contradictory, but represent different aspects of human nature	141
The real facts are, that—	
1. Natural impulses, not in themselves inimical to virtue, may become so if uncontrolled	146
2. The force of such impulses varies in different individuals, and has to be reckoned with in the moral culture of each :	150
3. In so far as they are natural, these impulses are non-moral, and cannot therefore be described as sinful. <i>Original sin</i> is a contradictory term	151
4. Morality implies that these impulses may be controlled by the will	153

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

General difficulty in the problem of beginnings. When a human being begins to apply reason to the guidance of conduct, he finds that it has been already overborne by natural impulses, that he has been acting unreasonably. Such action, in its highest aspect as conflicting with Supreme Reason, is a sin. Consequently at the very beginning of Christian life we are called to face the fact of—

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Of sin, Christian Ethics can accept no view which, tending to practical Fatalism, would weaken or paralyse moral effort	156