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Critique of
Practical Reason



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IMMANUEL KANT
Critique of Practical Reason

Translated, with an Introduction, by
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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

I

Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, published in 1788, is the second of his three *Critiques*, the others being the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and the *Critique of Judgment* (1790). It is likewise the second of his three most important writings in moral philosophy, the first being the *Fundamental Principles* (sometimes called the *Foundations* or the *Groundwork*) of the *Metaphysic of Morals* (1785), and the third being the *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797).

The relation between the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals* is much like that of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the *Prolegomena*. For each of the first two *Critiques*, Kant wrote a briefer, less "scholastic," work on the same topics. The shorter works follow the analytical or regressive method; they begin with experience and regress upon its *a priori* presuppositions or principles without which it would not be possible to have that kind of experience. In these shorter works, starting points are found in mathematical and scientific knowledge (*Prolegomena*) and in "common knowledge of morality" (in the *Fundamental Principles*). In each everything is based "upon something already known as trustworthy, from which we can set out with confidence and ascend to sources as yet unknown."¹ These "sources as yet unknown" are the forms of intuition and categories (in the *Prolegomena*) and the moral law and freedom (in the *Fundamental Principles*).

The method of the *Critiques*, on the other hand, is synthetic. That is, they begin with principles and thence proceed to the experiences which they organize, govern, and render intelligible. Only by this method can philosophical knowledge "present

¹ *Prolegomena* §4.

Cat. of Imp. - 3 2 of Pract. Reason
p. 301

all its articulations, as the structure of a peculiar cognitive faculty, in their natural combination."² The *Critique of Practical Reason*, therefore, begins as it were where the *Fundamental Principles* ends, and retraces its steps. For this reason, Kant tells us, the *Critique of Practical Reason* presupposes the *Fundamental Principles* only "in so far as that work gives a preliminary acquaintance with the principle of duty and justifies a definite formula of it; otherwise it is an independent work."³ This definite formula, of course, is the categorical imperative, reached in the second section of the *Fundamental Principles* and in §7 of the *Critique*.

To be more specific, the *Fundamental Principles*, as the work giving an analysis of ordinary moral consciousness, begins with common moral judgments and the felt constraint of duty. It seeks to bring their basis to light, and does so by formulating the moral law expressed as a categorical imperative and a theory of freedom as the condition for making and realizing the demands of this imperative. The *Critique of Practical Reason*, on the other hand, begins with definitions, in a manner almost reminiscent of Spinoza, and proceeds quickly, in a quasi-deductive manner, to the formula of the moral law and the theory of freedom. The works, therefore, for a considerable distance go along the same path, but in opposite directions.

Nevertheless, the *Critique* contains material which, Kant says, would be out of place in the *Fundamental Principles*, for it must show the unity of practical and theoretical reason.⁴ The full investigation of this unity constitutes the chief advance made in the *Critique of Practical Reason* beyond Kant's earlier work. This unity was asserted in the first *Critique* and assumed in the *Fundamental Principles*; only in the *Critique of Practical Reason* is this assumption "deduced" or justified. Only in the light of this larger and deeper problem of showing that there

² *Ibid.*, Intro. (Liberal Arts Press ed., p. 11).

³ *Critique of Practical Reason*, this edition, p. 8.

⁴ *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals* (Liberal Arts Press ed.), p. 7.

is no conflict of reason with itself in its claims to knowledge and in its use in practical conduct does Kant deal adequately with many of those most profound philosophical problems concerning the relations between knowing, believing, and acting.

II

Even the titles of the works, properly understood, tell much of this story of their intimate connection. There is a whole theory implicit in the very words "metaphysics of morals," "critique," and "practical reason."

"Metaphysics" means two things for Kant. It is alleged speculative knowledge of supersensible and unconditional reality; this is the old metaphysics which the *Critique of Pure Reason* was written to destroy. Then there is the metaphysics Kant attempted to establish, "metaphysics as science," "the inventory of all our possessions through pure reason, systematically arranged,"⁵ "a system of a priori knowledge from mere concepts."⁶ It has two parts: the metaphysics of nature, consisting of all the a priori principles of what is, and the metaphysics of morals, comprising all the a priori principles of what ought to be.⁷ But many philosophers claimed that certain, rational knowledge of God, freedom, and immortality belonged in the store-house of metaphysics understood as knowledge of ultimate reality. Kant is primarily concerned to deny this, and he does so by showing that such putative knowledge has no valid foundation. Such claims to knowledge are vain and empty or, in Kant's technical terminology, "dialectical."

This brings us to Kant's conception of the function he assigns to a "critique." One task of a critique is the self-examination of reason for the purpose of discovering and eradicating the dialectical illusions of the older metaphysics. The second task of a critique is to rescue those principles which constitute

⁵ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A xx. —

⁶ *Metaphysik der Sitten*, Einleitung, ii. —

⁷ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 840 = B 868.

metaphysics "as science" from the ruin threatened by universal empiricism, which not only raised doubts about the possibility of speculative metaphysics but also tended to undermine knowledge even of nature and morals.⁸ Critique is negatively an attack on pretensions to supersensible knowledge, which appear as metaphysical dogmatism and moral fanaticism;⁹ affirmatively it establishes the structure, range, use, and validity of concepts (like that of cause in the first Critique, duty in the second) which cannot be objectively valid if derived from experience, but which are essential if experience is to "make sense." Without a critique having both these affirmative and negative functions, Kant thinks it is not possible to draw a line between legitimate and illegitimate metaphysics, or to defend legitimate knowledge from attacks properly made only on dialectical illusion masquerading as the higher wisdom.

So much for the word "critique." And what is "practical reason"? To say, as Kant does, that practical reason is the same as will is instructive only when we understand his theory of reason itself. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* there are three cognitive faculties of the mind: sensibility, which is receptivity to sense data under the forms of space and time; understanding, which is the faculty of synthesizing these data into knowledge of objects, the synthesis occurring under rules established by concepts called categories; and reason, which is the faculty of synthesizing knowledge of objects into systems (such as the "realm of nature," the whole system of phenomena under laws). Reason guides the construction of knowledge in its systematic aspect, by directing our search for the absolute conditions of all contingent conditions, which will support the entire edifice of knowledge. This is the ideal of reason in its theoretical aspect, and when its search leads it to make assertions which concern supersensible realities which belong in the realm of the older metaphysics, it is called "speculative reason."

Now, Kant tells us, all things in nature, including human

⁸ *Critique of Practical Reason*, this edition, p. 12 and the ironical remark at the end of the Preface, p. 14.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 141.

beings, behave in accordance with laws. But only a rational being can have or act according to a *conception* of laws. A falling body, for instance, "obeys" Galileo's law in the sense of merely illustrating it; but man, as a being endowed with consciousness and reason, can govern his behavior by his *conception* of this law. By his knowledge of Galileo's law, he may decide whether it is safe to jump from a certain height, and (if his "will" is strong enough) may thereby overcome his fear of doing so. Such a conception of law is possible only to a rational being; and we say that a man acts voluntarily when his conception of a law, and not his momentary impulses, governs his behavior. To take another example: a man as a creature of impulse unwittingly follows psychological laws in his sexual behavior; but as a rational being, possessing insight into the causal laws of psychology, he may discern consequences of his possible actions, and thereby modify his behavior and act in ways which in fact thwart his impulses. Such a man, we ordinarily say, has a strong will; he acts rationally, not merely impulsively;¹⁰ rational order and system are introduced into his activities by the governance of reason.

We can thus see that when Kant says the will is nothing but practical reason, what he says is not so very startling, but is implicit even in the common usage of the word "will." "Will" is the name we ordinarily give to the subjective experience of control of impulse by reason, and not to the merely emotional or impulsive aspect of behavior.

The book before us is a critical examination of will understood in this sense, as practical reason, reason applied in conduct. And its main thesis is that though practical reason generally has an impulsive component or motive, which it more or less successfully guides by maxims and rules of experience, it is also possible for a man's reason to guide his behavior without the motive force springing from variable, subjective im-

¹⁰ Note that, even if we are not Kantians, we do not yet say that he acts *morally*, for his self-control through strength of will may be merely a matter of prudence, of staying out of trouble. Cf. Kant's tart remark on a similar example in the *Critique*, p. 30.

pulses directed to the gaining of pleasure. Such a reason provides not just the long-range control of impulses but, as *pure* practical reason, it can provide also the motives and set the ends of action. The law conceived by reason in this capacity is not an empirical law of nature, or of human nature as learned in psychology, but it is the moral law, and the imperative to obey it is a categorical imperative, not hypothetical and contingent upon the actual presence of a given impulse.

Kant tells us, in the opening sentence, that the work is called *Critique of Practical Reason* and not *Critique of Pure Practical Reason*, because its task is to show that pure reason can be practical, and it does so by a critical examination of reason's *entire* (both pure and empirical) practical use. This suggests that this *Critique* has only the second, the affirmative, function distinguished above. But this is not correct, for there is a dialectical illusion even in pure practical reason, as we shall see; and this must be criticized.—The lack of parallelism in the titles is unfortunate in another respect: it has led superficial readers and not an insignificant number of philosophical thinkers into believing that Kant established a dichotomy between “pure” and “practical” reason. But if this is believed, it is safe to say that not a single doctrine of his ethical theory has been or can be understood. Kant is trying to show that pure reason can be practical, and must be practical if morality is not an illusion; he is trying to show that it is practical of itself, and not merely as “the servant of the passions” (Hume), i.e., in connection with other, non-rational components of personality.¹¹

We are now in a position to appreciate the full import of the title of the book, *Critique of Practical Reason*. Affirmatively, the book is to work out the pure *a priori* laws of conduct, and thus to establish beyond sophistic criticism the existence of pure practical reason, whose dictates will constitute a metaphysics of morals understood as rational knowledge of the moral law in all its ramifications. Negatively, it will examine the presuppositions of practical reason to prevent them from being passed off

¹¹ As held by Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1139a, 1177b; *On the Soul*, 432b) and most other philosophers and psychologists.

as insight into a supersensible world. These two tasks are carried out, respectively, in the “Analytic of Pure Practical Reason” and in the “Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason.”

III

The “Analytic” has as its task the establishment of the possibility of a *priori* (universal and necessary) practical principles (moral laws), and it accomplishes this in the first two chapters. They give the formula of the moral law (§ 7), its differences from maxims and rules of practice (§§ 1–4), its intimate relation to the autonomy (freedom) of the will as practical reason (§§ 5, 6, 8, and pp. 43–51), and the connection between moral principles and moral concepts (good and evil) (Chapter II). Chapter III of the Analytic is one of the most effective of all of Kant's writings, manifesting on every page his own profound moral commitment and giving a vivid and memorable phenomenology of moral experience. Its purpose is to show the way in which men come to be moved by the thought of duty; and this account of reverence for the law as the motive to morality has important implications for Kant's theory of moral education, as given in the “Methodology” at the end of this *Critique*.

Though the argument is somewhat more formal, elaborate, and rigorous, most of the Analytic will be at least partly familiar to those who have read the *Fundamental Principles*, and I shall therefore turn to new material not touched upon, or at most intimated, in the *Fundamental Principles* but fully developed in the present work. Most of this material is in the “Dialectic.”

IV

To understand fully the Dialectic of the second *Critique*, we must recall some of the teachings of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹² In the Dialectic of that book, Kant was concerned with

¹² Fortunately, at various places in the second *Critique*, Kant reminds the reader of what he has said in the first. But inasmuch as these passages may

Reason - not restricted to cognition (

this why: understanding - reason

Critique. Assume, for the moment, that morality requires belief in God, freedom, and immortality—why Kant says it does so will be mentioned later. If reason in its practical aspect (as the “organ” of morality) requires that the theoretically empty space in the system of knowledge be filled by assumptions, in default of which the moral experience would be illusory and the moral law invalid; and if these assumptions conflict with no principles that theoretical reason can establish; then, says Kant, pure reason in its practical capacity has primacy over pure reason in its speculative (theoretical) capacity. It can therefore legitimately make—indeed, if morality is not in vain, it must make—these assumptions. But it makes them not as expressions of knowledge but as matters of faith, or as what Kant calls “practical postulates.”¹⁵ If we mistook the authority of practical reason and claimed that these postulates gave us any knowledge, we would not only exceed the competence of theoretical reason but would actually threaten the foundations of morals themselves.¹⁶

The ideas of God, freedom, and immortality are merely possible for speculative reason, not actual. But Kant says that they are necessary for morality. They therefore fit this “empty space”

¹⁵ *Critique of Practical Reason*, Bk. II, ch. II, sect. 3: “On the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason in its Association with Speculative Reason.” This chapter should be carefully compared with the writings of other defenders of the “right” or “will” to believe beyond theoretical evidence, among whom Kant is often counted. But the differences between Kant and, for instance, William James are at least as important as the similarities. The chief difference is, in Kantian language, that since they have not shown that pure reason can be practical (which, indeed, they deny), their claim that there is a right to believe beyond the evidence is based on premises having no objective validity, and the resulting belief is therefore irrational and subjective. Kant, on the other hand, claims that the legitimate belief in these postulates is objective and rational, though not cognitive; it is based on demands of pure reason and not on what James called “our passionate nature.” What is unique in Kant’s view is precisely the point that “rational” is not restricted in meaning to “cognitive.”

