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A CRITIQUE OF
ARISTOTLE'S DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most pessimism-inducing studies that one can engage in is the study of ethics. We speak more or less disparagingly of the morality of the ant-hill and the bee-hive, (to use Bergson's terms).¹ But what have we to boast about as regards the morality of our own species? Bergson makes a statement which is most characteristic of human reasoning, or at least human rationalization, and which lies at the heart of the human ethical problem:

"Let us imagine an ant who is stirred by a gleam of reflection and thereupon judges she had been wrong to work unremittingly only for others." ²

Her intelligence paralyzes her instincts. She gets momentarily wise to herself. This ant's judgment, Bergson points out, would soon be silenced and set aside by the

1 - H. Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, p 17.

2 - Ibid, p 17.

categorical imperative of instinct saying "you must because you must." But man does not as a regular thing recognize such a must. Bergson further points out that "the groupings of primitive humanity were certainly nearer the ants than ours today."¹ But we look upon primitive society with an eye of pity, indulgence or curiosity precisely because of its primitiveness. We have enthroned reason, prided ourselves on evolutionary progress, a part of which progress is tacitly assumed to be the going beyond the morality of the bee-hive and the ant-hill.

But, aside from all motive, the fact remains that in the bee-hive and the ant-hill there is a cooperation of the part (the individual) in the interest of the whole, the whole in turn serving the well-being of the individual. The problem of ethics on the practical side is to secure such cooperation and with it mutual consideration, to have the individual see over against himself and his fellowmen an "ought to be" which he makes his "ought to do,"² and to seek such realization without sanction, force or fable being employed. The ultimate vision of philosophy is a state of affairs in which the individual achieves his possibility,

1 - Ibid, p 73.

2 - Nicolai Hartmann, Ethics, Vol I p 248.

but does so with reference to the family, the family with reference to the state, the state in turn with reference to humanity. In the case of Comte, total humanity (in a sense its well-being) is made the object of devotion and supreme allegiance, where the restraining fact of kind-ness (being of a kind) shall induce kind-preserving conduct. The vast array of institutions that humanity today employs to secure individual decency and social endeavor and with it a degree of altruism, which shall in some measure take the place of the instinctive cooperation of the ant-hill and the bee-hive, puts the morality of man to shame before the morality of the ant-heap. World conditions today hurl at humanity the challenge: actualize your ethical potentialities as men and nations, or perish! Even though we say that the morality of the ant-heap is not morality in the human sense, it yet remains that we humans lack the cooperation of the ant-hill.

The problem of human well-being as it here concerns us is a two-fold one. There is the problem of visualizing the well-being of the group and legislating to that end, and of acquiring by moral suasion or by voluntary action or else by force or fable the well-being of the group by obtaining the cooperation of the parts for the survival of the whole. With Plato the state determines the individual and as such his politics is prior to his ethics, in fact deter-

mines his ethics. Aristotle, however, begins with the individual, asks what man qua man as a political animal ought to do and be, concerns himself initially with man voluntarily actualizing that ought, seeing his personal "ought to be" (on the basis of his potentialities) over against society and voluntarily making the "ought to be" his personal "ought to do." His politics is subsequent to an ascertaining of what man the individual ought to be and therefore ought to do.

At the heart of the ethics of Aristotle is his doctrine of the mean. This thesis constitutes a critique of that doctrine. The writer seeks to ascertain the place of the mean in Aristotle's ethics and in the realm of ethics at large, and to determine the merits and defects, the adequacies and inadequacies and the extent of applicability of the doctrine as an aid to conduct. Some steps necessary to make the doctrine more adequate are indicated.

The significance of the mean fluctuates between well nigh all and well nigh nothing. Within the method itself and with the field utterly to itself, the significance of the mean is overwhelming. Viewed in the light of other systems and in the light of the ends of other systems and methods, the mean at times comes close to fading into the realms of the insignificant.

Any doctrine of ethics is open to the charge of being a rationalization to which charge the doctrine of the mean is open in common with other ethical doctrines. Men thought long before logic came on the scene. Men asked: What ought we to do? long before ethics as a formal study came on the scene as an aid to conduct or a clarifier of the motives or the universals underlying the conduct of men and women. Logic asks: What are the universals of reasoning that result in valid conclusions? Ethics, in the case of Aristotle, asks: What is the universal of ethical conduct?

Paradoxically the mean, concerned as it is with the avoidance of too much and too little, is operative within a method which of all others is most in danger of going into extremes in its claims for itself. Hence we have found it necessary to concern ourselves initially with ethical methodology and with the methodology that employs the mean. Such consideration is necessary in order to ascertain the place of the doctrine of the mean in the ethical field as well as the status of the various methods and doctrines in ethics.

Part I is concerned with (1) the most important aspects of the doctrine of the mean in its setting, viz: the place of the mean in the method that employs it and the

status and relation of the various methods; (2) the psychology upon which the doctrine is based; and (3) with clarifying and establishing the relation of the mean to virtue, to the individual virtues, and to the telos that the mean seeks to actualize.

Part II undertakes an analysis of the mean together with theoretical considerations relative to its utilization. The charge of mediocrity (in the sense that the mean is identical with mediocrity) is refuted, and the status of the mean as both a mean and an extreme is established. The matter of the "right rule" for employing the mean is clarified and the technique for finding the mean is elaborated.

Part III seeks to demonstrate the manner in which the doctrine of the mean is an aid to conduct. This section begins with a consideration of some of the objections that would rob the mean of its distinctiveness and would paralyze it as an aid to conduct. A division of actions and conduct on the basis of the doctrine is undertaken, and a supplementary list of means is given. The point at which the doctrine of the mean becomes significant is shown. Hartmann's attempt to ascribe to the idea of synthesis that "which Aristotle so strongly felt but was unable to express" is refuted.

Part IV summarizes what the writer finds to be the merits and defects of the doctrine and indicates what he

conceives must be supplied to make the doctrine more adequate, resulting in an altered doctrine of the mean, which can be a greater aid to conduct within the framework of humanistic ethics.

P A R T I

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN IN ITS SETTING

a - Aristotle's Statement of the Doctrine of the Mean.

Aristotle introduces the doctrine of the mean with¹
the words:

" - matters concerned with conduct and questions of what is good for us have no fixity, any more than matters of health. - the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion, as happens also in the art of medicine or of navigation."

Then follows what we may term the essence of the doctrine:

" - it is the nature of such things to be destroyed by defect and excess, as we see in the case of strength and of health; both excessive and defective exercise destroys the strength, and similarly drink or food which is above or below a certain amount destroys the health, while that which is proportionate both produces and increases and preserves it. So too it is in the case of temperance and

1 - The translated version used throughout is that of W. D. Ross. See Bibliography. Ethica Nicomachea will hereafter be abbreviated E. N.

courage, and the other virtues . . . temperance and courage, then, are destroyed by excess and defect and preserved by the mean." 1

Among other characteristic statements, and statements which will subsequently concern us, are the following:

"In everything that is continuous and divisible it is possible to take more, less, or an equal amount, and that either in terms of the thing itself or relatively to us; and the equal is an intermediate between excess and defect. - by the intermediate relatively to us (I mean) that which is neither too much nor too little - and this is not one nor the same for all. A master of any art avoids excess and defect, but seeks the intermediate and chooses this." 2

" - moral virtue - is concerned with passions and actions, in which excess is a form of failure, and so is defect, while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success." 3

" - excess and defect are characteristic of vice, and the mean of virtue - " 4

" - virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect; and again it is a mean because the vices respectively fall short of or exceed what is right in both actions and passions, while virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate." 5

1 - E. N. 1104a 5 to 25.

