

What needs to be understood is, that the state of things in the public schools and in society has been engendered by the inculcation of a defective morality in the higher places. Putting it baldly, it is not so much the lack of all teaching of morals as the teaching of a so-called morality that is either *unmoral* or *immoral*. The aim of this brief paper is to expose this deeper fountain of corruption for which the ministry are so largely responsible.

Whatever may be boastfully said by this generation in laudation of the highest attainments and achievements of genius on the lower level of intellect, emotion and will, it will hardly be denied directly by any one that, as Mivart has said, the "I ought" of a human soul transcends them more than the intellectual transcends the animal. The questions of conduct and character are in a vague way held to be higher than those of psychology, logic and æsthetics, and duty and virtue in some way to be higher than achievement and genius. So far, when things are viewed on the surface, man in general seems to be orthodox enough. The error and failure arise in the theoretical and practical interpretation of the "I ought." What does it mean? What is wrapped up in the fundamental facts of conscience? What do I owe? To what or whom do I owe it? What is the *summum bonum*? Wherein are to be found the supreme end and law of human conduct?

The different philosophical views that have been broached in explanation of the facts of man's ethical nature are well-nigh innumerable; but, roughly speaking, it may be said that there are three working theories of morality, as men regard human happiness, human perfection, or human righteousness, as the supreme good and end. All the higher teaching done in the department of morals may be said to be in harmony with the theory of happiness or self-interest, or with that of perfection or human dignity, or with that of the right or essential morality.

According to the first view, happiness is the supreme end of the rational universe. The end of human life is the quest of happiness. Virtue consists in securing the greatest amount of happiness; in the common form of the theory, the happiness of the individual, and in utilitarianism the greatest happiness of the greatest number. When this view becomes grossly religious, it teaches, according to Paley's famous definition, that virtue consists in doing right, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness; when it becomes refinedly pious, it directs the men who would be virtuous to esteem lightly all lower forms of enjoyment and to seek for a holy blessedness.

It is easy to see what must be the results of this view upon the conduct and character of the men who really accept it. Its blighting effects, when it has made the happiness of the individual the end,