¹⁶ *Critique of Practical Reason*, Bk. II, ch. II, sect. 9: “Of the Wise Adaptation of Man’s Cognitive Faculties to his Practical Vocation.”

in the system of theoretical knowledge, and acceptance of them is justified by the primacy of practical reason.

We turn now to the final question: how does Kant show that morality requires such postulates? The same answer does not fit all of them. The idea or postulate of freedom differs markedly from the others, and therefore we must briefly discuss each of them separately. Generally speaking, we can say that freedom is required for the establishment of the moral law itself, while the other postulates are required only for the resolution of an antinomy into which practical reason itself falls.

In the Dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant develops an antinomy between the concept of freedom and that of natural causation. That is, he gives a proof that the connection of events under the laws of empirical science is the only necessary connection, and then he gives an equally valid proof that there is a “causality of freedom,” i.e., that there can be initiated a new causal chain in nature. The first member of such a chain might be an act of will which is not an effect of some earlier natural event. He resolves this antinomy by arguing that both statements are true and that there is no contradiction between them. The first is true, but it concerns events only as phenomena in time. If the empirical events which are the objects of scientific knowledge were events among things in themselves, the principle of natural causation would be absolutely true without restriction, there would be an irresolvable conflict between freedom and causal determinism, and freedom would have to be surrendered. But if the events we observe are only phenomena, i.e., appearances of things in themselves as organized by our own sensibility and understanding, as he believes he has shown, in other parts of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to be the case, then the causality of freedom might be true of the relation of realities to appearances while mechanical determinism would still hold of the connections among the observed events themselves. The two principles might therefore be true, each in its own context. Thus the *Critique of Pure Reason* shows that freedom is not incompatible with natural necessity and is thus a possible

insofar as they are:
2) Freedom
3) "I will" -
actual Re-
spect -
1.153

concept. But the first *Critique* does not give any reason for believing that it is actual, i.e., that there is freedom.¹⁷

The *Critique of Practical Reason*, however, shows that the moral law which is given as a fact of pure reason, reciprocally implies and is implied by the concept of freedom.¹⁸ In asserting that man is morally obligated, Kant is asserting that freedom is real, while nature, including human nature, can be understood *scientifically* only under the principle of strict causal necessity. Man as a moral agent is not the same as man as a part of nature; and the act which the psychologist says is causally determined by heredity and environment can be said by the moral agent himself to be freely chosen.¹⁹ Kant's concept of freedom, therefore, is not equivalent to that according to which free actions have no causes, or to the view, popular in his time and in ours, that actions are free if they are psychologically determined by one's own settled character and not by momentary stimuli.²⁰

The other two postulates are quite different, and it is generally recognized, even by Kant himself, that the argument for them is less coercive. Pure practical reason has its own antinomy and the exposure and resolution of this antinomy is the negative task of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. It arises in the concept of "the highest good," which is the ideal of moral perfection conjoined with happiness proportionate to the degree of perfection attained. Striving for the highest good is required by the moral law, but the highest good cannot be made real unless the soul is immortal and God exists. The moral law is vain if it commands us to do the impossible; hence the moral law is invalid, or the highest good is possible. Now since we have the "fact of pure reason" to show that the moral law really does bind us, and since the criticism of speculative reason showed

¹⁷ This is not quite true in fact, for there are sections of the *Critique of Pure Reason* which are concerned with moral questions. It would be more accurate to say: a critique restricted to an examination of theoretical and speculative reason would give no grounds for asserting more than the possibility of the idea of freedom.

¹⁸ *Critique of Practical Reason*, pp. 3, 28f., 31.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 100f.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 97f.

no impossibility in either immortality or God (but only the impossibility of a theoretical proof), the assumptions are justified. We are therefore under a moral necessity to ascribe reality to God and immortality to ourselves; but we do so as a matter of rational faith, and not in the form of a claim to metaphysical knowledge of the nature of ourselves and of the being of God. i. e. only for action

Hence the *Critique of Practical Reason* has two functions: affirmatively it defends those concepts without which moral experience would be unintelligible or impossible; negatively it restrains the dogmatism and fanaticism which claim on moral grounds to have an insight into ultimate metaphysical realities.

There is a tale, invented by Heinrich Heine, that Kant demolished religious belief, but when he saw how unhappy this made his servant Lampe, the great philosopher showed that he was also a "good man" by writing the *Critique of Practical Reason* to give old Lampe his faith again. This is, of course, a caricature of the doctrine of the primacy of practical reason and its postulates. But if the reader will keep this story in mind as he reads the *Dialectic*, so that at the end he can decide whether there is a kernel of truth inside the husk of error in this anecdote, he can rightly feel that he has at least the beginning of real insight into what is perhaps the most important and profound philosophy of morals produced in modern times.

LEWIS WHITE BECK

NOTE ON THE EDITION

This translation, first published in my edition of *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason and other Writings in Moral Philosophy* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1949), is based on careful comparison of the variant readings in the German editions of Natorp, Vorländer and Kellermann. A few errors discovered in the Chicago edition have been corrected, and I am indebted to several reviewers of that book for bringing some of them to my attention. A much larger number of minor changes have been made in the hope of rendering the readings in this edition somewhat smoother but without sacrificing accuracy. The pagination in the running-heads is that of the Prussian Academy edition, Volume V, and is appended in order to facilitate the use of secondary writings which generally, and should universally, cite that splendid edition. The folios in brackets inserted in the text at the end of a line indicate the approximate break of the pages of the Academy edition.

The translator has contributed a number of footnotes which have been bracketed. The other notes are those of the author.

O. P.

PREFACE

Why this critique is called simply *Critique of Practical Reason* and not *Critique of Pure Practical Reason*, though the parallelism between it and the critique of speculative reason seems to demand the latter title, will be sufficiently shown in the treatise itself. Its task is merely to show that there is a pure practical reason, and, in order to do this, it critically examines reason's entire practical faculty. If it succeeds in this task, there is no need to examine the pure faculty itself to see whether it, like speculative reason, presumptuously overreaches itself. For if pure reason is actually practical, it will show its reality and that of its concepts in actions, and all disputations which aim to prove its impossibility will be in vain.

With the pure practical faculty of reason, the reality of transcendental freedom is also confirmed. Indeed, it is substantiated in the absolute sense needed by speculative reason in its use of the concept of causality, for this freedom is required if reason is to rescue itself from the antinomy in which it is inevitably entangled when attempting to think the unconditioned in a causal series. For speculative reason, the concept of freedom was problematic but not impossible; that is to say, speculative reason could think of freedom without contradiction, but it could not assure any objective reality to it. Reason showed freedom to be conceivable only in order that its supposed impossibility might not endanger reason's very being and plunge it into an abyss of skepticism.

The concept of freedom, in so far as its reality is proved by an apodictic law of practical reason, is the keystone of the whole architecture of the system of pure reason and even of speculative reason. All other concepts (those of God and immortal- [4] ity) which, as mere ideas, are unsupported by anything in speculative reason now attach themselves to the concept of freedom and gain, with it and through it, stability and objective reality.

That is, their possibility is proved by the fact that there really is freedom, for this idea is revealed by the moral law.

Freedom, however, among all the ideas of speculative reason is the only one whose possibility we know a priori. We do not understand it, but we know it as the condition¹ of the moral law which we do know. The ideas of God and immortality are, on the contrary, not conditions of the moral law, but only conditions of the necessary object of a will which is determined by this law, this will being merely the practical use of our pure reason. Hence we cannot say that we know or understand either the reality or even the possibility of these ideas. Nevertheless, they are the conditions of applying the morally determined will to the object which is given to it a priori (the highest good). Consequently, the possibility of these conditions can and *must* be assumed in this practical context without our knowing or understanding them in a theoretical sense. To serve their practical function, it suffices that they do not contain any internal impossibility (contradiction). Here we have a ground of assent which, in comparison to the speculative reason, is only subjective, but which is just as valid objectively to a practical but equally pure reason. Thus, through the concept of freedom, the ideas of God and immortality gain objective reality and legitimacy and indeed subjective necessity (as a need of pure reason). Reason is not hereby extended, however, in its theoretical [5] knowledge; the only thing which is different is that the possibility, which was heretofore a problem, now becomes an assertion, and the practical use of reason is thus connected with the elements of theoretical reason. This need is not just a hypothetical one for some *arbitrary* speculative purpose, of the kind that one

¹ To avoid having anyone imagine that there is an inconsistency when I say that freedom is the condition of the moral law and later assert that the moral law is the only condition under which freedom can be known, I will only remind the reader that, though freedom is certainly the ratio essendi of the moral law, the latter is the ratio cognoscendi of freedom. For had not the moral law already been distinctly thought in our reason, we would never have been justified in assuming anything like freedom, even though it is not self-contradictory. But if there were no freedom, the moral law would never have been encountered in us.

of these concepts is different from that required by speculative [6] reason.

So far from being incoherent, the highly consistent structure of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is very satisfyingly revealed here. For in that work the objects of experience as such, including even our own subject, were explained as only *appearances*, though as based upon things-in-themselves; consequently, even in that *Critique* it was emphasized that the supersensible was not mere fancy and that its concepts were not empty. Now practical reason itself, without any collusion with the speculative, provides reality to a supersensible object of the category of causality, i.e., to freedom. This is a practical concept and as such is subject only to practical use; but what in the speculative critique could only be thought is now confirmed by fact. The strange but incontrovertible assertion of the speculative *Critique*, that the thinking subject is only an appearance to itself in inner intuition, now finds its full confirmation in the *Critique of Practical Reason*; the establishment of this thesis is here so cogent that one would be compelled to accept it even if the first had not already proved it.³

In this way I can also understand why the most weighty criticisms of the *Critique* which have come to my attention turn about these two points: first, the reality of the categories as applied to noumena, which is denied in theoretical knowledge but affirmed in practical; and, second, the paradoxical demand to regard one's self, as subject to freedom, as noumenon, and yet from the point of view of nature to think of one's self as a phenomenon in one's own empirical consciousness. So long as one had no definite concept of morality and freedom, no conjecture could be made concerning what the noumenon was which should be posited as the ground of the alleged appearance, and

³ The union of causality as freedom with causality as the mechanism of nature, the first being given through the moral law and the latter through natural law, and both as related to the same subject, man, is impossible unless man is conceived by pure consciousness as a being in itself in relation to the former, but by empirical reason as appearance in relation to the latter. Otherwise the self-contradiction of reason is unavoidable.

sequently passed over to the practical use of this concept, they would have been brought to the same description of it in respect to its principles which they are now so unwilling to acknowledge. The concept of freedom is the stumbling block of all empiricists but the key to the most sublime practical principles for critical moralists, who see, through it, that they must [8] necessarily proceed rationally. For this reason, I beg the reader not to run lightly through what is said about this concept at the end of the Analytic.

I leave it to the connoisseur of this kind of work to judge whether such a system into which practical reason has been developed through a critique of this faculty has cost much or little trouble, especially in gaining the right point of view from which the whole can be rightly sketched. It presupposes the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, but only in so far as that work gives a preliminary acquaintance with the principle of duty and justifies a definite formula of it;⁵ otherwise it is an independent work.

The reason the classification of all practical sciences is not completely carried through, as the critique of speculative reason did this for the theoretical sciences, lies in the nature of the practical faculty itself. For the specific definition of duties as human duties, which is necessary to a classification of them, is only possible if the subject of this definition (man) is known in his actual nature, at least in so far as this knowledge is needed in determining his relation to duty in general. Getting this knowledge, how-

⁵ A critic* who wished to say something against that work really did better than he intended when he said that there was no new principle of morality in it but only a new formula. Who would want to introduce a new principle of morality and, as it were, be its inventor, as if the world had hitherto been ignorant of what duty is or had been thoroughly wrong about it? Those who know what a formula means to a mathematician, in determining what is to be done in solving a problem without letting him go astray, will not regard a formula which will do this for all duties as something insignificant and unnecessary.

* [Gottlob August Tittel, who in his *Über Herrn Kants Moralreform* (1786) asked, "Is the entire Kantian reform of ethics to limit itself just to a new formula?"]

ever, does not belong in a critique of practical reason as such, which gives an account of the principles of the possibility of duty, of its extent and limits, without particular reference to human nature. Consequently, this classification belongs to the system of science, not to the system of criticism.