2 - Ibid, 1106a 25 to 1106b 8.

3 - Ibid, 1106b 25.

4 - Ibid, 1106b 34.

5 - Ibid, 1107a 1 to 5.

" - fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little - similarly with regard to actions also there is excess, defect and the intermediate - " 1

" - - moral virtue is a mean - - it is a mean between vices, the one involving excess, the other deficiency - - and - it is such because its character is to aim at what is intermediate in passions and in actions." 2
3

In addition to the foregoing statements pertaining to the doctrine, it will be found helpful at this stage to present a table of the virtues together with the excess (vice) and defect (vice) between which each of the virtues is a mean. We herewith present the table as formulated by
4
Ross.

1 - Ibid, 1106b 18-24.

2 - Ibid, 1109a 20-24.

3 - Among the more relevant statements of Aristotle are the following additional ones: 1109b 23; 1108b 11; 1108a 15, 16; 1114b 27; 1106b 18-24.

4 - W. D. Ross, Aristotle, p 203.

ROSS'S TABULATION OF THE ARISTOTELIAN VIRTUES

<u>FEELING</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>EXCESS</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>DEFECT</u>
Fear		Cowardice	Courage	Unnamed
Confidence		Rashness	Courage	Cowardice
Certain pleasures		Profligacy	Temperance	Insensibility
Pain arising from				
desire for such				
pleasures				
	Giving of money	Prodigality	Liberality	Illiberality
	Taking of money	Illiberality	Liberality	Prodigality
	Giving of money -			
	large scale:	Vulgarity	Magnificence	Meanness
	Claiming of honor			
	on a large scale	Vanity	Self respect	Humility
	Pursuit of honor			
	on a small scale	Ambitiousness	Unnamed	Unambitiousness
Anger		Irascibility	Gentleness	Unirascibility
	SOCIAL INTERCOURSE			
	Telling the truth about			
	oneself	Boastfulness	Truthfulness	Self-depreciation
	Giving of pleasure:			
	By way of amusement	Buffoonery	Wittiness	Boorishness
	In life generally	Obsequiousness	Friendliness	Sulkiness
	Mean states of feeling			
Shame		Bashfulness	Modesty	Shamelessness
Pain at good or bad fortune of		Envy	Righteous	Malevolence
others			indignation	

b - The Place of the Mean in its Method and the Relation of the Methods.

In undertaking a critique of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean it is necessary to preface such an endeavor by establishing the place of the mean in its ethical method as well as establishing the status of the different methods and their relation to each other.

By "method of ethics" we shall accept and employ the designation given that term by Sidgwick as "any rational procedure by which we determine what individual beings "ought" or what is "right" for them to do, or to seek to realize by voluntary action."¹ This involves a method for ascertaining the ultimate end and also a method for attaining that end.

Instances of the fruitage of such "rational procedures"² are the various systems of ethics, more specifically, the various kinds of systems. The methods underlying the classical systems have been variously named and classified. Sidgwick reduces them to three, viz: (1) The "Intuitionist" method (2) "Egoistic Hedonism," which he usually calls "Egoism" and (3) Universalistic Hedonism, commonly

1 - H. Sidgwick, Methods of Ethics, p 1.

2 - A method is employed to create or build a system. It is in this sense that the word system will be used.

called "Utilitarianism."¹ But to subsume all methods under these three heads makes the manipulation of them cumbersome by reason of too many sub-methods. The writer prefers and will employ the classification and the division of methods made by Wheelwright in his critical introduction to ethics.² These are five in number, viz: Hedonism,³ Naturalism,⁴ The Idea of Duty,⁵ Rationalism,⁶ Humanism.⁷

Lest it appear in the pages that follow that too great a claim is made either for the method that employs the mean or for the mean itself, we must initially note that the methods all have a common appeal to reasonableness, so that an individual who studies each with an unbiased mind finds in himself some inclination to each of them in turn. Thus, bearing in mind the methods in which the norms are operative, one is compelled to agree with Sidgwick when he says: "When I am asked, 'Do you not consider it ultimately reasonable to seek pleasure and to avoid pain for yourself?' 'Have you not a moral sense?' 'Do you not intuitively pre-

1 - H. Sidgwick, Op. Cit. p 11.

2 - Philip Wheelwright, A Critical Introduction to Ethics.

3 - Ibid, p 67.

4 - Ibid, p 101.

5 - Ibid, p 130.

6 - Ibid, p 163.

7 - Ibid, p 187.

nounce some actions right and others to be wrong?' 'Do you not acknowledge the general happiness to be a paramount end?' I answer 'yes' to all these questions.¹ To the foregoing we add, "Do you not acknowledge the imperative of avoiding excess and defect?"

To the methods wherein these questions are central, as well as to the questions themselves, apply Sidgwick's words preceding the above quotation that, "they are more or less satisfactory to the common sense of mankind so long as they have the field to themselves."² Methodology as applied in ethics is concerned with the question: What methods are "implicit in our common moral reasoning"? as Sidgwick points out. To the ethical methods and their originators we may apply a paraphrase of Locke's statement relative to Aristotelian Logic³ and say:

God was not so sparing to men as to make them barely two-legged creatures and left it to Aristotle (or some other philosopher) to make them moral.

1 - H. Sidgwick, The Methods of Ethics, p 14.

2 - Ibid, p 14.

3 - H.W.B. Joseph, An Introduction to Logic, p 3,
 "God has not been so sparing to men, to make them barely two-legged creatures, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational - - "

But we may likewise paraphrase H. W. B. Joseph's¹
 answer to Locke by saying:

It is not the business of a method of ethics to make men moral but rather to teach them in what their being moral consists.

But each method, in so far as it gives insight into the nature of morality and the virtues, is to that extent a means and an aid to the good life, its norm becoming a guide to conduct, an aid in determining one's course in contemplated experience, or a check upon another system. Each method shares in a greater or lesser degree in an inadequacy which is inevitable. (Each of the systems can, however, be spoken of as "adequate" in the sense that they have been deemed adequate by some.) Methods rationalize and systematize and classify, in which process there is the risk of doing violence to the facts. This is inevitable when we seek to confine something dynamic within static bounds. Each method is an attempt to capture the elusive, the living, the vital, which refuses to be confined. The content can be put into varied methodological forms. It admits of manipulation by various methods. But the method

1 - Ibid, p 3. " - but it is not the business of logic to make men rational but rather to teach them in what their being rational consists - -"

itself runs the risk of having the status of a myth. No amount of exactitude or assumed impersonalism can employ or create a method and a subsequent system of ethics that has the status of "scientific" as that term is employed in the captured territory of, let us say, chemistry. There is wide disagreement as to the methods of accounting for the moral laws and the virtues, but there is almost equally wide agreement as to the moral laws and the virtues.

Paradoxically, the mean, concerned as it is with the avoidance, i.e. the non-participation in, too much or too little, is at the heart of the method which more so than any other is by its very nature in danger of going into excess in its claims for itself. It is the method of humanism. Humanism is characterized by Wheelwright as that philosophy which (1) "Does justice to the entire nature and all the latent possibilities of man" and (2) which is "derived from the nature of man" and is founded "upon an examination of human capacities." This method asks "How far is it possible to accept the valid insights of each of the major systems of ethics and integrate them into a theory which, while reserving a certain unity of outlook, succeeds in reflecting more adequately the many sidedness of moral problems and moral decisions as they occur or are made in real life?"¹

1 - Philip Wheelwright, Op. Cit. p 188.

