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WHAT IS RIGHT.

A LONG list of maxims might be given each of which in turn has been announced as the fundamental principle of morality, as for example, "Strive after a state free from pain," "Consider the welfare of the whole as thy own welfare," "Act according to the law of the country," "Follow the dictates of the moral sense," "Strive after perfection," "Strive after the favour and approbation of the Deity," and many more.

In the midst of this confusion modern speculation tends to seek greater certainty by an inductive method. In all times and countries some actions have been described as right, others as wrong; and we may commence our inquiry by a comparison of the actions called right, to discover what they have in common, and thus to form a scientific definition of a class. But if we succeed in this, another difficulty immediately arises. Right actions having been defined, not by their relation to the doer, but by some quality discovered in the acts themselves, we have to ask further, "Why ought I to do that which is thus defined to be right?" and this question is found quite as difficult to answer as the former. Many moralists nevertheless affirm this to be the proper order of ethical inquiry. It is said that the two questions, "What actions are right?" and "Why should A. B. do right actions?" are in reality entirely independent of each other; and the answers to the two arrived at by treating them thus independently are—(1) Those actions are right which promote the happiness of mankind; (2) The reason why A. B. should