I have, I hope, given a sufficient answer, in the second part of the Analytic, to a certain critic,⁶ truth-loving and acute and therefore worthy of respect, who made the following objection to the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*: the concept of the good was not established before the moral principle, as [9] in his opinion was necessary.⁷ I have also paid attention to many

⁶ [The anonymous author (H. A. Pistorius) of a review of the *Foundations* in *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, LXVI, Part 2, 447 ff. See Daniel Jentsch's letter to Kant, May 14, 1787, Cassirer ed., IX, 325.]

⁷ One could also raise the objection that I have not previously explained the concept of the faculty of desire or the feeling of pleasure. This reproach would be unfair, however, because this explanation, as given in psychology, could reasonably be presupposed. But then the definition given in psychology might be so framed that the feeling of pleasure would be made basic to the determination of the faculty of desire (as this is commonly done); and, as a result, the supreme principle of practical philosophy would necessarily turn out to be empirical, a conclusion which would have to be proved first and which is, in fact, completely refuted in this *Critique*. Therefore, I shall give this explanation in the way it ought to be given in order to decide properly this controversial question at the beginning.

Life is the faculty of a being by which it acts according to the laws of the faculty of desire. The *faculty of desire* is the faculty such a being has of causing, through its ideas, the reality of the objects of these ideas. *Pleasure* is the idea of the agreement of an object or an action with the *subjective* conditions of life, i.e., with the faculty through which an idea causes the reality of its object (or the direction of the energies of a subject to such an action as will produce the object).

I need no more than this for the purposes of a critique of concepts borrowed from psychology; the rest is supplied by the *Critique* itself. The question as to whether pleasure is always the ground of the faculty of desire or whether under certain conditions it only follows upon a particular modification of this faculty—this question, as is easily seen, remains unanswered by this explanation; for it consists only of terms belonging to the pure understanding, i.e., categories, which contain nothing empirical. Such a precaution against making judgments by venturing definitions be-

ing it deals with is very close to the popular way of thinking. This objection, moreover, could not have been made even to the first *Critique* by anyone who had really thought his way through it instead of merely turning the pages. To make up new words for accepted concepts when the language does not lack expressions for them is a childish effort to distinguish one's self not by new and true thoughts but by new patches on old clothes. If any reader of that work can show that he knows more common expressions which are as adequate to the thoughts as the ones I used seemed to me, or can demonstrate the nullity of the thoughts themselves and therewith of the terms used to express them, he should do so. The first would greatly oblige me, for I only want to be understood; the second would be a service to philosophy itself. But, as long as those thoughts stand, I [11] very much doubt that expressions both more suitable to them and more common can be found.⁹

⁹ More than this kind of unintelligibility, I fear some misinterpretations, here and there, of expressions which I have sought out with the greatest care in order that the concepts which they mean may not be missed. Thus, under the heading "modality," in the table of categories of practical reason, the "permitted" and the "forbidden" (objective-practical meanings of the possible and the impossible) have almost the same significance, in popular usage, as the categories which immediately follow them, namely, "duty" and "contrary to duty." Here, however, the former mean that which is in agreement or disagreement with a merely possible precept (as, for example, the solution of problems of geometry or mechanics); the latter, however, indicate what is in such a relation to a law actually lying in reason as such. This difference of meaning is not entirely foreign to ordinary language, but it is somewhat unusual. For instance, an orator is not permitted to forge new words or constructions, but this is permitted, to some extent, to a poet. In neither case, though, is there any thought of duty, for if anyone wishes to forfeit his reputation as a speaker, no one can prevent it. Here it is a question of the difference of the imperatives corresponding to the problematic, assertoric, and apodictic ground of determination. Similarly in the note where I compare the moral ideals of practical perfection in the various philosophical schools, I have differentiated between the ideas of wisdom and holiness, although I have shown them to be fundamentally and objectively identical. But I take wisdom, in that note, only in the sense in which man (the Stoic, for example) lays claim to it, and thus as it is thought of subjectively as a human charac-

In this manner the a priori principles of two faculties of [12] the mind, cognition and desire, are to be discovered and their scope and limits determined. Thus the firm basis is laid for a systematic philosophy, both theoretical and practical, as a science.

Nothing worse could happen to all these labors, however, than that someone should make the unexpected discovery that there is and can be no a priori knowledge at all. But there is no danger of this. It would be like proving by reason that there is no such thing as reason; for we only say that we know something through reason when we know that we could have known it even if it had not actually come within our experience. Thus knowledge through reason and a priori knowledge are the same thing. It is a clear contradiction to try to extract necessity from an empirical proposition (*ex pumice aquam*),¹⁰ and it is equally contradictory to attempt to procure, along with such necessity, true universality to a judgment (for without it no rational inference is possible, and consequently no inference is possible by analogy either, since the latter has an at least presumed universality and objective necessity and therefore presupposes it). To substitute subjective necessity, i.e., habit, for the objective which pertains only to a priori judgments would be to deny to reason the fac-

teristic. (Perhaps the term "virtue," which the Stoic made so much of, would show even better the characteristic of this school.) But the term "postulate of pure practical reason" can occasion the worst misinterpretation if confused with the meaning which postulates have in pure mathematics, where they are of apodictic certainty. The latter, however, postulate the possibility of an action, the object of which one previously knows a priori, theoretically and with complete certainty, to be possible. Those of the pure practical reason, however, postulate the possibility of an object (God and the immortality of the soul) from apodictic practical laws, but therefore only for the use of a practical reason. This certainty of the postulated possibility is not in the least theoretical and consequently also not apodictic, i.e., not a necessity known by the reference to an object; it is a necessary assumption, rather, with reference to the subject as conforming to the objective practical laws of reason. Thus it is merely a necessary hypothesis. I could not discover for this subjective yet true and absolute rational necessity a better term than "postulate."

¹⁰ ["Water from a pumice stone" (Plautus *Persa* i. i. 14). Cf. our "blood from a turnip."]

ulty of judging an object, of knowing it and what belongs to it. It would mean, for example, that what usually or always follows a certain prior condition could not be inferred to follow *from* it, since that would imply objective necessity and an a priori concept of a connection. It would mean only that similar cases may be expected, as animals expect them. It would be to reject the concept of cause as fundamentally false and a mere delusion of thought. As to attempting to remedy this lack of objective and consequently universal validity by arguing that there is no reason not to attribute to other reasonable beings a different type of ideation—well, if this sort of argument should yield a valid inference, then our ignorance would render us greater services in widening our knowledge than all our meditation. Simply because we do not know any reasonable beings other than men, we would have the right only to assume them to be of the same nature as we know ourselves to be, and therefore we would really know them. I need not mention the fact that universality of assent does not prove the objective validity of a judgment, i.e., its validity as knowledge, but only call attention to the fact that, even if sometimes that which is universally assented to is also correct, this is no proof of its agreement with the object; it is rather the case that only objective validity affords the ground of a necessary universal agreement.

Hume would find himself completely at ease in this system of universal empiricism of principles, for he desired, as is well known, nothing more than that a merely subjectively necessary concept of cause, i.e., habit, be assumed in place of all objective meaning of necessity in the causal concept; he did this in order to deny to reason any judgment concerning God, freedom, and immortality; and he knew very well how to draw conclusions, with complete cogency when once the principles were conceded. But even Hume did not make his empiricism so universal as to include mathematics in it. He held its propositions to be analytic, and, if this were correct, they would indeed be apodictic; but this would not give us any right to conclude that there is a faculty of reason which can make apodictic judgments also in philosophy, for in philosophy they would be synthetic, as the

law of causality is. But if one assumes a universal empiricism, mathematics will also be involved.

When, however, mathematics comes into conflict with that reason which admits only empirical principles, as this inevitably occurs in the antinomy, since mathematics irrefutably proves the infinite divisibility of space which empiricism cannot allow, there is an obvious contradiction between the highest possible demonstrable evidence and the alleged inferences from empirical principles. One might ask, like Cheselden's¹¹ blind man, "Which deceives me, sight or touch?" (Empiricism is based on touch, but rationalism on a necessity which can be seen.) Thus universal empiricism is revealed to be genuine skepticism, which has been falsely ascribed to Hume in this unlimited sense,¹² for he let mathematics stand as a sure touchstone of experience, [14] instead of admitting no touchstone (which can be found only in a priori principles) even though experience consists not only of feelings but also of judgments.

Since in this philosophical and critical age no one can be very much in earnest about such an empiricism, and since it is presumably put forward only as an exercise for judgment and to place the necessity of rational principles in a clearer light by contrast, we can only be grateful to those who trouble themselves with this otherwise unproductive work.

¹¹ [William Cheselden (1688-1752), an English surgeon, famous for his operation of iridectomy which cured some forms of blindness. Cheselden attended Newton in his last illness.]

¹² Names which refer to the followers of a sect have always been accompanied by much injustice. It is as if someone said, "N. is an idealist." For although he not only admits, but even emphasizes, that our ideas of external things correspond to real objects, he will still hold that the form of their intuition depends not on them but on the human mind.

INTRODUCTION

OF THE IDEA OF A *CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON*

The theoretical use of reason is concerned with objects of [15] the merely cognitive faculty, and a critical examination of it with reference to this use deals really only with the pure cognitive faculty, because the latter raised the suspicion, which was subsequently confirmed, that it might easily pass beyond its boundaries and lose itself among unattainable objects or even among contradictory concepts. It is quite different with the practical use of reason. In the latter, reason deals with the grounds determining the will, which is a faculty either of bringing forth objects corresponding to conceptions or of determining itself, i.e., its causality to effect such objects (whether the physical power is sufficient to this or not). For here reason can at least attain so far as to determine the will, and, in so far as it is a question of volition only, reason does always have objective reality. !!

This is, then, the first question: Is pure reason sufficient of itself to determine the will, or is it only as empirically conditioned that it can do so? At this point there appears a concept of causality which is justified by the *Critique of Pure Reason*, though subject to no empirical exhibition. That is the concept of freedom, and if we now can discover means to show that freedom does in fact belong to the human will (and thus to the will of all rational beings), then it will have been proved not only that pure reason can be practical but also that it alone, and not the empirically conditioned reason, is unconditionally practical. Consequently, we shall have to make a critical examination, not of the *pure* practical reason, but only of practical reason [16] *as such*.

For pure [practical] reason, where it is once demonstrated to

exist, is in no need of a critical examination; it is pure reason itself which contains the standard for the critical investigation of its entire use. The critique, therefore, of practical reason as such has the obligation to prevent the empirically conditioned reason from presuming to be the only ground of determination of the will. The use of pure [practical] reason, if it is shown that there is such a reason, is alone immanent; the empirically conditioned use of reason, which presumes to be sovereign, is, on the contrary, transcendent, expressing itself in demands and precepts which go far beyond its own sphere. This is precisely the opposite situation from that of pure reason in its speculative use.

Yet because it is still pure reason, the knowledge of which here underlies its practical use, the organization of the *Critique of Practical Reason* must conform, in its general outline, to that of the critique of speculative reason. We shall therefore have to have a Doctrine of Elements and a Methodology. The former must have as its first part an Analytic as the rule of truth and a Dialectic as an exhibition and resolution of illusion in the judgments of practical reason. Only the order in the subdivision of the Analytic will be the reverse of that in the critique of speculative reason. For in the present work we begin with principles and proceed to concepts, and only then, if possible, go on to the senses, while in the study of speculative reason we had to start with the senses and end with principles. Again the reason for this lies in the fact that here we have to deal with a will and to consider reason not in relation to objects but in relation to this will and its causality. The principles of the empirically unconditioned causality must come first, and afterward the attempt can be made to establish our concepts of the ground of determination of such a will, their application to objects, and finally their application to the subject and its sensuous faculty. The law of causality from freedom, i.e., any pure practical principle, is the unavoidable beginning and determines the objects to which it alone can be applied.

PART I

DOCTRINE OF THE ELEMENTS OF PURE PRACTICAL REASON

BOOK I

ANALYTIC OF PURE PRACTICAL REASON

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF PURE PRACTICAL REASON

§ 1. Definition

Practical principles are propositions which contain a general determination of the will, having under it several practical rules. They are subjective, or maxims, when the condition is regarded by the subject as valid only for his own will. They are objective, or practical laws, when the condition is recognized as objective, i.e., as valid for the will of every rational being.

REMARK

Assuming that pure reason can contain a practical ground sufficient to determine the will, then there are practical laws. Otherwise all practical principles are mere maxims. In the will of a rational being affected by feeling, there can be a conflict of maxims with the practical laws recognized by this being. For example, someone can take as his maxim not to tolerate any unavenged offense and yet see at the same time that this is only his own maxim and not a practical law and that, if it is taken as a rule for the will of every rational being, it would be inconsistent with itself.