It is under this method that the ethics of Aristotle falls. Aristotle employs a rational procedure for ascertaining both the "end" (the general "ought" of man), and another for actualizing that "ought" in individual instances. The universal of the acts that further the "ought" in individual instances is the mean. Such acts in the majority of cases are means between excess and defect; "in the majority of cases" being the most that can be said for it. The practical imperative, the norm of the method, once the telos is established, is "choose the mean." The mean, historically, is an ethical norm, is the practical imperative of teleological ethics, specifically of the humanistic method employed by Aristotle. As such it is normative in the system, bidding us what to seek in contemplated experience and indicating the universal instanced in individual virtues. To speak of the mean as a method would be to confuse the norm with the method that employs it.

The norm "seek the mean" in so far as the mean is the universal of telos-fulfilling conduct, occupies the place in the humanistic teleological method of Aristotle; that the norm: "Seek pleasure and avoid pain" occupies in the hedonistic method; that the norm "Seek and follow what is natural" occupies in the naturalistic method; that the norm "Follow the dictates of your moral sense" or "Follow the dictates prescribed as right, regardless of personal

gain or loss" occupies in the method that makes duty paramount; and that the categorical imperative occupies in the rationalistic method of Kant.

A critique of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean becomes then a critique of the mean as the norm, as the practical imperative, within the humanistic teleological ethics of Aristotle.

c - The Ethical Method of Aristotle.

Understanding by "Method of Ethics" the designation given that term by Sidgwick, viz: as any rational procedure by which we determine what individual beings "ought" - or what is "right" for them to do, or to seek, or to realize by voluntary action, it is apparent that Aristotle's method involves a rational procedure for determining and ascertaining what that "ought" is, and also a rational procedure for achieving and actualizing that "ought." In the interest of brevity we shall summarize those two procedures as follows:

The "ought" for man is ascertained by applying the potentiality-actuality principle to man as of a kind, based upon man's differentia which is found to be reason. Reason is not merely a quality, but a capacity, a potentiality, an ability to act in a certain general way. A life in accordance with reason is thus conceived to be man's function, his ought, as by analogy the function of the eye is to see and

that of the ear to hear. The life according to reason when actualized is denominated well-being. This is the ultimate telos.

Examination of individual acts that contribute to well-being reveals that such are generally means between excess and defect on the quantitative side. Hence the procedure for actualizing the ultimate ought is that of achieving conduct such as contributes to well-being. The procedure for actualizing this kind of conduct is the technique for finding the mean.

d - The Psychology upon which Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean is Based.

Aristotle bases his ethics upon human psychology. An inquiry into Aristotle's psychology must be made in terms of what Aristotle denominates " $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$," which in the various translations of his ethics is loosely called "soul." But according to the interpretation of Edward Moore,¹ "soul" is not a true English equivalent, for " $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ " embraces all that is non-material in man including mind, desire, will, instincts and even life itself. But current usage (according to Moore) has superimposed upon the word "soul" theological meanings which are foreign to Aristotle's use of the term.

1 - Edward Moore, Introduction to Aristotle's Ethics, p xlvii, Introduction.

But "soul" also includes and suggests too little, for it does not mean merely physical life such as animals and plants also possess. Plants (for Aristotle) have the nutritive soul; animals possess the nutritive plus the sentient; man possesses the nutritive soul, plus the sentient, plus the intelligent, the latter being considered the crown and height of man. The foregoing will become manifest as we consider Griffin's tabulation of what he considers "Aristotle's full analysis of the soul" based upon De Anima.

- "(1) The nutritive part, which is the cause of growth and decay and reproduction. Men and animals share this with plants.
- (2) The part responsible for sensation and perception. By this men and animals are distinguished from plants. Touch is the most universal form of sensation and is alone present in lower forms. From this the other senses develop.
- (3) Imagination. This subserves memory and thought.
- (4) Desire.
- (5) Reason. This is peculiar to man.

The scale of being according to these parts is as follows:

- (1) Plants. They have only the nutritive faculty of soul. They are stationary.
- (2) Lower animals. They have the nutritive faculty. They have perception (in the lowest form, only touch) of which taste is a species. They have pleasure and pain and therefore appetite. They have vague sensual imagination. They are either stationary or with vague and intermediate movements.

I - Aristotle's Psychology of Conduct, pp 20, 21.

- (3) Higher animals. They have perception.
 They have desire.
 They have deliberate imagination.
 They have determinate movements.

- (4) Man alone has reason and voluntary recollection."

Of the above classification we note that for general and practical purposes the division is the three-fold one: Plants, animals and man. Although Griffin gives five basic divisions and has four levels of being, there are essentially but the three levels of being here indicated.

It must be noted that in addition to the foregoing Aristotle speaks of "things found in the soul," which "things" are pertinent to his ethics. These are "passions,"¹ "faculties" and "states of character."

A passion for Aristotle is a particular manifestation of desire. Man is motivated by desire. "In order, then, to obtain any kind of action whatever in life there must be present desire of some kind. Thus it is clear that a study of man's conduct will be mainly an inquiry into the nature of his desires, (of which desires the passions are various manifestations), how they arise, how they are altered,² and how they find their way into action." Desire is the dynamic and fundamental element of human life and activity. All of the passions are by Aristotle subsumed under

1 - Aristotle, Op Cit. 1105b 20.

2 - A. K. Griffin, Aristotle's Psychology of Conduct, p 21.

"desire," and "passion" must be taken to include not only anger but the majority of our emotions.¹ Modern psychology covers Aristotle's term "passion" with the word "instincts," but as to what these are and what an instinct is, there is wide disagreement.

By faculty he means that by virtue of which we are capable of experiencing the passions.² By states of character he means the things by virtue of which we stand well or not well with reference to the passions.³

The doctrine of the mean is concerned then with the feelings, passions, instincts or impulses innate in man, with their suppression or expression and control as they are aroused by stimuli from without. In the case of some (hunger for instance) they are aroused as the individual's vitality is depleted, but aroused still more by the sights or sound or smells that emanate from or suggest whatever may satisfy those desires. In still other cases desire may arise by means of "imagination or conception."⁴

What then, according to Aristotle, are the passions with which man is equipped? A. K. Griffin seeks to answer

1 - Ibid, p 24.

2 - Aristotle, Op. Cit. 1105b p 22.

3 - Ibid, 1105b p 25.

4 - A. K. Griffin, Op. Cit. p 23.

precisely that question. He both lists and described the passions mentioned in the extant works of Aristotle. The

¹
list follows: 2

Appetite, anger, calmness, fear, confidence, emulation, joy, affection, hate, longing, indignation, envy, malice, contempt, pity, shame, aesthetic desire for rhythm, desire to surpass one's fellows, desire for honor and reputation, emotion of wonder and the desire to know, desire for possession, love of one's self, desire for amusement, for relaxation, for superiority, for the ridiculous, desire to imitate.

It is to be assumed that Aristotle would apply the mean to that entire list of passions, for his table of the virtues is manifestly inadequate and incomplete. Aristotle's list of passions and his treatment of "desire" when considered in the light of modern psychology, is surprisingly adequate. Instead of "passions" the moderns speak of instincts, or, when they do not like that word, then in terms of "units" of reaction" or "fundamental desires" or

-
- 1 - Ibid, Beginning with page 46 these passions are discussed in the order given above. Thus appetite is discussed on page 46, anger on page 49, etc.
 - 2 - Griffin characterizes his volume as "a presentation of Aristotle's dispersed statements" on the subject, given in what Griffin thinks is their "due order." (*Italics are mine*). But Griffin thinks that had Aristotle specifically and exhaustively discussed the psychology of conduct, a part of which is the listing and treating of the instincts, there would have been little alteration. But " - he would doubtless have carried the analyses into greater detail, have removed some of the inconsistencies, and also have added - flashes of illuminating insight." Aristotle's Psychology of Conduct, The Preface.

similar terms. But when they come to name such "fundamental desires" or "units of reaction" their list is practically identical with the list of instincts given by others. Aristotle's "desire" is rebaptized "will" or "will to power" or "libido." The foregoing facts are substantiated by the paragraphs that follow.

