

every one of the actions which is or ever has been so called. It will suffice if among a large number of the actions so named important common characters can be traced. Right actions being defined according to these characters, the moralist may declare that other actions which have been named right, but which do not conform to the definition, have been wrongly named. And there will be nothing to object to in this from a scientific point of view, even if the proportion of actions excluded to those admitted should be as great as that of the crustaceans and shell-bearing molluscs to the true fishes.

But how is this discrimination to be made? The inductive moralist must proceed, as the naturalist would do in like case, by a tentative process. He finds that actions called right all agree in being according to rule, while so-called wrong actions are infringements of rule. But this alone does not suffice for a definition, since it is evident that the same action may be according to one rule and contrary to another. Hence arises the necessity for a critical examination and comparison of the rules themselves. Now rules are expressed in various forms, but for purposes of comparison it is convenient to reduce them all to the same form; and every rule is capable of being expressed in a form commencing with the assertion "you ought." It may be that the Turcoman thinks it right to steal, and the Egyptian thinks it right to lie (as Mr. Herbert Spencer asserts¹), while we think it right to be honest and speak the truth. And it may be also, as the same writer argues, that the moralist contrasting these conflicting opinions and seeking to give a reason why he accepts the latter and rejects the former, is driven to admit that his reason ultimately resolves itself into a recognition of the misery produced by stealing and lying, and the benefit resulting from honesty and truthfulness. But whatever his ultimate reason for asserting that honesty and truth-telling are properly classed, and stealing and lying improperly classed among right actions, he cannot do so without at the same time implicitly asserting

¹ *The Data of Ethics*, p. 39.