In natural science the principles of what occurs (e.g., the principle of equivalence of action and reaction in the communication of motion) are at the same time laws of nature, for there

*In a rational being not affected by desires
Sollen = Willen.*

the use of reason is theoretical and determined by the [20] nature of the object. In practical philosophy, which has to do only with the grounds of determination of the will, the principles which a man makes for himself are not laws by which he is inexorably bound, because reason, in practice, has to do with a subject and especially with its faculty of desire, the special character of which may occasion variety in the rule. The practical rule is always a product of reason, because it prescribes action as a means to an effect which is its purpose. This rule, however, is an imperative for a being whose reason is not the sole determinant of the will. It is a rule characterized by an "ought," which expresses the objective necessitation of the act and indicates that, if reason completely determined the will, the action would without exception take place according to the rule.

Imperatives, therefore, are valid objectively and are quite distinct from maxims, which are subjective principles. Imperatives determine either the conditions of causality of a rational being as an efficient cause only in respect to its effect and its sufficiency to bring this effect about, or they determine only the will, whether it be adequate to the effect or not. In the former case, imperatives would be hypothetical and would contain only precepts of skill; in the latter, on the contrary, they would be categorical and would alone be practical laws. Maxims are thus indeed principles, but they are not imperatives. Imperatives themselves, however, when they are conditional, i.e., when they determine the will not as such but only in respect to a desired effect, are hypothetical imperatives, which are practical precepts but not laws. Laws must completely determine the will as will, even before I ask whether I am capable of achieving a desired effect or what should be done to realize it. They must thus be categorical; otherwise they would not be laws, for they would lack the necessity which, in order to be practical, must be completely independent of pathological conditions, i.e., conditions only contingently related to the will.

Tell someone, for instance, that in his youth he should work and save in order not to want in his old age—that is a correct and important practical precept of the will. One easily sees, however,

that the will is thereby directed to something else which he is assumed to desire; and, as to this desire, we must leave it up to the man himself if he foresees other resources than his own acquisitions, does not even hope to reach old age, or thinks that in case of need he can make out with little. Reason, from which alone a rule involving necessity can be derived, gives necessity to this precept, without which it would not be an imperative; but this necessity is dependent on only subjective conditions, and one cannot assume it in equal measure in all men. But for reason to be legislative, it is required that reason need presuppose only itself, because the rule is objectively and universally [21] valid only when it holds without any contingent subjective conditions which differentiate one rational being from another.

Now tell a man that he should never make a deceitful promise; this is a rule which concerns only his will regardless of whether any purposes he has can be achieved by it or not. Only the volition is to be completely determined a priori by this rule. If, now, it is found that this rule is practically right, it is a law, because it is a categorical imperative. Thus practical laws refer only to the will, irrespective of what is attained by its causality, and one can disregard this causality (as belonging to the sensuous world) in order to have the laws in their purity.

§ 2. Theorem I

All practical principles which presuppose an object (material) of the faculty of desire as the determining ground of the will are without exception empirical and can furnish no practical laws.

By the term "material of the faculty of desire," I understand an object whose reality is desired. When the desire for this object precedes the practical rule and is the condition under which the latter becomes a principle, I say, first, that this principle is then always empirical. I say this because the determining ground of choice consists in the conception of an object and its relation to the subject, whereby the faculty of desire is determined to seek its realization. Such a relation to the subject is called pleasure in the reality of an object, and it must be presupposed as

the condition of the possibility of the determination of choice. But we cannot know, a priori, of the idea of any object, whatever the nature of this idea, whether it will be associated with pleasure or displeasure or will be merely indifferent. Thus any such determining ground of choice must always be empirical, and the practical material principle which has it as a condition is likewise empirical.

Second, a principle which is based only on the subjective susceptibility to a pleasure or displeasure (which is never known except empirically and cannot be valid in the same form for all rational beings) cannot function as a law even to the subject possessing this susceptibility, because it lacks objective [22] necessity, which must be known a priori. For this reason, such a principle can never furnish a practical law. It can, however, be counted among the maxims of a subject thus susceptible.

§ 3. *Theorem II*

All material practical principles are, as such, of one and the same kind and belong under the general principle of self-love or one's own happiness.

Pleasure from the conception of the existence of a thing, in so far as it is a determining ground of the desire for this thing, is based upon the susceptibility of the subject because it depends upon the actual presence of an object. Thus it belongs to sense (feeling) and not to the understanding, which expresses a relation of a conception to an object by concepts and not the relation of a conception to the subject by feelings. It is only practical in so far as the faculty of desire is determined by the sensation of agreeableness which the subject expects from the actual existence of the object. Now a rational being's consciousness of the agreeableness of life which without interruption accompanies his whole existence is happiness, and to make this the supreme ground for the determination of choice constitutes the principle of self-love. Thus all material principles, which place the determining ground of choice in the pleasure or displeasure to be re-

mode of determining the will different from that of the senses. For the possibility of these pleasures, too, presupposes, as the first condition of our delight, the existence in us of a corresponding feeling. So to assume this difference resembles the error of ignorant persons who wish to dabble in metaphysics and who imagine matter as so subtle, so supersubtle, that they almost get dizzy considering it, and then believe that they have conceived of a spiritual but still extended being. If, with Epicurus, we let virtue determine the will only because of the pleasure it promises, we cannot later blame him for holding that this pleasure is of the same sort as those of the coarsest senses. For we have no reason to charge him with relegating the ideas by which this feeling is excited in us to the bodily senses only. So far as we can tell, he sought the source of many of them in the employment of the higher cognitive faculty. That did not and could not deter him, however, in accordance with the principle stated above, from holding that the pleasure which is given to us by these intellectual ideas and which is the only means by which they can determine the will is of exactly the same kind as that coming from the senses.

Consistency is the highest obligation of a philosopher and yet the most rarely found. The ancient Greek schools afford more examples of it than we find in our syncretistic age, when a certain shallow and dishonest system of coalition between contradictory principles is devised because it is more acceptable to a public which is satisfied to know a little about everything and at bottom nothing, thus playing the jack-of-all-trades. The principle of one's own happiness, however much reason and understanding may be used in it, contains no other determinants for the will than those which belong to the lower faculty of desire. Either, then, no higher faculty of desire exists, or else pure reason alone must of itself be practical, i.e., it must be able to determine the will by the mere form of the practical rule without presupposing any feeling or consequently any idea of the pleasant or the unpleasant as the matter of the faculty of desire and as the empirical condition of its principles. Then only is reason a truly higher faculty of desire, but still only in so far as it de-

termines the will by itself and not in the service of the inclinations. Subordinate to reason as the higher faculty of desire is the pathologically determinable faculty of desire, the latter being really and in kind different from the former, so that even the slightest admixture of its impulses impairs the strength and superiority of reason, just as taking anything empirical as the condition of a mathematical demonstration would degrade and destroy its force and value. Reason determines the will in a practical law directly, not through an intervening feeling of pleasure or displeasure, even if this pleasure is taken in the law itself. Only because, as pure reason, it can be practical is it possible for it to give law.

REMARK II

To be happy is necessarily the desire of every rational but finite being, and thus it is an unavoidable determinant of its faculty of desire. Contentment with our existence is not, as it were, an inborn possession or a bliss, which would presuppose a consciousness of our self-sufficiency; it is rather a problem imposed upon us by our own finite nature as a being of needs. These needs are directed to the material of the faculty of desire, i.e., to that which is related to a basic subjective feeling of pleasure or displeasure, determining what we require in order to be satisfied with our condition. But just because this material ground of determination can be known by the subject only empirically, it is impossible to regard this demand for happiness as a law, since the latter must contain exactly the same determining ground for the will of all rational beings and in all cases. Since, though, the concept of happiness always underlies the practical relation of objects to the faculty of desire, it is merely the general name for subjective grounds of determination [motives], and it determines nothing specific concerning what is to be done in a given practical problem; but in a practical problem this is what is alone important, for without some specific determination the problem cannot be solved. Where one places his happiness is a question of the particular feeling of pleasure or displeasure in each man, and even of the differences in needs

occasioned by changes of feeling in one and the same man. Thus a subjectively necessary law (as a law of nature) is objectively a very contingent practical principle which can and must be very different in different men. It therefore cannot yield any [practical] law, because in the desire for happiness it is not the form (accordance with law) but only the material which is decisive; it is a question only of whether I may expect pleasure from obedience to this law, and, if so, how much. Principles of self-love can indeed contain universal rules of skill (how to find means to [26] some end), but these are only theoretical principles,¹ as, for example, how someone who wants bread should construct a mill. But practical precepts based on them can never be universal, for the determinant of the faculty of desire is based on the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, which can never be assumed to be universally directed to the same objects.

But suppose that finite rational beings were unanimous in the kind of objects their feelings of pleasure and pain had, and even in the means of obtaining the former and preventing the latter. Even then they could not set up the principle of self-love as a practical law, for the unanimity itself would be merely contingent. The determining ground would still be only subjectively valid and empirical, and it would not have the necessity which is conceived in every law, an objective necessity arising from a priori grounds, unless we hold this necessity to be not at all practical but only physical, maintaining that our action is inevitably forced upon us by our inclination as yawning is by seeing others yawn. It would be better to maintain that there are no practical laws but merely counsels for the service of our desires than to elevate merely subjective principles to the rank of practical laws, which must have an objective and not just subjective necessity and which must be known a priori by reason

¹ Propositions called "practical" in mathematics or natural science should properly be called "technical," for in these fields it is not a question of determining the will; they only indicate the manifold of a possible action which is adequate to bring about a certain effect, and are therefore just as theoretical as any proposition which asserts a connection between cause and effect. Whoever chooses the latter must also choose the former.

instead of by experience, no matter how empirically universal. Even the rules of uniform phenomena are denominated natural laws (for example, mechanical laws) only if we really can understand them a priori or at least (as in the case of those of chemistry) suppose that they could be known in this way if our insight went deeper. Only in the case of subjective practical principles is it expressly made a condition that not objective but subjective conditions of choice must underlie them, and hence that they must be represented always as mere maxims and never as practical laws.

This remark may appear at first blush to be mere hairsplitting; actually, it defines the most important distinction which can be considered in practical investigations.

§ 4. Theorem III

If a rational being can think of its maxims as practical [27] universal laws, he can do so only by considering them as principles which contain the determining grounds of the will because of their form and not because of their matter.

The material of a practical principle is the object of the will. This object either is the determining ground of the will or it is not. If it is, the rule of the will is subject to an empirical condition (to the relation of the determining idea to feelings of pleasure or displeasure), and therefore it is not a practical law. If all material of a law, i.e., every object of the will considered as a ground of its determination, is abstracted from it, nothing remains except the mere form of giving universal law. Therefore, a rational being either cannot think of his subjectively practical principles (maxims) as universal laws, or he must suppose that their mere form, through which they are fitted for being universal laws, is alone that which makes them a practical law.

REMARK

What form of a maxim makes it suitable for universal law-giving and what form does not do so can be distinguished without instruction by the most common understanding. I have, for

example, made it my maxim to increase my property by every safe means. Now I have in my possession a deposit, the owner of which has died without leaving any record of it. Naturally, this case falls under my maxim. Now I want to know whether this maxim can hold as a universal practical law. I apply it, therefore, to the present case and ask if it could take the form of a law, and consequently whether I could, by the maxim, make the law that every man is allowed to deny that a deposit has been made when no one can prove the contrary. I immediately realize that taking such a principle as a law would annihilate itself, because its result would be that no one would make a deposit. A practical law which I acknowledge as such must qualify for being universal law; this is an identical and therefore a self-evident proposition. Now, if I say that my will is subject to a practical law, I cannot put forward my inclination (in this case, my avarice) as fit to be a determining ground of a universal practical law. It is so far from being worthy of universal legisla- [28] tion that in the form of a universal law it must destroy itself.

It is therefore astonishing how intelligent men have thought of proclaiming as a universal practical law the desire for happiness, and therewith to make this desire the determining ground of the will merely because this desire is universal. Though elsewhere natural laws make everything harmonious, if one here attributed the universality of law to this maxim, there would be the extreme opposite of harmony, the most arrant conflict, and the complete annihilation of the maxim itself and its purpose. For the wills of all do not have one and the same object, but each person has his own (his own welfare), which, to be sure, can accidentally agree with the purposes of others who are pursuing their own, though this agreement is far from sufficing for a law because the occasional exceptions which one is permitted to make are endless and cannot be definitely comprehended in a universal rule. In this way a harmony may result resembling that depicted in a certain satirical poem as existing between a married couple bent on going to ruin, "Oh, marvelous harmony, what he wants is what she wants"; or like the pledge which is said to have been given by Francis I to the Em-

rules under a problematic condition of the will. Here, however, the rule says: One ought absolutely to act in a certain way. The practical rule is therefore unconditional and thus is thought of a priori as a categorically practical proposition. The practical rule, which is thus here a law, absolutely and directly determines the will objectively, for pure reason, practical in itself, is here directly legislative. The will is thought of as independent of empirical conditions and consequently as pure will, determined by the mere form of the law, and this ground of determination is regarded as the supreme condition of all maxims.