Z. Y. Kuo writes on "Giving up Instincts in Psychology"¹ and is among those who "completely denied the existence of instincts in the human being." Instead he endeavors to explain all human behavior on the basis of innate "units of reaction" which have no inherited relation to specific stimuli. Knight Dunlap in writing on "Elements of Scientific Psychology" substitutes the term "fundamental desires" for instincts, and gives a list of what he regards² as such.

Aristotle's "desire" reappears under new names. Freud calls it the libido. Schopenhauer names it will. Adler more specifically calls it the will to power.

1 - Quoted by L. T. Troland in Fundamentals of Human Motivation, p 47.

2 - Ibid, p 47. "Desire for aliment, desire for excretion, desire for rest, desire for activity, desire for shelter, desire for conformity, desire for pre-eminence, desire for progeny, desire for sex gratification."

1

Among modern lists of instincts we note the follow-
 ing among others for comparison with Aristotle's list:²

Decartes recognized six primary passions as the pri-
 mary elements of which all others are compounds.³

Chadbourne, as quoted by Troland, speaks of a set of
 "appetites which are common to men and animals" and of man
 as having "instincts leading to progress."⁴ William James
 gives an imposing list, which he divides into simple and
 complex instincts.⁵ Titchner's list is brief.⁶ McDougall

- 1 - Troland, Op. Cit. p 42, gives the following as a most general definition of instincts: "An inherited tendency to action of a specific kind, usually set off by a limited range of stimuli, and having definite survival or biological value in the struggle for existence." This is for practical purposes what Aristotle means by passion.
- 2 - For Aristotle's list see Thesis, p 24.
- 3 - Troland, Op. Cit. p 23. "Wonder, love, hate, desire, joy and sadness."
- 4 - Ibid, p 42. These are "desire for society, desire for knowledge, for property, for power and esteem, the impulse to confide in others and the disposition to work for the welfare of posterity."
- 5 - Ibid, p 42. "Sucking, biting, chewing, licking, grimacing, spitting, clasping, reaching, pointing, ingesting, crying, smiling, protruding lips, turning head aside, holding head erect, sitting up, standing, locomotion, climbing, vocalization, etc." The more complex forms: "imitation, emulation or rivalry, pugnacity, sympathy, hunting, fear, acquisition, constructiveness, play, curiosity, sociability, secretiveness, cleanliness, modesty and shame, love, jealousy and parental love."
- 6 - Ibid, p 42. "fear, love, jealousy, rivalry, curiosity, pugnacity, repulsion, self-abasement and self-assertion."

correlates instincts with what he regards as the primary¹ emotions.

The writer concludes that Aristotle's psychology, on the instinctive side, is of sufficient clarity and adequacy that both his methodology and his terminology can be significantly employed in the kind of ethical inquiry (the humanistic) in which he employs it. Man, for Aristotle, is endowed with desire, whose partial vehicle of expression is the passions. The passions are thus the raw material of the human virtues. To the passions, both as feeling and as response activity, the doctrine of the mean is applied. This is the special function of reason by virtue of the possession of which man is unique.

Reason is man's differentia. It is the plus which differentiates man from the plants and animals. This

1 - Ibid, pp 45, 46. "the instinct of flight and the emotion of fear, the instinct of repulsion and the emotion of disgust, the instinct of curiosity and the emotion of wonder, the instinct of self-abasement and the emotion of subjection (negative self-feeling), the instinct of self-assertion and the emotion of elation (positive self-feeling), the parental instinct and the tender emotion, and finally all instinctive agencies or emotional states which are compounded out of the above." He also speaks of "minor instincts" which have less well-defined emotional accompaniments. These include "the instinct of reproduction, the gregarious instinct (which involves sympathetic feeling), the instinct of acquisition (leading when successful to the pride of possession), and the instinct of construction."

differentia is not merely a quality but a capacity, a potentiality, and a tendency to act in a certain way. The plus is the character giving differentiation of the species, the determining factor in ascertaining the status and function of man. Reason is man's surplus endowment. A man's reason applied to the rest of himself sets man apart from the rest of creation.

But to ask, then, if we can base the function of man upon his differentia as regards the rest of animal creation is putting the question unfairly and is asking too much. Reason is not considered in disregard of the other faculties of man. Man is not controlled by reason alone, for man's physical nature is basic. Reason is superimposed upon the nutritive and sensitive. Reason is not operating in a vacuum unimpeded, for the nutritive and the sensitive faculties supply the matter to which reason gives form. Reason as the climax, height and crown of man is to direct, check and control the direction and use of man's passions and thus to actualize the teleology of the individual.

Instead of letting an appetite become an end in itself, or express itself to the point of destructiveness or to the exclusion of other appetites, or possibly to the detriment of the whole self, reason has as its function to deliberate, to inhibit, to delay, to choose, by virtue of

which functions reason is the authoritative element in man. Man cannot help being man, but he can help being the kind of a moral man that he is, if and when reason is made authoritative over the passions. Reason enables him to predict the consequences of giving reign to his impulses and so enables him to control them at the stage of their formation, enabling him to determine how angry he will get or when or where or at or with whom.

Even though it may be said that "Reason need not be proud of itself" that "Reason worships its own imaginings" that "Reason is passionate," it is also true that "Reason can verify itself,"¹ enabling a person to criticize, evaluate and appraise his conduct and his conclusions with reference to the telos of his life.

If a man's actions are not guided by thoughtful conclusions, they are then guided by, it may be, inconsiderate impulse, unbalanced appetite, caprice, habit, custom, social pressure or the circumstance of the moment. Reason's function is to forestall the latter alternatives and to achieve teleological conduct. Reason potentially holds the reins and is in the saddle in the case of the animal in man.

1 - Henneshaw Ward, Builders of Delusion, pp 1 to 47.

There is then the dynamic human self as the starting point of motion, of life's primary activities, particularly those concerned with the preservation of organic man. The fact that reason is not considered sufficient unto itself in ethics is indicated by the fact that habituation receives well-nigh central place in character development. To the end that reason may not be thronged and stampeded by the passions, the passions themselves are habituated to given responses and to set limits of expression. But on the other hand, reason determines the particular states or limits of action to which the passions shall be habituated, man's nature however setting certain limits. Hence Aristotle¹ says "reason more than anything else is man."

Reason's possibility and potentiality over against impulse, as well as its strategy in maintaining teleological conduct, is stated concisely in what we may infer to be one of Aristotle's off-the-record illustration thereof, as contained in the *Magna Moralia*:²

"There are two species of incontinence, one in the way of precipitancy and want of forethought, a kind that comes on suddenly, (for instance when we see a beautiful woman) we are at once affected in some way and from the affection there ensues an impulse to do something which perhaps we ought not, - the other a sort of weakness but attended with reason, which warns against action . . . One may avoid being affected by fortifying one's self

1 - Aristotle, Op. Cit. 1178a 3.

2 - Aristotle, Magna Moralia, 11 1203b 30.

before hand with the thought 'there will come a pretty woman, so one must suppress himself', so that if he has fortified himself before hand with a thought of this kind, he whose incontinence is due to the suddenness of the impression will not be affected at all, nor do anything wrong."

Reason and desire are not completely dissevered from nor antagonistic to each other nor independent of each other. Reason modifies desire, but desire is basic to reason in the ethical realm. Reason, though mixed with passion has the faculty of controlling passion according to the principle of the mean in the interest of well-being.

