

to it. Yet if the utilitarian calculus be adequate, both statesmen should not merely be justified but commended. Mr. Morley, however, pleads against "reason of state" with a severity which would not ill-become one who held Newman's doctrine of sin. It is only fair, however, to say that he struggles desperately to fit the facts of history into the formula by urging that the international iniquities of the rulers debase the character, and so the happiness, of the nation. Probably the reverse of this is true. As a rule the people care nothing for public morality. If they could be induced to do so, it would be, perhaps, by some specially gross violation of it on the part of the governing class; so that disregard of it might, if utilitarians are right, prove rather a stimulus to national character.

Mr. Morley's Romanes lecture on "Machiavelli," in which he makes his attack on "reason of state," is really in the same category as its famous predecessor, Huxley's "Evolution and Ethics." Each is the protest of a singularly austere moralist against principles which on intellectual grounds cannot be easily disowned. Each is the confession of an idealist who fears his followers—not unreasonably—may mistake him for something less. But it would be unpardonable to offer to that brilliant essay, which is, probably, the high-water mark of Mr. Morley's writing, no warmer tribute than this. It has been compared to the work of a musician who knows how to blend together the sounds of many instruments; and the comparison is not inadequate. Now we catch a note from Molière or Goethe or Tennyson, then something louder, a phrase from Thucydides or Butler, now again a deep piercing chord from Dante or Michelangelo—all harmonised without show or strain. In fifty short pages he concentrates the wisdom of a lifetime—a lifetime which has been passed, like Machiavelli's own, partly in the council-chamber of statesmen, partly in the "ancient courts of the men of old." It is, to change our simile, as if a man were to spread over the sober warp of his own life a woof of many tints and colours.