The thing is strange enough and has no parallel in the remainder of practical knowledge. For the a priori thought of the possibility of giving universal law, which is thus merely problematic, is unconditionally commanded as a law without borrowing anything from experience or from any external will. It is, however, not a prescription according to which an act should occur in order to make a desired effect possible, for such a rule is always physically conditioned; it is, on the contrary, a rule which determines the will a priori only with respect to the form of its maxims. Therefore, it is at least not impossible to conceive of a law which merely serves the purpose of the *subjective* form of principles and yet is a ground of determination by virtue of the *objective* form of a law in general. The consciousness of this fundamental law may be called a fact of reason, since one cannot ferret it out from antecedent data of reason, such as the consciousness of freedom (for this is not antecedently given), and since it forces itself upon us as a synthetic proposition a priori based on no pure or empirical intuition. It would be analytic if the freedom of the will were presupposed, but for this, as a positive concept, an intellectual intuition would be needed, and here we cannot assume it. In order to regard this law without any misinterpretation as given, one must note that it is not an empirical fact but the sole fact of pure reason, which by it proclaims itself as originating law (*sic volo, sic iubeo*).³

³ [An allusion to Juvenal *Satire* vi: "This is my will and my command: let my will be the voucher for the deed" (trans. G. G. Ramsay ["Loeb Classical Library" (1918)]).]

that which we are advised to do and that which we are obligated to do.

What is required in accordance with the principle of autonomy of choice is easily and without hesitation seen by the commonest intelligence; what is to be done under the presupposition of its heteronomy is hard to see and requires knowledge of the world. That is to say, what duty is, is plain of itself to everyone, but what is to bring true, lasting advantage to our whole existence is veiled in impenetrable obscurity, and much prudence is required to adapt the practical rule based upon it even tolerably to the ends of life by making suitable exceptions to it. But the moral law commands the most unhesitating obedience from everyone; consequently, the decision as to what is to be done in accordance with it must not be so difficult that even the commonest and most unpracticed understanding without any worldly prudence should go wrong in making it.

It is always in everyone's power to satisfy the commands of the categorical command of morality; this is but seldom [37] possible with respect to the empirically conditioned precept of happiness, and it is far from being possible, even in respect to a single purpose, for everyone. The reason is that in the former it is only a question of the maxim, which must be genuine and pure, but in the latter it is also a question of capacity and physical ability to realize a desired object. A command that everyone should seek to make himself happy would be foolish, for no one commands another to do what he already invariably wishes to do. One must only command—or better, provide—the means to him, since he cannot do everything which he wishes. But to command morality under the name of duty is very reasonable, for its precept will not, for one thing, be willingly obeyed by everyone when it is in conflict with his inclinations. Then, regarding the means of obeying this law, there is no need to teach them, for in this respect whatever he wills to do he also can do.

He who has lost at play may be vexed at himself and his imprudence; but when he is conscious of having cheated at play, even though he has won, he must despise himself as soon as he compares himself with the moral law. This must therefore be

something else than the principle of one's own happiness. For to have to say to himself, "I am a worthless man, though I've filled my purse," he must have a different criterion of judgment than if he approves of himself and says, "I am a prudent man, for I've enriched my treasure."

Finally, there is something else in the idea of our practical reason which accompanies transgression of a moral law, namely, its culpability. Becoming a partaker in happiness cannot be united with the concept of punishment as such. For even though he who punishes can do so with the benevolent intention of directing this punishment to this end, it must nevertheless be justified as punishment, i.e., as mere harm in itself, so that even the punished person, if it stopped there and he could see no glimpse of kindness behind the harshness, would yet have to admit that justice had been done and that his reward perfectly fitted his behavior. In every punishment as such there must first be justice, and this constitutes the essence of the concept. With it benevolence may, of course, be associated, but the person who deserves punishment has not the least reason to count on it. Punishment is physical harm which, even if not bound as a natural consequence to the morally bad, ought to be bound to it as a consequence according to principles of moral legislation. Now if every crime, without regard to the physical consequences to him who commits it, is punishable, i.e., involves a forfeiture of happiness at least in part, it is obviously absurd to say that the crime consists just in the fact that one has brought punishment upon himself and thus has injured his own happiness [38] (which, according to the principle of self-love, must be the correct concept of all crime). In this way, the punishment would be the reason for calling anything a crime, and justice would consist in withholding all punishment and even hindering natural punishment, for there would be no longer any evil in an action, since the harm which would otherwise follow upon it and because of which alone the action was called bad would now be omitted. To look upon all punishment and reward as machinery in the hand of a higher power, which by this means sets rational beings in action toward their final purpose (happiness),

so obviously reduces the will to a mechanism destructive of freedom that it need not detain us.

More refined, but equally untrue, is the pretense of those who assume a certain particular moral sense which, instead of reason, determines the moral law, and in accordance with which the consciousness of virtue is directly associated with satisfaction and enjoyment, while consciousness of vice is associated with mental restlessness and pain. Thus everything is reduced to the desire for one's own happiness. Without repeating what has already been said, I will only indicate the fallacy they fall into. In order to imagine the vicious person as tormented with mortification by the consciousness of his transgressions, they must presuppose that he is, in the core of his character, at least to a certain degree morally good, just as they have to think of the person who is delighted by the consciousness of doing dutiful acts as already virtuous. Therefore, the concept of morality and duty must precede all reference to this satisfaction and cannot be derived from it. One must already value the importance of what we call duty, the respect for the moral law, and the immediate worth which a person obtains in his own eyes through obedience to it, in order to feel satisfaction in the consciousness of his conformity to law or the bitter remorse which accompanies his awareness that he has transgressed it. Therefore, this satisfaction or spiritual unrest cannot be felt prior to the knowledge of obligation, nor can it be made the basis of the latter. One must be at least halfway honest even to be able to have an idea of these feelings. For the rest, as the human will by virtue of its freedom is directly determined by the moral law, I am far from denying that frequent practice in accordance with this determining ground can itself finally cause a subjective feeling of satisfaction. Indeed, it is a duty to establish and cultivate this feeling, which alone deserves to be called the moral feeling. But the concept of duty cannot be derived from it, for we would have to presuppose a feeling for law as such and regard as an object of sensation [39] what can only be thought by reason. If this did not end up in the flattest contradiction, it would destroy every concept of duty

and fill its place with a merely mechanical play of refined inclinations, sometimes contending with the coarser.

If we now compare our supreme formal principle of pure practical reason, that of the autonomy of will, with all previous material principles of morality, we can exhibit them in a table which exhausts all possible cases except the one formal principle; thus we can show visually that it is futile to look around for another principle than the one presented here. All possible determining grounds of the will are either merely subjective and therefore empirical or objective and rational; in either case they may be external or internal.

Practical material determining grounds in the principle of morality are: [40]

SUBJECTIVE

EXTERNAL:

Education (Montaigne)
Civil Constitution (Mandeville)

INTERNAL:

Physical Feeling (Epicurus)
Moral Feeling (Hutcheson)

OBJECTIVE

INTERNAL:

Perfection (Wolff and the Stoics)

EXTERNAL:

Will of God (Crusius and other theological moralists)

Those in the first group are without exception empirical and are obviously unfit for being the supreme principle of [41] morality. Those in the second, however, are based on reason, for perfection, as a character of things, and the highest perfection thought of in substance, i.e., God, can be thought of only through concepts of reason. The first concept, perfection, can be taken in either a theoretical or a practical sense. In the former,

I. OF THE DEDUCTION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF PURE PRACTICAL REASON

This Analytic proves that pure reason can be practical, [42] i.e., that of itself and independently of everything empirical it can determine the will. This it does through a fact wherein pure reason shows itself actually to be practical. This fact is autonomy in the principle of morality by which reason determines the will to action.

At the same time it shows this fact to be inextricably bound up with the consciousness of freedom of the will, and actually to be identical with it. By this freedom the will of a rational being, as belonging to the sensuous world, recognizes itself to be, like all other efficient causes, necessarily subject to the laws of causality, while in practical matters, in its other aspect as a being in itself, it is conscious of its existence as determinable in an intelligible order of things. It is conscious of this not by virtue of a particular intuition of itself but because of certain dynamic laws which determine its causality in the world of sense, for it has been sufficiently proved in another place that freedom is attributed to us, it transfers us into an intelligible order of things.

Now, if we compare the analytical part of the critique of the pure speculative reason with this Analytic, a noteworthy contrast between them appears. In that other critique, not principles but pure sensuous intuition (space and time) was the first datum which made a priori knowledge possible, though only of objects of the senses. Synthetical principles could not be derived from mere concepts without intuition; rather, these principles could exist only in relation to sensuous intuition and thus only in relation to objects of possible experience, since it is only the concepts of the understanding united with this intuition which can make that knowledge possible which we call experience. Beyond objects of experience, i.e., concerning things as noumena, all positive knowledge was correctly denied to the speculative reason. This reason, however, was successful to the

The world is intelligible because we have intellect -

extent that it established with certainty the concept of noumena, i.e., it established the possibility—indeed, the necessity—of thinking of them. For example, it showed against all objections that the assumption of freedom, negatively considered, was entirely compatible with those principles and limitations of pure theoretical reason. But it could not give us anything definite [43] to enlarge our knowledge of such objects, but rather it cut off any such prospect altogether.

On the other hand, the moral law, although it gives no such prospect, does provide a fact absolutely inexplicable from any data of the world of sense or from the whole compass of the theoretical use of reason, and this fact points to a pure intelligible world—indeed, it defines it positively and enables us to know something of it, namely, a law.

This law gives to the sensible world, as sensuous nature (as this concerns rational beings), the form of an intelligible world, i.e., the form of supersensuous nature, without interfering with the mechanism of the former. Nature, in the widest sense of the word, is the existence of things under laws. The sensuous nature of rational beings in general is their existence under empirically conditioned laws, and therefore it is, from the point of view of reason, heteronomy. The supersensuous nature of the same beings, on the other hand, is their existence according to laws which are independent of all empirical conditions and which therefore belong to the autonomy of pure reason. And since the laws, according to which the existence of things depends on cognition, are practical, supersensuous nature, so far as we can form a concept of it, is nothing else than nature under the autonomy of the pure practical reason. The law of this autonomy is the moral law, and it, therefore, is the fundamental law of supersensuous nature and of a pure world of the understanding, whose counterpart must exist in the world of sense without interfering with the laws of the latter. The former could be called the archetypal world (*natura archetypa*) which we know only by reason; the latter, on the other hand, could be called the ectypal world (*natura ectypa*), because it contains the possible effect of the idea of the former as the determining ground of the will.

Although I am not the creator, I affirm and act as though I am the legislator -

For, in fact, the moral law ideally transfers us into a nature in which reason would bring forth the highest good were it accompanied by sufficient physical capacities; and it determines our will to impart to the sensuous world the form of a system of rational beings. The least attention to ourself shows that this idea really stands as a model for the determination of our will.

When the maxim according to which I intend to give [44] testimony is tested by practical reason, I always inquire into what it should be if it were to hold as a universal law of nature. It is obvious that, in this way of looking at it, it would oblige everyone to truthfulness. For it cannot hold as a universal law of nature that an assertion should have the force of evidence and yet be intentionally false. Also the maxim which I adopt in respect to freely disposing of my life is at once determined when I inquire what it would have to be in order that a system of nature could maintain itself in accordance with such a law. Obviously in such a system of nature no one could arbitrarily end his life, for such an arrangement could not constitute a permanent natural order. And so in all other cases.

Now, however, in actual nature as an object of experience, the free will is not of itself determined to follow such maxims as could of themselves establish a nature based on universal laws, or even such maxims as would fit into a system of nature so constituted; rather, its maxims are private inclinations, which form a natural whole according to pathological (physical) laws, but not a system of nature which is possible only through our will acting according to pure practical laws. However, through reason we are conscious of a law to which all our maxims are subject as though through our will a natural order must arise. Therefore, this law must be the idea of a supersensuous nature, a nature not empirically given yet possible through freedom; to this nature we give objective reality, at least in a practical context, because we regard it as the object of our will as pure rational beings.

The difference, therefore, between the laws of a system of nature to which the will is subject and of a system of nature which is subject to a will (as far as the relation of the will to its

free actions is concerned) rests on this: in the former, the objects must be the causes of the conceptions which determine the will, and in the latter, the will is the cause of the objects. Consequently, in the latter the causality of the objects has its determining ground solely in the pure faculty of reason, which therefore may be called pure practical reason.

There are, therefore, two very different problems. The first is: How can pure reason know objects a priori? The second is: How can pure reason be a directly determined ground of the will, i.e., of the causality of a rational being with respect to the [45] reality of the objects, merely through the thought of the universal validity of its own maxims as a law?

