

examined the philosophical basis of the system, and has, we think, succeeded in showing that it is very insecure.

In the first part of the work, Utilitarianism, in its main features, is described in a series of chapters; thus making thoroughly plain the positions which are to be assailed. The account of the system is so fair that few Utilitarians, we imagine, would seriously object to the way in which their views are here presented. With this statement very little direct criticism is interwoven. The titles of these chapters will show how fully the territory is mapped out. They are as follow:—The Theory of Knowledge; The Theory of Life; Nature and Origin of Moral Distinctions; Conscience, or the Moral Faculty; The Ethical Standard; Moral Obligation; Disinterested Affections and Benevolent Actions; Motion and Action; The Will. In the second part of the work each of these topics is taken up in order, and subjected to criticism in a separate chapter. The examination of the subject is thus very complete, though the chapters are quite brief, and the argument in no place greatly expanded. Dr. B. comes to close quarters with such logicians as J. S. Mill, Bain, and Herbert Spencer, and our conviction is that he has demonstrated the essential weakness of the main forms of the Utilitarian theory.

The great question at issue is the *Foundation of Right and Wrong*. Is this Utility, or is it something else? No one denies that right action is useful, and that wrong action is hurtful; but the point is whether certain actions are right *because* they are useful, and the others wrong *because* they are hurtful. It is not correct to say, with Mill, that the great question in Ethics is the *Criterion of Right and Wrong*; for no opponent of Utilitarianism denies that the results of Actions, when only ascertained, serve as a criterion of their moral quality.

The matter in dispute is therefore of very great importance, and the view taken of it must have a powerful influence in the formation of character, and in the affairs of life. It is no barren metaphysical subtlety which is under discussion. Often, doubtless, the details of a science or system are not deduced by exact logical process from its first principles: they may be largely right while the first principles are wrong; but in the present case unsound root principles cannot be admitted without peril. The belief that right and wrong are determined by utility can hardly form the same kind of character as the belief that these distinctions root in the nature of things, or in the will and character of God. The Intuitive and the Inductive Schools of Ethics are not practically equivalent. If right and wrong are questions merely of observation and experience (Mill), it seems an abuse of terms to say that they are still "deduced from principles;" for the "greatest happiness principle" is not a moral principle at all, unless you supplement it by the affirmation that we are *bound* to promote the happiness of mankind: in which case another—a quite different—element comes in, that, viz., of being "bound"—that of duty. As soon as you use such terms as "bound," "obligation," "duty," you are in another region altogether: you are not thinking of utility, but of something else.

No one, of course, denies that the right proves to be also the useful. In holding that right and wrong are not determined by utility, you may still admit that all right conduct is recommended by its good results. All right action continually proves to be profitable, and all wrong action injurious; but this does not imply the identity of the *rectum* and the *utile*. The confusion of these two positions in the writings of many Utilitarians is quite apparent, and the popularity of the Utilitarian doctrine depends greatly upon this confusion;