Thus Whitehead and Aristotle would agree that the function of reason is "(i) to live, (ii) to live well, (iii) to live better. In fact, the art of life is first to be alive, secondly to be alive in a satisfactory way, and thirdly to acquire an increase in satisfaction," - - - and that "the function of reason" is "the promotion of the art of life."¹

Whitehead stresses the attack upon the environment, one aspect of the problem of achieving well-being. Aristotle in his ethics attacks the problem from within man and is concerned with reason sublimating, controlling and directing desire (the passions) with reference to well-being.

1 - Alfred North Whitehead, The Function of Reason, p 5.

e - The Relation of the Mean to Virtue and to the Virtues.

Since it is in moral virtue that the doctrine of the mean is central, the nature of moral virtue and its relation to intellectual virtues must now be ascertained. Moral virtue for Aristotle is excellence in the realm of our moral nature. "Arete"¹ means "excellence" in all its various senses and applications.² It is applied by Aristotle to the eye, to the flute player, to the musician as well as to all teleological acts or creations. The arete of each is the good performance of its function, the "ideal discharge of function,"³ so that "the very charioteer who wins a race may be said to have shown arete." There are thus many excellences, i.e. one of the eye, of the foot, of the teeth etc. The arete of the flute player is to play the flute well, that of a soldier to fight well, that of a shoemaker to make good shoes. And of these various excellences he says "every excellence both brings into good condition the thing of which it is the excellence and makes the work of that thing be done well."⁴ There is thus an excellence of our

1 - Arete - transliteration of ἀρετή, goodness, excellence.

2 - Edward Moore, Op. Cit. Glossary xlix.

3 - G. Barker, Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle, p 98.

4 - E. N. 1106a 15.

rational or intellectual nature, the dianoetic excellences (virtues), as well as the moral virtues.

The intellectual virtues are five in number: Art is described as the disposition by which we make things by the aid of a true rule. It is a state concerned with making, involving a true course of reasoning. Lack of art is characterized as involving a false course of reasoning.¹

Scientific knowledge proceeding "sometimes by induction and sometimes by syllogism" - - - "is a state or capacity to demonstrate."²

Intuitive reason is the process whereby, after experience of a certain number of particular instances, the mind grasps a universal truth which then and afterwards is seen to be self-evident. Induction in this sense is the "Activity of intuitive reason."³

Practical wisdom is "true and reasoned state or capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man."⁴ To possess practical wisdom is to possess a capacity to act with regard to human goods. Its concern is the good for man.

1 - E. N. 1140 a 1-23.

2 - Ibid, 1139b 31.

3 - W. D. Ross, Aristotle, p 217.

4 - E. N. 1140 b 5.

Philosophic wisdom is to "be wise in general," and is intuitive reason combined with scientific knowledge of the highest objects. Hence a man may possess philosophic wisdom and at the same time be ignorant of what is to his own advantage, lacking practical wisdom. Such may "know things that are remarkable, admirable, difficult and divine, but useless: because it is not human good that they seek."¹

If a person has the moral virtues but lacks the intellectual virtues, (and Aristotle holds that the intellectual virtues can be learned, which statement must be qualified), he will still be a virtuous blunderer. But having the dionetic virtues but lacking moral virtues, he still may be a rogue and a rascal, the more so by reason of turning his knowledge to unethical ends.

To the dionetic virtues, being themselves *logoi* (laws), the mean does not apply. They are rather used in ascertaining the mean, once the disposition to ascertain it is there. Here is an inevitable weakness which makes reasoned morality, as opposed to customary morality, practically impossible for the rank and file. The rank and file, as a matter of empirical fact, either do not or cannot actualize the intellectual virtues in the practical sense, but heed either customary morality or the morality prescribed by

1 - Ibid, 1141b 5.

some semi-deified leader as in Germany today.

Moral virtue is the excellence of man's moral nature. Moral virtue is:

(Genus) A state of character.¹

(Differentia) It is the disposition to choose the mean
(mesotes) relative to us.²

"Disposition" is here used in the sense of a state of character, a customary choice of action or mode of behavior. Thus

"virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom determines it." ³

The foregoing must be borne clearly in mind in that which is to follow if we are to avoid pointless disputation and criticism.

Aristotle gives three marks of virtue all of which are pertinent in his system:

(a) Moral virtue must have the quality of choosing and seeking the intermediate.⁴⁵

1 - E. N. 1106a 10.

2 - Ibid, 1107a 6.

3 - Ibid, 1107a 1.

4 - Ibid, 1106b

5 - Ibid, 1107a 5.

(b) Excess and defect are characteristic of vice, the choice¹ of the mean of virtue.

(c) Actions, although habitual, must be voluntary to be virtuous,² the agent both concurring and desiring, and the choice being in his power. (An action is called compulsory without qualification when the cause is in the external circumstances and the agent contributes nothing). Man is considered to be a begetter of his action as of children, being responsible for both his virtues and his vices, both being in his power.³ Both vice and virtue are qualities, states of character, dispositions. Moral virtue is the particular quality of character which is equivalent to the disposition to choose the mesotes and admitting of conversion with it, to wit:

Virtue = a disposition to choose the mean, and habitually choosing it . . . and . . .

A disposition to choose the mean, and habitually choosing it = virtue.

It is a symmetrical relation. In all cases virtue is a disposition, a state, a quality concerned with the choice of the mean. Hence an individual who consistently chooses and acts on the mean is a virtuous individual.

1 - Ibid, 1106b 30.

2 - Ibid, 1110a 35 ff.

3 - Ibid, 1113b 15.

Personalizing virtue, or using it in the sense of a person possessing it or motivated by it, we must then say: virtue chooses the mean. But this relation is not symmetrical, does not admit of conversion. The mean may have been accidentally hit upon. Thus as Epimenides, if he is included in the "all" whom he designates as liars, is then himself a liar and may yet accidentally be telling the truth, so the mean may be chosen or hit upon and the individual still not be virtuous.

In the interest of brevity then moral virtue may be summarized as being the arete (excellence) of the moral self. Its genus is that it is a state of character, in a sense a habit, a disposition. Its differentia that it chooses the mean relative to us in respect to the various passions either by way of feeling or activity, with a further reference to time, place and circumstances. Virtue is the state of character. The virtues (courage, temperance, etc.) are the names given to virtue's choice in the various fields of the ethical realm of discourse. Courage, for instance, is virtue's choice; is the mean between excess and defect, is "the virtue" in regard to feelings of fear and confidence. But what is the end that the mean seeks to actualize? What is the "telos"¹ with reference to which an act is deemed to

1 - "Telos", transliteration of $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$, the completion or fulfillment of anything, the end or purpose sought, "that on account of which."

be a virtue or a vice? This necessitates an examination of Aristotelian teleology.

f - The Telos that the Mean seeks to Actualize.

We must initially note that Aristotle determines the good for man, not by going beyond man, not by taking one phase of human activity by itself, not even by reason itself, but by a consideration of man's total nature, combining in proper order the activities of the whole man under the authority of reason. Reason itself must in turn be subjected to a "right rule" which must be our special concern in a subsequent section.

"The Nicomachean Ethics begins its inquiry into the aim of human life with a bold sketch of the system of ends. Thus from the start the problem is put into relation with Aristotelian teleology as a whole."¹

The foregoing statement needs modification and explanation. The teleology of Aristotle, as it applies to ethics, is a matter of answering the question: why? (the ultimate "why") of ascertaining "the end or purpose for the sake of which a thing is done."² "The phrase 'for the sake of' connotes both a goal and a highest good- whether that be real or apparent."³ According to Janet⁴ the term "final

1 - W. Jaeger, Aristotle, p 232.