The first of these questions belongs to the critical examination of pure speculative reason; it requires that we first show how intuitions, without which no object can be given and therefore none can be known synthetically, are possible a priori. Its answer lies in the fact that intuitions are without exception sensuous, and therefore no speculative knowledge is possible which reaches further than possible experience; consequently, all principles of pure speculative reason avail only to make possible experience of objects which are actually given or of objects which though they may be given *ad infinitum* are never completely given.

The second question belongs to the *Critique of Practical Reason*. It requires no explanation of how objects of the faculty of desire are possible, for that, as a task of the theoretical knowledge of nature, is left to the critique of speculative reason. It asks only how reason can determine the maxim of the will, whether this occurs only by means of empirical conceptions as determining grounds, or whether pure reason is also practical and a law of a possible order of nature which is empirically unknowable. The possibility of such a supersensuous nature, the concept of which can be the ground of its reality through our free will, requires no a priori intuition of an intelligible world, which even in this case would be impossible to us, since it is supersensuous. For it is only a question of the determining ground of volition in its own maxims: Is the determining ground empirical or is it

a concept of pure reason (a concept of its lawfulness in general)? And how can it be the latter? The decision as to whether the causality of the will is sufficient to the reality of the objects is left up to the theoretical principles of reason, involving as it does an investigation of the possibility of objects of volition, the intuition of which is of no importance in the practical problem. The only concern here is with the determination of the will and with the determining ground of its maxims as a free will, not with its result. For if the will be only in accord with the law of pure reason, the will's power in execution may be what it [46] may; and a system of nature may or may not actually arise according to these maxims of the legislation of a possible nature—all this does not trouble us in this *Critique*. This *Critique* concerns itself only with whether and how reason can be practical, i.e., how it can directly determine the will.

In this inquiry no objection can be raised that the *Critique* begins with pure practical laws and their reality. Instead of intuition, it makes the concept of their existence in the intelligible world, i.e., freedom, its foundation. For this concept has no other meaning, and these laws are possible only in relation to the freedom of the will; but, if the will is presupposed as free, then they are necessary. Conversely, freedom is necessary because those laws are necessary, being practical postulates. How this consciousness of the moral laws or—what amounts to the same thing—how this consciousness of freedom is possible cannot be further explained; its permissibility, however, is established in the theoretical *Critique*.

The exposition of the supreme principle of practical reason is now finished. It has shown, first, what it contains, and that it is of itself entirely a priori and independent of empirical principles; and then it has shown how it differs from all other practical principles. With the deduction, i.e., the justification of its objective and universal validity and the discernment of the possibility of such a synthetic a priori proposition, one cannot hope to have everything as easy as it was with the principles of pure theoretical understanding. For the latter referred to objects of possible experience, i.e., appearances, and it could be proved

that they could be known as objects of experience and, consequently, that all possible experience must be conformable to these laws, only because these appearances, in accordance with these laws, could be brought under the categories. Such a procedure, however, I cannot follow in the deduction of the moral law. For it does not concern knowledge of the properties of objects, which may be given to reason from some other source; rather, it concerns knowledge in so far as it can itself become the ground of the existence of objects, and in so far as reason, by virtue of this same knowledge, has causality in a rational being. Our deduction is concerned with pure reason, regarded as a faculty directly determining the will.

But human insight is at an end as soon as we arrive at [47] fundamental powers or faculties, for their possibility can in no way be understood and should not be just arbitrarily imagined or assumed. Therefore, in the theoretical use of reason only experience could justify their assumption. Such empirical proof, as a substitute for deduction from sources of knowledge a priori, is, however, denied to us with respect to the pure practical faculty of reason. For whatever needs to draw the evidence of its reality from experience must depend for the grounds of its possibility on principles of experience; by its very notion, however, pure yet practical reason cannot be held to be dependent in this way. Moreover, the moral law is given, as an apodictically certain fact, as it were, of pure reason, a fact of which we are a priori conscious, even if it be granted that no example could be found in which it has been followed exactly. Thus the objective reality of the moral law can be proved through no deduction, through no exertion of the theoretical, speculative, or empirically supported reason; and, even if one were willing to renounce its apodictic certainty, it could not⁶ be confirmed by any experience and thus proved a posteriori. Nevertheless, it is firmly established of itself.

Instead of this vainly sought deduction of the moral principle, however, something entirely different and unexpected appears: the moral principle itself serves as a principle of the deduction

⁶["Not" inserted by Grillo and Vorländer.]

moral principle can not be deduced!

of an inscrutable faculty which no experience can prove but which speculative reason had to assume as at least possible (in order not to contradict itself in finding among its cosmological ideas something unconditional in its causality). This is the faculty of freedom, which the moral law, itself needing no justifying grounds, shows to be not only possible but actual in beings which acknowledge the law as binding upon them. The moral law is, in fact, a law of causality through freedom and thus a law of the possibility of a supersensuous nature, just as the metaphysical law of events in the world of sense was a law of the causality of sensuous nature; the moral law thus defines that which speculative philosophy had to leave undefined. That is, it defines the law for a causality the concept of which was only negative in speculative philosophy, and for the first time it gives objective reality to this concept.

This kind of credential for the moral law, namely, that it [48] is itself demonstrated to be the principle of the deduction of freedom as a causality of pure reason, is a sufficient substitute for any a priori justification, since theoretical reason had to assume at least the possibility of freedom in order to fill one of its own needs. For the moral law sufficiently proves its reality even for the critique of speculative reason by giving a positive definition to a causality thought merely negatively, the possibility of which was incomprehensible to speculative reason though this reason was compelled to assume it. The moral law adds to the negative concept a positive definition, that of a reason which determines the will directly through the condition of a universal lawful form of the maxims of the will. Thus reason, which with its ideas always became transcendent when proceeding in a speculative manner, can be given for the first time an objective, although still only practical, reality; its transcendent use is changed into an immanent use, whereby reason becomes, in the field of experience, an efficient cause through ideas.

The determination of the causality of beings in the world of sense as such can never be unconditioned, and yet for every series of conditions there must be something unconditioned, and consequently a causality which is entirely self-determining.

Therefore, the idea of freedom as a faculty of absolute spontaneity was not just a desideratum but, as far as its possibility was concerned, an analytical principle of pure speculation. But because it is absolutely impossible to give an example of it from experience, since no absolutely unconditioned determination of causality can be found among the causes of things as appearances, we could defend the supposition of a freely acting cause when applied to a being in the world of sense only in so far as the being was regarded also as noumenon. This defense was made by showing that it was not self-contradictory to regard all its actions as physically conditioned so far as they are appearances, and yet at the same time to regard their causality as physically unconditioned so far as the acting being is regarded as a being of the understanding. Thus the concept of freedom is made the regulative principle of reason. I thereby do not indeed learn what the object may be to which this kind of causality is attributed. I do, however, remove the difficulty, since, on the one hand, in the explanation of natural occurrences, including the actions of rational beings, I leave to the mechanism of [49] natural necessity the right to ascend from conditioned to condition *ad infinitum*, while, on the other hand, I hold open for speculative reason the place which for it is vacant, i.e., the intelligible, in order to put the unconditioned in it. I could not, however, give content to this supposition, i.e., convert it into knowledge even of the possibility of a being acting in this way. Pure practical reason now fills this vacant place with a definite law of causality in an intelligible world (causality through freedom). This is the moral law. Speculative reason does not here-with grow in insight but only in respect to the certitude of its problematic concept of freedom, to which objective, though only practical, reality is now indubitably given. Even the concept of causality, having its application and hence significance only in relation to appearances which it connects into experiences (as shown in the *Critique of Pure Reason*), is not enlarged by this reality so as to extend its employment beyond these limits. For if reason sought to go beyond them, it would have to show how the logical relation of ground and consequence could

II. OF THE RIGHT OF PURE REASON TO AN EXTENSION
IN ITS PRACTICAL USE WHICH IS NOT POSSIBLE
TO IT IN ITS SPECULATIVE USE

In the moral principle as we have presented it there is a law of causality which puts the determining ground of causality above all conditions of the world of sense. We have thought of the will as determinable inasmuch as it belongs to an intelligible world and of the subject of this will (man) as belonging to a pure intelligible world, though in this relation man is unknown to us. (How this relation can be thought and yet be unknowable has been shown in the critique of the pure speculative reason.) We have, I say, *thought* of man and his will in this way, but, furthermore, we have *defined* the will with respect to its causality by means of a law which cannot be counted among the natural laws of the world of sense; finally, we have thereby *widened* our knowledge beyond the limits of the world of sense. But this is a presumption which the *Critique of Pure Reason* declared to be void in all speculation. How, then, is the practical use of pure reason to be reconciled with its theoretical use in respect to determining the boundaries of their competence?

David Hume, who can be said to have begun the assault on the claims of pure reason which made a thorough examination of them necessary, argued as follows. The concept of cause is [51] one which involves the necessity of a connection between different existing things, in so far as they are different. Thus, when *A* is granted, I recognize that *B*, something entirely different from it, must necessarily exist also. Necessity, however, can be attributed to a connection only so far as it is known a priori, for experience of a connection would only give knowledge that it existed, not that it necessarily existed. Now it is impossible, he says, to know a priori and as necessary the connection which holds between one thing and another (or between one property and another entirely different from it) if this connection is not given in perception. Therefore, the concept of a cause is itself fraudulent and deceptive. To speak in the mildest way, it is an

without reference to an object). But because an object, according to concepts of good and evil, had been made the basis of every practical law, and because the former, in the absence of any prior law, could be thought only according to empirical concepts, the possibility was already removed even of conceiving a pure practical law. Had one previously analyzed the practical law, he would have found, on the contrary, not that the [64] concept of the good as an object of the moral law determines the latter and makes it possible, but rather the reverse, i.e., that the moral law is that which first defines the concept of the good—so far as it absolutely deserves this name—and makes it possible.

This remark, which refers only to the method of the deepest moral investigations, is important. It explains once and for all the reasons which occasion all the confusions of philosophers concerning the supreme principle of morals. For they sought an object of the will in order to make it into the material and the foundation of a law (which would then be not the directly determining ground of the will, but only by means of that object referred to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure); instead, they should have looked for a law which directly determined the will a priori and only then sought the object suitable to it. Whether they placed this object of pleasure, which was to deliver the supreme concept of the good, in happiness, or in perfection, in moral feeling,⁴ or in the will of God—their fundamental principle was always heteronomy, and they came inevitably to empirical conditions for a moral law. This was because they could call their object, as the direct determining ground of the will, good or bad only according to its exclusively empirical relation to feeling. Only a formal law, i.e., one which prescribes to reason nothing more than the form of its giving universal law as the supreme condition of maxims, can be a priori a determining ground of practical reason. The ancients openly revealed this error by devoting their ethical investigation entirely to the definition of the concept of the highest good and thus posited an

⁴ [Reading "feeling" with Hartenstein instead of "law" with Kant.]

object which they intended subsequently to make the determining ground of the will in the moral law. But only much later, when the moral law has been established by itself and justified as the direct determining ground of the will, can this object be presented to the will whose form now is determined a priori. This we shall undertake in the Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason. The moderns, among whom the concept of the highest good has fallen into disuse or at least seems to have become something secondary, hide the error (as they do many others) behind vague expressions; but one can nevertheless see it [65] shine through their systems since it always reveals heteronomy of practical reason, from which an a priori universally commanding moral law can never issue.

Now since the concepts of the good and evil, as consequences of the a priori determination of the will, presuppose also a pure practical principle and thus a causality of pure reason, they do not (as determinations of the synthetic unity of the manifold of given intuitions in one consciousness) refer originally to objects as do the pure concepts of the understanding or categories of the theoretically employed reason. Rather, they presuppose these objects as given, and they are without exception modes of a single category, that of causality, so far as its determining ground consists in reason's idea of a law of causality which, as the law of freedom, reason gives itself, thereby showing itself a priori to be practical. On the one side the actions are under a law which is a law of freedom instead of a natural law and thus belong to the conduct of intelligible beings, and on the other side as events in the world of sense they belong to appearances; so that the rules of a practical reason are possible only with respect to the latter and consequently in accordance with the categories of the understanding. These rules, however, contribute nothing to the theoretical use of the understanding in bringing the manifold of (sensuous) intuitions under one consciousness a priori, but only to the a priori subjection of the manifold of desires to the unity of consciousness of a practical reason commanding in the moral law, i.e., of a pure will.

These categories of freedom—for we wish to call them this in

contrast to the theoretical concepts which are categories of nature—have a manifest advantage over the latter. The latter categories are only forms of thought which, through universal concepts, designate in an indefinite manner objects in general for every intuition possible to us. The categories of freedom, on the contrary, are elementary practical concepts which determine the free faculty of choice; though no intuition perfectly corresponding to the latter can be given, it yet has as its foundation a pure practical law a priori, and this cannot be said for any of the concepts of the theoretical use of our cognitive faculty. Instead of having as its given basis the form of intuition (space and time), which does not lie in reason itself but which rather has to be taken over from sensibility, the elementary practical concepts have as their foundation the form of a pure will given in reason and thus in the faculty of thought itself [and do not have to borrow their form from another faculty]. Since in all precepts of the pure will it is only a question of the determination of the will and not of the natural conditions (of practical ability) for achieving its purpose, it thereby happens that the practical concepts a priori in relation to the supreme principle of freedom immediately become cognitions, not needing to wait upon intuitions in order to acquire a meaning. This occurs for the noteworthy reason that they themselves produce the reality of that to which they refer (the intention of the will)—an achievement which is in no way the business of theoretical concepts. One must carefully observe, however, that these categories concern only practical reason in general, and so they proceed in order from those which are as yet morally undetermined and sensuously conditioned to those which, being sensuously unconditioned, are determined merely by the moral law.

TABLE OF CATEGORIES OF FREEDOM WITH REFERENCE
TO THE CONCEPTS OF GOOD AND EVIL

1. Categories of Quantity
 - Subjective, according to maxims (intentions of the individual's will)
 - Objective, according to principles (precepts)

only apply to it the form of lawfulness in general (the concept of which occurs in the most ordinary use of reason, though it cannot be known definitely a priori except with reference to the pure practical use of reason). For laws as such are all equivalent, regardless of whence they derive their determining grounds.

Furthermore, since of all intelligible objects absolutely nothing [is known] except freedom (through the moral law), and even this only in so far as it is a presupposition inseparable from the moral law; and since, moreover, all intelligible objects to which reason might eventually lead us under the guidance of the law can have no reality for us except for the purpose of this law and of the use of pure practical reason; and, finally, since reason has a right, and is even compelled, to use nature (in its pure intelligible form) as the type of judgment—for all these reasons the present remark should serve to guard against counting among the concepts themselves what merely belongs to the typic of the concepts. This, as the typic of judgment, guards against the empiricism of practical reason, which bases the practical concepts of good and evil merely on empirical consequences (on so-called happiness). Happiness and the infinite useful consequences of a will determined only by [the maxim of] helping itself could, if this will made itself into a universal law, certainly serve as a very adequate type for the morally good but still not be identical with it. The same typic guards also against the mysticism of practical reason, which makes into a schema that which should serve only as a symbol, i.e., proposes to supply [71] real yet nonsensuous intuitions (of an invisible kingdom of God) for the application of the moral law, and thus plunges into the transcendent. Only rationalism of judgments is suitable to the use of moral laws, for rationalism takes no more from sensuous nature than that which pure reason can also think for itself, i.e., lawfulness, and conversely transfers into the supersensuous nothing more than can be actually exhibited by actions in the world of sense according to a formal rule of natural law in general. Thus the protest against empiricism of practical reason is much more important and commendable, because mysticism is

(which can be brought into a fairly tolerable system, whereupon their satisfaction is called happiness) constitute self-regard (*solipsismus*). This consists either of self-love, which is a predominant benevolence toward one's self (*philautia*) or of self-satisfaction (*arrogantia*). The former is called, more particularly, selfishness; the latter, self-conceit. Pure practical reason merely checks selfishness, for selfishness, as natural and active in us even prior to the moral law, is restricted by the moral law to agreement with the law; when this is done, selfishness is called rational self-love. But it strikes self-conceit down, since all claims of self-esteem which precede conformity to the moral law are null and void. For the certainty of a disposition which agrees with this law is the first condition of any worth of the person (as will soon be made clear), and any presumption [to worth] prior to this is false and opposed to the law. Now the propensity to self-esteem, so long as it rests only on the sensibility, is one of the inclinations which the moral law checks. Therefore, the moral law strikes down self-conceit.

Since this law, however, is in itself positive, being the form of an intellectual causality, i.e., the form of freedom, it is at the same time an object of respect, since, in conflict with its subjective antagonists (our inclinations), it weakens self-conceit. And as striking down, i.e., humiliating, self-conceit, it is an object of the greatest respect and thus the ground of a positive feeling which is not of empirical origin. This feeling, then, is one which can be known a priori. Respect for the moral law, therefore, is a feeling produced by an intellectual cause, and this feeling is the only one which we can know completely a priori and the necessity of which we can discern.

In the preceding chapter we have seen that anything [74] which presents itself as the object of the will prior to the moral law is excluded from the determining grounds of the will (which is called unconditionally good) by the law itself as the supreme condition of practical reason. We have also seen that the mere practical form, which consists in the competency of the maxims to give universal laws, first determines what is of itself and absolutely good and is the ground of the maxims of a pure

will, which alone is good in every respect. We find now, however, our nature as sensuous beings so characterized that the material of the faculty of desire (objects of the inclination, whether of hope or fear) first presses upon us; and we find our pathologically determined self, although by its maxims it is wholly incapable of giving universal laws, striving to give its pretensions priority and to make them acceptable as first and original claims, just as if it were our entire self. This propensity to make the subjective determining grounds of one's choice into an objective determining ground of the will in general can be called self-love; when it makes itself legislative and an unconditional practical principle, it can be called self-conceit. The moral law, which alone is truly, i.e., in every respect, objective, completely excludes the influence of self-love from the highest practical principle and forever checks self-conceit, which decrees the subjective conditions of self-love as laws. If anything checks our self-conceit in our own judgment, it humiliates. Therefore, the moral law inevitably humbles every man when he compares the sensuous propensity of his nature with the law. Now if the idea of something as the determining ground of the will humiliates us in our self-consciousness, it awakens respect for itself so far as it is positive and the ground of determination. The moral law, therefore, is even subjectively a cause of respect.

Now everything in self-love belongs to inclination, and all inclination rests on feelings; therefore, whatever checks all inclinations in self-love necessarily has, by that fact, an influence on feeling. Thus we conceive how it is possible to understand a priori that the moral law can exercise an effect on feeling, since it blocks the inclinations and the propensity to make them the supreme practical condition (i.e., self-love) from all participation in supreme legislation. This effect is on the one side merely negative; but on the other, in respect to the restrictive practical ground of pure practical reason, it is positive. And to the latter, no kind of feeling, [even] under the name of a practical or moral feeling, may be assumed as prior to the moral law and as its basis.

The negative effect on feeling (unpleasantness) is, like all in-

authority and absolute sovereignty to the law. It should be noticed that, as respect is an effect on feeling and thus on the sensibility of a rational being, it presupposes the sensuousness and hence the finitude of such beings on whom respect for the moral law is imposed; thus respect for the law cannot be attributed to a supreme being or even to one free from all sensibility, since to such a being there could be no obstacle to practical reason.

This feeling, under the name of moral feeling, is therefore produced solely by reason. It does not serve for an estimation of actions or as a basis of the objective moral law itself but only as an incentive to make this law itself a maxim. By what name better than moral feeling could we call this singular feeling, which cannot be compared with any pathological feeling? It is of such a peculiar kind that it seems to be at the disposal only of reason, and indeed only of the pure practical reason.

Respect always applies to persons only, never to things. The latter can awaken inclinations, and even love if they are animals (horses, dogs, etc.), or fear, as does the sea, a volcano, or a beast of prey; but they never arouse respect. Something which approaches this feeling is admiration, and this, as an emotion (astonishment) can refer also to things, e.g., lofty mountains, the magnitude, number, and distance of the heavenly bodies, the strength and swiftness of many animals, etc. All of this, however, is not respect. A man can also be an object of love, fear, or admiration even to astonishment, and yet not be an object of respect. His jocular humor, his courage and strength, and his power of rank may inspire me with such feelings, though inner respect for him is still lacking. Fontanelle² says, "I bow to a great man, but my mind does not bow." I can add: to a [77] humble plain man, in whom I perceive righteousness in a higher degree than I am conscious of in myself, *my mind bows* whether I choose or not, however high I carry my head that he may not forget my superior position. Why? His example holds a law before me which strikes down my self-conceit when I

² [Bernard Le Bovier de Fontanelle (1657-1757), a French satirist and popular philosopher.]

compare my own conduct with it; that it is a law which can be obeyed, and consequently is one that can actually be put into practice, is proved to my eyes by the act. I may even be conscious of a like degree of righteousness in myself, and yet respect remains. In men all good is defective, but the law made visible in an example always humbles my pride, since the man whom I see before me provides me with a standard by clearly appearing to me in a more favorable light in spite of his imperfections, which, though perhaps always with him, are not so well known to me as are my own. Respect is a tribute we cannot refuse to pay to merit whether we will or not; we can indeed outwardly withhold it, but we cannot help feeling it inwardly.

Respect is so far from being a feeling of pleasure that one only reluctantly gives way to it as regards a man. We seek to discover something that will lighten the burden of it for us, some fault to compensate us for the humiliation which we suffer from such an example. The dead themselves are not immune from this criticism, especially when their example appears inimitable. Even the moral law itself in its solemn majesty is exposed to this endeavor to keep one's self from yielding respect to it. Can it be thought that there is any reason why we like to degrade it to the level of our familiar inclination and why we take so much trouble to make it the chosen precept of our well-understood interest, other than the fact that we want to be free of the awesome respect which so severely shows us our own unworthiness? Nevertheless, there is on the other hand so little displeasure in it that, when once we renounce our self-conceit and respect has established its practical influence, we cannot ever satisfy ourselves in contemplating the majesty of this law, and the soul believes itself to be elevated in proportion as it sees the holy law as elevated over it and its frail nature. Certainly, great talents and activity proportionate to them can occasion respect or [78] an analogous feeling, and it is proper to accord it to them; then it seems that admiration is the same as this feeling [of respect]. But if one looks more closely it is noticed that it is always uncertain how great a part of the ability must be ascribed to innate talent and how much to cultivation through the person's own

diligence. Presumably reason represents it to us as a fruit of cultivation, and therefore as merit which perceptibly diminishes our self-conceit and therefore either reproaches us or imposes it upon us as an example to be followed. This respect which we have for a person (really for the law, which his example holds before us) is, therefore, not mere admiration. This is also confirmed by the way the common run of men give up their respect for a man (e.g., Voltaire) when they think they have in some manner found the badness of his character, while the true scholar still feels this respect at least for his talents, since he is himself involved in a business and vocation which makes imitation of him to some extent a law.

Respect for the moral law is therefore the sole and undoubted moral incentive, and this feeling is directed to no being except on this basis. First, the moral law determines the will directly and objectively in the judgment of reason. Freedom, the causality of which is determinable merely through the law, consists, however, only in the fact that it limits all inclinations, including self-esteem, to the condition of obedience to its pure law. This limitation exerts an effect on feeling and produces the sensation of displeasure, which can be known a priori from the moral law. Since, however, it is so far a merely negative effect, originating from the influence of pure practical reason, it checks the activity of the subject to the extent that inclinations are its grounds of determination, and consequently it checks also the opinion of personal worth, which is nothing without accordance with the moral law. Thus the effect of this law on feeling is merely humiliation, which we thus see a priori, though we cannot know the force of the pure practical law as incentive but only the resistance to the incentives of sensibility. This same [79] law, however, is objectively, i.e., in the conception of pure reason, a direct determining ground of the will. Hence this humiliation occurs proportionately to the purity of the law; for that reason the lowering of the pretensions of moral self-esteem (humiliation) on the sensuous side is an elevation of the moral, i.e., practical, esteem for the law on the intellectual side. In a word, respect for the law is thus by virtue of its intellectual cause

respect were pathological and thus a feeling of pleasure grounded on the inner sense, it would be futile to try to discover a relation of the feeling to any idea a priori. But it is a feeling which is concerned only with the practical, and with the idea of a law simply as to its form and not on account of any object of the law; thus it cannot be reckoned either as enjoyment or as pain, yet it produces an interest in obedience to the law, and this we call the moral interest. And the capacity of taking such an interest in the law (or of having respect for the moral law itself) is really moral feeling.

The consciousness of free submission of the will to the law, combined with an inevitable constraint imposed only by our own reason on all inclinations, is respect for the law. The law which commands and inspires this respect is, as we see, no other than the moral law, for no other law precludes all inclinations from having a direct influence on the will. The action which is objectively practical according to this law and excludes inclination from its determining grounds is called duty; and, because of this exclusion, in the concept of duty there is that of practical constraint, i.e., determination to actions, however reluctantly they may be done. The feeling which arises from the consciousness of this constraint is not pathological, as are those caused by objects of the senses, but practical, i.e., possible through a prior (objective) determination of the will and the causality of reason. As submission to a law, i.e., as a command (which constrains the sensuously affected subject), it contains, therefore, no pleasure but rather displeasure proportionate to this constraint. On the other hand, since this constraint is exercised only through the legislation of one's own reason, it also contains something elevating, and the subjective effect on feeling, in so far as pure [81] practical reason is its sole cause, can also be called self-approbation with reference to pure practical reason, for one knows himself to be determined thereto solely by the law and without any [sensuous] interest; he becomes conscious of an altogether different interest which is subjectively produced by the law and which is purely practical and free. Our taking this interest in an action of duty is not suggested by an inclination, but the

For it is then not to be wondered at that man, as belonging to two worlds, must regard his own being in relation to his second and higher vocation with reverence and the laws of this vocation with the deepest respect.