2 - P. Wheelwright - Aristotle, Natural Science - Bk 2.

3 - Ibid, p 26.

4 - Paul Janet, Final Causes, p 1 footnote.

cause" (causa finalis) was introduced into the language of philosophy by scholasticism. "Aristotle never employs it. He says 'the end', that 'on account of which' but never 'final cause'."

Hence the question is: What is the goal and highest good, the end, the "that on account of which," that the man seeks to actualize? In seeking the answer thereto, he is not proceeding from some preconceived "end" or good, but he lets the nature of man determine the end. The abuse of final causes such as regards man as the center and end of all creation, is not resorted to. There is no imputing of a "for the sake of" to living entities in their relation to one another. His position is that as the eye has a telos, viz: to see well, as the practice of medicine has a telos, viz: health, and so in other cases, man also has a function, a telos, an ultimate "for the sake of" in his acts and conduct.¹ There is, in the case of the vital organs in man, an internal teleology which make them both ends and means. The telos of an individual organ, when

1 - E. N. 1097a 18.

achieved, contributes to the maintenance of the whole as
¹
 the ultimate telos.²

Granting this internal teleology, it is but natural to ask, what is the telos, the function, of the whole, i.e. of man? Aristotle regards reason as the authoritative element in him, and that a life according to reason is the potentiality that man should seek to achieve. It is just here that Aristotle's Ethics stands in relation to Aristotelian teleology as a whole. The telos is man's excellence, man's arete, man's potentiality actualized. The

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- 1 - Kant divides finality into two species: internal and external or relative. Internal finality, i.e. an organization of the parts in the interest of the preservation of the whole, he regards as absolute. External finality is relative. "Finality purely external, that is, the utility of one thing for another, is never more than relative" and "only exists accidentally in the thing to which it is attributed" - quoted by Janet, Final Causes, p 332. Meredith in his translation of Kant's Critique of Teleological Judgment uses the terms "intrinsic and extrinsic finality" pp 24-26. The principle on which the intrinsic finality of organisms is estimated is that "an organized natural product is one in which every part is reciprocally both end and means. In such a product nothing is in vain, without an end, or to be ascribed to a blind mechanism of nature." pp 24-25.
- 2 - As the eye can be said to have a telos with reference to itself, as well as with reference to the whole, viz: man, so man can be said to have a telos with reference to himself as well as with reference to the larger unit with which individual man is bound up, viz: society. But as the actualization of the eye's telos with reference to itself is also the actualization of its telos with reference to man, so by analogy the actualization of man's telos with reference to himself, at the same time involves the actualization of his telos with reference to society. At least the actualization of the latter is dependent upon the former.

potentiality-actuality principle applied to man begins with the assumption that man has a telos, a potentiality, based upon man's nature. We cannot say that Aristotle has a pre-conceived end to which all else is bent. Beginning with the assumption of potentiality, Aristotle then investigates the nature of man to ascertain what that potentiality (telos, excellence) may be, and therefore should be. That which is deemed to be man's potentiality (man's excellence as based upon an investigation of man's nature) then determines the mean sought in a given instance.

Using Aristotle's methodology, we begin with the assumption of potentiality. Then must follow an investigation of the nature of man to determine wherein that potentiality consists, in general. Then that potentiality must be envisioned in the concrete. Next we must ascertain the acts that contribute to that telos. An act that contributes to the ultimate telos is then the instrumental telos which the mean seeks to actualize. By the mean, then, the individual seeks to actualize the instrumental telos which shall contribute toward actualizing the ultimate telos.

Is it not a false assumption that Aristotle's telos determines the mean? Is it not the other way round? We reiterate: An excellence (as potentiality) is assumed, based on analogy, comparison and observation. The content of that excellence (telos) is then obtained by studying

man's nature. The envisioned content of potential excellence then becomes the goal, the achievement of which is sought. The telos idea is regulative throughout, motivating the investigation of man's nature, going not to gods or ~~beasts~~ or fables but to human-kind in determining the specific content of the human telos. Hence we ~~must~~ say that the telos, based upon man's nature as of a kind, determines the various instances of the instrumental telos that the mean seeks to actualize. This makes possible telos-determined conduct as opposed to, for instance, conduct that is impulse controlled.

Aristotle calls the telos "eydaimonia,"¹ whose proper English equivalent (based upon the spirit and tone of Aristotle's ethics), is "well-being." The Greek term involves the concept of well-being, happiness and actualization of the good. This - WELL-BEING - is the actualization of the form which is potential to man. Aristotle describes it as activity of soul which follows or implies a rational principle,² one part consisting of having such a principle in the sense of possessing one and exercising³ thought and the other in the sense of being obedient thereto⁴. . . in a complete

1 - "Eydaimonia" - transliteration of εὐδαιμονία

2 - E. N. 1098a 8.

3 - Ibid, 1098a 20.

4 - i.e. Both knowing and doing, as opposed to unutilized knowledge.

life . . the individual possessing a share of this world's goods. Aristotle gives it the following characterization¹ and delimitation:

EYDAIMONIA (Well-being - happiness)

is chosen for the sake of nothing other than itself;
is good in itself;
it makes life desirable and lacking in nothing;
is something self-sufficient and final and is the end
of action.

He who possesses it:

lives well and does well, for it is a good life and
good action; has activity of soul in accord with
perfect virtue.

Eydaimonia is:

not honor, for honor is, strictly speaking, a means;
not virtue, for virtue is compatible with being asleep
or with life-long inactivity;
not pursuit of wealth, for that too is for the sake of
something else;
not pleasure or reason, for they too are for the sake
of something else;
not the life of perception, nutrition or growth, for
that would leave man unsatisfied.

1 - Based upon E. N. 1095a 13 to 1103a 10.

Well-being in the Aristotelian sense is a life of activity in accord with virtue, the individual both possessing and following a rational principle. It is the process of achieving (eventually the achieved state), the end, that is potential and natural to him, his whole soul being taken into consideration. As in religion, the concern is that man shall serve God in and through whatever his work or profession may be, so here the concern is that reason's dictate (a rational principle) be followed in and through all our activities, as well as determining what activities shall or shall not be followed. Man's function is attained when this is actualized. Reason, as the authority in man, uses the passions, not as ends in themselves but as instrumental ends, bending, subjugating and sublimating them as the instrumental telos, as determined by the ultimate telos, may prescribe. The whole soul is to be under its direction. It is important to note, however, that he considers the possession of some measure of worldly prosperity, which latter he regards as proper equipment, a part of well-being.

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Resume: Well-being is the telos of man. It is that which determines the various acts that the mean seeks to actualize.

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- 1 - The fact that Aristotle's mean is telos-determined, and that the telos is the fruitage of the actuality-potentiality principle as applied to man, and that the function of the mean is to deal with the teleological nature of human conduct, is frequently lost sight of by

Well-being consists in a life of activity in accord with virtue, lived in society, the whole life-expectancy span being taken into consideration, and having some measure of material prosperity by way of equipment. The telos-idea is regulative. The idea motivates the search for its own content, studies man's nature to discover his potentiality, and then has that potentiality (concretely envisioned) determine the instrumental telos which latter the mean seeks to actualize.

the writers of histories of philosophy. They speak superficially of a "golden mean," but lose sight of the mean's connection with the telos, that it is the telos which gives the mean its significance.