Many expressions which indicate the worth of objects according to moral ideas are based on this origin. The moral law is holy (inviolable). Man is certainly unholy enough, but humanity in his person must be holy to him. Everything in creation which he wishes and over which he has power can be used merely as a means; only man, and, with him, every rational creature, is an end in itself. He is the subject of the moral law which is holy, because of the autonomy of his freedom. Because of the latter, every will, even the private will of each person directed to himself, is restricted to the condition of agreement with the autonomy of the rational being, namely, that it be subjected to no purpose which is not possible by a law which could arise from the will of the passive subject itself. This condition thus requires that the person never be used as a means except when he is at the same time an end. We may rightly attribute this condition even to the divine will with respect to the rational beings in the world as its creatures, since the condition rests on the personality of these beings, whereby alone they are ends in themselves.

This idea of personality awakens respect; it places before our eyes the sublimity of our own nature (in its [higher] vocation), while it shows us at the same time the unsuitability of our conduct to it, thus striking down our self-conceit. This is naturally and easily observed by the most common human reason. Has not every even fairly honest man sometimes found that he desists from an otherwise harmless lie which would extricate him [88] from a vexing affair or which would even be useful to a beloved and deserving friend simply in order not to have to contemn himself secretly in his own eyes? In the greatest misfortunes of his life which he could have avoided if he could have disregarded duty, does not a righteous man hold up his head thanks to the consciousness that he has honored and preserved humanity in his own person and in its dignity, so that he does not have

only on the supposition of a supreme cause of nature which has a causality corresponding to the moral intention. Now a being which is capable of actions by the idea of laws is an intelligence (a rational being), and the causality of such a being according to this idea of laws is his will. Therefore, the supreme cause of nature, in so far as it must be presupposed for the highest good, is a being which is the cause (and consequently the author) of nature through understanding and will, i.e., God. As a consequence, the postulate of the possibility of a highest derived good (the best world) is at the same time the postulate of the reality of a highest original good, namely, the existence of God. Now it was our duty to promote the highest good; and it is not merely our privilege but a necessity connected with duty as a requisite to presuppose the possibility of this highest good. This presupposition is made only under the condition of the existence of God, and this condition inseparably connects this supposition with duty. Therefore, it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God.

It is well to notice here that this moral necessity is subjective, i.e., a need, and not objective, i.e., duty itself. For there cannot be any duty to assume the existence of a thing, because such a supposition concerns only the theoretical use of reason. It is also not to be understood that the assumption of the existence of God is necessary as a ground of all obligation in general (for this rests, as has been fully shown, solely on the autonomy [126] of reason itself). All that here belongs to duty is the endeavor to produce and to further the highest good in the world, the existence of which may thus be postulated though our reason cannot conceive it except by presupposing a highest intelligence. To assume its existence is thus connected with the consciousness of our duty, though this assumption itself belongs to the realm of theoretical reason. Considered only in reference to the latter, it is a hypothesis, i.e., a ground of explanation. But in reference to the comprehensibility of an object (the highest good) placed before us by the moral law, and thus as a practical need, it can be called *faith* and even pure *rational faith*, because pure reason

utter insufficiency of speculative reason to solve the most weighty problems which are presented to it in a way satisfactory to its end; but that critique did not ignore the natural and unmistakable hints of the same reason or the great steps that it can take in approaching this great goal which is set before it but which it can never of itself reach even with the aid of the greatest knowledge of nature. Thus nature here seems to have provided us only in a stepmotherly fashion with a faculty needed for our end.

Now assuming that it had here indulged our wish and had provided us with that power of insight or enlightenment which we would like to possess or which some erroneously believe they do possess, what would be the consequence so far as we can discern it? In so far as our whole nature was not changed at the same time, the inclinations (which under any condition have the first word) would first strive for their satisfaction and, [147] conjoined with reasonable consideration, for the greatest possible and most lasting satisfaction under the name of happiness. The moral law would afterward speak in order to hold them within their proper limits and even to subject them all to a higher end which has no regard to inclination. But instead of the conflict which now the moral disposition has to wage with inclinations and in which, after some defeats, moral strength of mind may be gradually won, God and eternity in their awful majesty would stand unceasingly before our eyes (for that which we can completely prove is as certain as that which we can ascertain by sight). Transgression of the law would indeed be shunned, and the commanded would be performed. But because the disposition from which actions should be done cannot be instilled by any command, and because the spur to action would in this case be always present and external, reason would have no need to endeavor to gather its strength to resist the inclinations by a vivid idea of the dignity of the law. Thus most actions conforming to the law would be done from fear, few would be done from hope, none from duty. The moral worth of actions, on which alone the worth of the person and even of the world depends in the eyes of supreme wisdom, would not

exist at all. The conduct of man, so long as his nature remained as it now is, would be changed into mere mechanism, where, as in a puppet show, everything would gesticulate well but no life would be found in the figures.

But it is quite otherwise with us. With all the exertion of our reason we have only a very obscure and ambiguous view into the future; the Governor of the world allows us only to conjecture His existence and majesty, not to behold or clearly prove them; the moral law in us, without promising or threatening us with anything certain, demands of us a disinterested respect; finally, only when this respect has become active and dominating, it allows us a view into the realm of the supersensuous, though only a glimpse. Thus only can there be a truly moral character dedicated directly to the law and the rational creature become worthy of participating in the highest good corresponding to the moral worth of his person and not merely to his actions.

Thus what the study of nature and of man has suffi- [148] ciently shown elsewhere may well be true here, viz., that the inscrutable wisdom through which we exist is not less worthy of veneration in respect to what it denies us than in what it has granted.

cause, though Phalaris himself should bring up his bull and dictate to you a perjury, count it the greatest of all sins to prefer life to honor, and to lose, for the sake of living, all that makes life worth living.”²

Whenever we bring any flattering thought of merit into our actions, the incentive is already mixed with self-love and thus has some assistance from the side of sensibility. But to put everything else after the holiness of duty and to know that we *can* do it because our own reason acknowledges it as its law and says that we *ought* to do it—that is, as it were, to lift ourselves altogether out of the world of sense; this elevation is inseparably present in the consciousness of the law as an incentive of a faculty which rules over the sensibility, though not always effectively. But frequent concern with this incentive and the at-first minor attempts at using it give hope of its effectiveness, so that gradually the greatest but still purely moral interest in it will be produced in us.

The method therefore takes the following course. The first step is to make judging according to moral laws a natural occupation which accompanies our own free actions as well as our observations of those of others, and to make it, as it were, a habit. We must sharpen these judgments by first asking whether the action is objectively in accordance with the moral law, and if so, with which one; by this, heed to the law which merely gives a principle of obligation is distinguished from one which is in fact obligatory (*leges obligandi a legibus obligantibus*). For instance, we distinguish between the law of that which the needs of men require of me from that which their rights demand, the latter prescribing essential duties while the former assigns non-essential duties. This teaches how to distinguish between the different duties which come together in an action. The second point to which attention must be directed is the question as to whether the action also is done (subjectively) for the sake of the moral law, and thus not only is morally correct as a deed, but

² [Juvenal *Satire* viii. 79-84, trans. G. G. Ramsey (“Loeb Classical Library”). Phalaris was tyrant of Agrigentum who had a brass ox constructed in which criminals were burned to death.]

tion, i.e., indicating that no incentives of inclinations are the determining grounds influencing an action done as a duty. By this, the pupil's attention is held to the consciousness of his freedom; and, although this renunciation excites an initial feeling of pain, at the same time, by relieving him of the constraint even of his true needs it frees him from the manifold discontent in which all these needs involve him and makes his mind receptive to the feeling of contentment from other sources. The [161] heart is freed from a burden which has secretly pressed upon it; it is lightened when in instances of pure moral resolutions there is revealed to man, who previously has not correctly known it, a faculty of inner freedom to release himself from the impetuous importunity of the inclinations, to such an extent that not even the dearest of them has an influence on a resolution for which he now makes use of his reason. In a case where I alone know that injustice lies in what I do, and where an open confession of it and an offer to make restitution is in direct conflict with vanity, selfishness, and an otherwise not illegitimate antipathy to the man whose rights I have impaired, if I can set aside all these considerations, there is a consciousness of an independence from inclinations and circumstances and of the possibility of being sufficient to myself, which is salutary for me in yet other respects. The law of duty, through the positive worth which obedience to it makes us feel, finds easier access through the respect for ourselves in the consciousness of our freedom. If it is well established, so that a man fears nothing more than to find himself on self-examination to be worthless and contemptible in his own eyes, every good moral disposition can be grafted on to this self-respect, for the consciousness of freedom is the best, indeed the only, guard that can keep ignoble and corrupting influences from bursting in upon the mind.

With these remarks I have intended only to point out the most general maxims of the methodology of moral cultivation and exercise. Since the manifold variety of duties requires specific definitions of each kind, and these would constitute a prolix affair, the reader will excuse me if in a work like this, which is only preliminary, I go no further than these outlines.

Shafiq

CONCLUSION

Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. I do not merely conjecture them and seek them as though obscured in darkness or in the transcendent region beyond [162] my horizon: I see them before me, and I associate them directly with the consciousness of my own existence. The former begins at the place I occupy in the external world of sense, and it broadens the connection in which I stand into an unbounded magnitude of worlds beyond worlds and systems of systems and into the limitless times of their periodic motion, their beginning and their continuance. The latter begins at my invisible self, my personality, and exhibits me in a world which has true infinity but which is comprehensible only to the understanding—a world with which I recognize myself as existing in a universal and necessary (and not only, as in the first case, contingent) connection, and thereby also in connection with all those visible worlds. The former view of a countless multitude of worlds annihilates, as it were, my importance as an animal creature, which must give back to the planet (a mere speck in the universe) the matter from which it came, the matter which is for a little time provided with vital force, we know not how. The latter, on the contrary, infinitely raises my worth as that of an intelligence by my personality, in which the moral law reveals a life independent of all animality and even of the whole world of sense—at least so far as it may be inferred from the purposive destination assigned to my existence by this law, a destination which is not restricted to the conditions and limits of this life but reaches into the infinite.

But though admiration and respect can indeed excite to inquiry, they cannot supply the want of it. What, then, is to be done in order to set the latter on foot in a useful way appropri-

ate to the sublimity of its objects? Examples may serve for warnings here, but also for imitation. The observation of the world began from the noblest spectacle that was ever placed before the human senses and that our understanding can bear to follow in its vast expanse, and it ended in astrology. Morals began with the noblest attribute of human nature, the development and cultivation of which promised infinite uses, and it ended in fanaticism or superstition. So it goes with all crude attempts in which the principal part of the business depends on the use of reason, a use which does not come of itself, like that of the feet, from frequent exercise, especially when it concerns attributes which cannot be so directly exhibited in common experience. Though late, when the maxim did come into vogue of carefully examining every step which reason had to take and not to let it proceed except on the path of a well-considered method, the study of the structure of the world took an entirely different direction and therewith attained an incomparably happier result. The fall of a stone and the motion of a sling, resolved into their elements and the forces manifested in them treated mathematically, finally brought that clear and henceforth unchangeable insight into the structure of the world which, as observations continue, we may hope to broaden but need not fear having to retract.

This example recommends to us the same path in treating of the moral capacities of our nature and gives hope of a similarly good issue. We have at hand examples of the morally judging reason. We may analyze them into their elementary concepts, adopting, in default of mathematics, a process similar to that of chemistry, i.e., we may, in repeated experiments on common sense, separate the empirical from the rational, exhibit each of them in a pure state, and show what each by itself can accomplish. Thus we shall avoid the error of a crude and unpracticed judgment and (which is far more important) the extravagances of genius, by which, as by the adepts of the philosopher's stone, visionary treasures are promised and real treasures are squandered for lack of methodical study and knowledge of nature. In a word, science (critically sought and methodically directed)

is the narrow gate that leads to the doctrine of wisdom, when by this is understood not merely what one ought to do but what should serve as a guide to teachers in laying out plainly and well the path to wisdom which everyone should follow, and in keeping others from going astray. It is a science of which philosophy must always remain the guardian; and though the public takes no interest in its subtle investigations, it may very well take an interest in the doctrines which such considerations first make clear to it.

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