Thus B. A. G. Fuller generalizes away this important fact by saying: "Right conduct is just enough, wrong conduct is too much or too little of a given function. This is the famous Aristotelian doctrine of virtue as the 'golden mean'." (History of Philosophy, p 164). He ignores the telos. He states: "Indeed, it takes great intelligence and great excellence to hit it exactly" - and yet ignores that by reason of which the mean in a given case IS the mean. A. K. Rogers equally vaguely states: "An impulse has in it the possibility of giving rise to a virtue by taking the middle course between excess and deficiency." (Students History of Philosophy, pp 114,115). The mean as the quantitative aspect of the telos-fulfilling is lost sight of. Even Windelband (who cannot be charged with superficiality), characterizes the mean as being "The general principle - that rational insight always finds the right mean between the unreasonable extremes to which the natural impulsive life leads." (History of Philosophy, p 152) But why "unreasonable extremes?" It is from the viewpoint of the specific telos and with reference to it, that a mean is characterized as the "right mean," which fact he does not bring out.

P A R T II

ANALYSIS OF ARISTOTLE'S MEAN AND THE METHOD OF ITS EMPLOYMENT

a - Analysis of Aristotle's Mean.

An analysis of Aristotle's mean herewith follows.

A study of Aristotle's various statements of the doctrine, together with the table of the virtues, leads us to give the following definition of a mean in the Aristotelian sense:

A mean in the realm of moral virtue is:

(Genus) That point, degree, amount or intensity in a passion, either as feeling or response activity.

(Differentia) which, (on the quantitative side) by avoiding excess and defect, actualizes an envisioned instrumental telos, as determined by man's ultimate telos, well-being. The category of quantity is applied to the passion or its response activity.

The "ought" of the method of Aristotle is obviously telos-fulfilling activity. "I ought to engage in such acts and conduct as contribute to my well-being"! But what is the nature of such acts? What have such acts in common? What formula is there for actualizing such conduct? Such acts and conduct, i.e. virtues, are means between excess and defect. Thus the "ought" of the five classical methods (using Wheelwright's classification) are as follows:

The ought of Hedonism:	Pleasure bringing activity
The ought of Deontology:	Duty fulfilling activity
The ought of Rationalism:	Consistent activity (admitting of universalization)
The ought of Naturalism:	Life-augmenting activity (both length and fullness)
The ought of Aristotle's Humanism:	Telos-fulfilling activity

With the foregoing in mind, Aristotle's method (within the larger method of humanism) is unique in that it applies the category of quantity or degree to the impulses and activities of man, and claims to have found and that it seeks to demonstrate, the quantitative universal in telos-fulfilling activity. A telos-fulfilling activity, for Aristotle, is an instance of the quantitative mean as a universal. Telos-fulfilling conduct as the ought of the

method fades into the background and the mean rises to the prominence that the respective norm occupies in the other methods. "If it is a virtue, it is a mean" is the impression left. But a mean between what? The ready answer is: A mean between two vices or between excess and defect, or between too much or too little, as is to be expected by a study of the Aristotle statement of the doctrine. But what is the significance of excess and defect, and just why should or does a virtue happen to lie between them, if indeed it can be said to do so? If a virtue lies between excess and defect, we must ask: Excess and defect of what? The reply: Excess and defect, quantitatively considered, of the particular passion or of the activity which is its expression. Each passion has a range of potential intensity or degree as regards the passion as feeling, and likewise a range of potentiality as applying to its expression. We may indicate this as follows:

Maximum X a b c M - - N d e f g h i Y Minimum
or all Passivity

Let the line $X - Y$ represent the full range of possibility quantitatively considered, in the feeling or response activity of a passion, the minimum and maximum limits as well as the point of passivity.

Point X represents the maximum in degree, amount, intensity; all, complete affirmation, in short the maximum extreme.

Point Y represents the extreme minimum in degree, amount, or intensity, the least that can be felt or expressed, or it may be complete negation, none, zero, absolute suppression.

The range of possibility, then, in between all and none, between complete affirmation and complete negation, between maximum expression and complete suppression. Somewhere in the potentiality range between X and Y is the point or region where, on a given occasion, that passion is contributory to well-being. Let us say that the situation calls forth anger. The occasion or event may be sufficiently provocative to have the anger rise in intensity of feeling to the point X. But there reason steps in, checks, impedes, and controls the feeling as well as the expression of the anger. Reason finds point X to be too much, to be an excess. The occasion is not worth it. However the occasion is sufficiently grievous that point Y would be equally bad, because the occasion calls forth anger on the part of man qua man in that kind of a situation. Point Y would be defect on the occasion. In like manner points a, b and c are too much. Points d,e,f and g are insufficient. But between c and d, in the area M - - - N as an approximation,

lies the particular degree or "amount" of anger that the occasion calls for with reference to the man's telos. Hence it is more correct to say that a virtue (quantitatively) is a mean between what on a particular occasion for a particular agent is a quantitative range of excess and a range of defect. When so stated and understood a virtue does not have the artificial appearance it does when it is simply asserted that a virtue lies between two vices, or is flanked by two vices, or as if two vices embraced an honorific term, or as if two negatives (non-values) in synthesis yielded a value. Both extremes (excess and defect) are too much or too little and therefore the choice of them is a vice on a particular occasion. The mean is the point which avoids them both and is unique. In the potentiality line above, d or f or a may be the mean on another occasion, under other circumstances.

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The individual passions¹ are in each case the raw material of the virtues. It is by means of them, and by finding the mean in them that reason seeks to realize itself, to go from potentiality to actuality. Aristotle's procedure is to apply the category of quantity to the impulse, singly considered, on each occasion. Of synthesis

1 - A. K. Griffin, Op. Cit. pp 20, 21.

or harmony or proportion there is for him no question. The diagram on the preceeding page exhibits and portrays the mean according to Aristotle, of which the explanations by the various commentators are but characterizations, in some instances misrepresentations.

Wheelwright identifies the mean with excellent manner of control of the passions, and warns that the mean is no simple formula, but he throws no further light upon the mean.¹

Griffin identifies the mean with "conduct that shrinks from excesses," and characterizes Aristotle's view of conduct as being thoroughly biological, as based upon the realization of man's kinship with the brutes and of the kinship of man's conduct with the conduct of the brute. But he points out that men do not do consciously what the brutes do unconsciously, but must apply reason in their conduct and must have "the wish to realize this reason in conduct."²

G. R. G. Mure more precisely characterizes a right action as lying "between all degrees of excessive feeling

1 - P. Wheelwright, A Critical Introduction to Ethics, p 205 ff.

2 - A.K.Griffin, Op.Cit. p 126. "Virtue, it appears, is exhibited in a course of conduct which shrinks from excess and follows a mean path traced out for it by reason, in places called right reason, which proves to be practical wisdom."

and response in one direction and all degrees of corresponding defect in the other."¹

Grant, in his commentary on Aristotle, sees in the mean chiefly an instance of the application of the Pythagorean idea of the good as limit and of evil as the unlimited.² He sees the mean to be to and in moral virtue what measure is in the realm of art. As such, a mean is "no mere negative principle, not the mere avoiding of extremes,³ but rather the realization of a law." The agent seeks to realize something positive the realization of which requires avoidance only as a negative aspect. The unlimited in the Pythagorean sense is the passion, over against a given situation. (But "the unmeasured, uncontrolled" is more appropriate than the term unlimited, when used apart from Pythagorean terminology). The mean is the limit imposed upon this unlimited by reason, and which achieves

1 - A.R.G.Mure, Aristotle, p 141.

2 - Sir A. Grant, Ethics of Aristotle, Vol I pp 252,253. "Aristotle's principle contains something more - it is not a mere application of the doctrine of moderation to the subject matter of the various separate virtues. - - For here we are taken back to associations of the Pythagorean philosophy and to the principle that evil is of the nature of the infinite and good of the finite."

3 - Ibid, p 257.

the uniqueness of being distinct in itself, participating in neither excess, nor defect. It is something positive, as is beauty in art, or as in ripeness in fruit, as is "done" in baking, and as Grant points out "It does not derogate¹ from a beautiful form, that more or less should spoil it."

Underlying the doctrine of the mean is the assumption that the category of quantity or degree can be significantly applied to impulse both as to feeling and to expression. But we are here concerned with a single state or activity, and therein the analogy to art breaks down. In the case of anger the concern is the avoidance of too much or too little of that single impulse. In the case of a work of art the too much or too little is a matter of (in the case of the human figure) too much arm, too much nose, too little this or that, aside and apart from motive.

Crude as the foregoing sounds, the fact remains that in a completed work of art any enlargement or reduction in size of any part of the figure will spoil the whole. Beauty is the single thing achieved. Between the beautiful head and the beautiful shoulder there must likewise be proportion. An unduly large but beautiful head upon small but beautiful shoulders would result in a non-beautiful bust.

1 - Ibid, p 260.

Aristotle's virtuous man is concerned with choosing the mean in the expression of each of the passions as occasion calls them forth, believing that a man so habituated will actualize and achieve well-being, and that the virtues will not conflict, since each is called forth singly.

Aristotle is not concerned with, let us say honesty, truthfulness, anger and liberality, all at the same static moment, (as there are many factors that need be in proportion at a given moment in a static work of art), but he is concerned with the quantitative mean in each impulse as it singly arises, assuming that they arise singly. His virtuous man is habituated to the choice of the mean in whatever activities he engages or in the impulse responses that he expresses. Thus in a virtuous individual, each passion is potentially limited by the *telos*, but actually limited as occasion calls them forth.

An act which is a mean itself "exhibits the law of beauty."¹ But when we come to resolve it into its elements and constituents, we are engaging in a post-mortem procedure, having to do with the corpse of a virtue after the life and spirit are gone. "Resolve," says Grant, "a virtuous act into the passions and some quantitative law, and it seems to be rather destroyed than analyzed; though, after

1 - Ibid, Vol. I, p 261.

all, what was there else that it could be resolved into? An act of bravery seems beautiful and noble; but when we reduce this to a balance between instincts of fear and self-confidence, the glory of it is gone. This is because the form is everything, and the matter is nothing; and yet the form, without the matter as its exponent, has no existence."¹ But in so saying the thing itself still eludes us. Grant realizes this when he repeatedly refers to virtues as instances of "beauty in action." But however we may interpret virtue, we continue to be confronted with the stubborn facts that: "- moral virtue - is concerned with passions and actions, and in these there is excess, defect and the intermediate,"² and excess is a form of failure, and so is defect, while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success,³ and the capacity to react emotionally is, as⁴ Hartmann points out, a presupposition of virtue.

Hence the mean, in so far as it can be "chosen" is a device whereby (negatively) the agent, in choosing it,

1 - Ibid, p 261.

2 - E. N. 1106b 16.

3 - Ibid, 1106b 24.

4 - N. Hartmann, Op. Cit. Vol. 2, p 414.

avoids and prevents failure, and (positively) which in choosing achieves the virtues that are means to the ultimate end: well-being.¹ Thus considered, the mean as mesotes between extremes, each of which are teleologically bad " - is a scientific formula, which describes the virtuous character in relation to the difficulties which surround it in its 'struggle for existence'. It describes virtue, as the Darwinian theory describes the forms of vegetable and animal life. - - 'If virtue is to be realized, such and such extremes must be avoided': so Darwinism - 'If the butterfly is to live, it must have such and such spots'.²"

According to him we must then regard the mean as an attempt at a scientific statement of the material content of a virtue,³ however with the proviso that virtue does not

1 - J. A. Stewart, Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics, Vol. I, p 195. "When an insect escapes capture by resembling the color of the leaves or bark on which it lives, its development of that particular shade of color and no other, has as much right to be described as an observance of the mean as the temperance which protects the citizen from extremes disastrous to himself and others."

2 - Ibid, p 209.

3 - Ibid, p 209. "Regarded scientifically, then, as a form constituted in a certain way out of certain elements, Virtue is a mean suggesting Extremes. The Extremes represent the prevalence of that matter which Virtue reduces to form; and a scientific account of Virtue must describe the manner in which it accomplishes this achievement. But the achievement itself is not the manner of its accomplishment. So Phidias, in executing his work must be alive to all the various treacheries of his material and subject; but when the work is finished, it stands a God⁴"

admit of scientific formulation, and cannot be reduced to figures even as regards its material. (We cannot speak of pounds or feet or measure of say anger or courage).

W. D. Ross characterizes the doctrine of the mean as: " - in effect a protest against the ascetic, Manichaeic view which condemns all natural impulses, and equally against the naturalistic view which elevates them above criticism and adopts them as the guide for life. None of them is good and none bad in itself; there is a right amount of each, a right time, a right manner, right objects for each,"¹ (but he is doubtful if the doctrine of the mean is "the correct way of expressing this sane and true view." These and other objections must be considered later). Ross's positive contribution to the exposition of the doctrine of the mean is in his characterization of the mean as dealing with the quantitative side of good action, quality resting on quantity.²

For the mean as the quantitative aspect of virtues (even though matters concerned with conduct have no more fixity than matters of health),³ there remains this to be said: "That it is the nature of such things to be destroyed by excess and defect, as we see in the case of strength

1 - W. D. Ross, Aristotle, p 195.

2 - Ibid, p 196.

3 - E. N. 1104a 5.

and of health; both excessive and defective exercise destroy the strength, and similarly drink or food which is above or below a certain amount destroy the health, while that which is proportional both produces and increases and preserves it. So too it is in the case of temperance and courage and the other virtues. They are destroyed by excess and defect and preserved by the mean." 1

This is the factual challenge to seek the mean. On the basis of the Aristotelian table of the virtues as lying between extremes the challenge can be thus given:

The physical and mental anguish, as well as the "dis-ease" occasioned by gluttony, resulting, it may be, in gout or obesity on the one hand; the pangs of hunger or thirst, or the weakness caused by malnutrition on the other; the condemnation by himself and others of rashness or cowardice; the plight of the prodigal, the contempt occasioned by stinginess; the folly of buffoonery, the painfulness of boorishness, these and all such constitute the practical imperative to seek the quantitative mean in the expression of the feelings or actions that the particular occasion calls forth, by avoiding a quantitative too much or too little, as well as the imperative to a perpetual habituation to the mean.

Aristotle's man is a dynamic being, equipped with a set of instincts which are set off or stimulated to action

1 - J. A. Stewart, Op. Cit. Vol. I, p 209.

by various stimuli, either from without or from within. These are neither morally good nor bad. Each is on occasion useful. The expression of any one of them must be controlled by reason in the interest of the whole man, not only in the interest of his self-preservation but of his well-being. Aristotle's doctrine implies that any one passion can be checked or increased to the telos-fulfilling point or degree; that a greatly aroused intensity can be satisfied by increased duration; that desire can be directed through some other instinct without the conduct becoming anti-teleological.

In so far as man is equipped with these passions, and in so far as these are singly aroused, and in so far as desire can be sublimated among the impulses (a single impulse being controlled with reference to his telos) in so far the doctrine of the mean is significant. The mean is a suitable quantity, linked up with and chosen by a quality (the state of character of the individual). A degree in quantity alters the quality.

b - The Mean both a Mean and an Extreme.

Moral Virtue is:

(Genus) A state of character.¹

(Differentia) It is a disposition to choose the mean²
(mesotes) relative to us.

Moral virtue is a quality of character concerned with quantitatively right action or feeling, a quality concerned with the choice of the mean.

" - in respect of its substance and the definition which states its essence virtue is a mean, with regard to what is best and right an extreme." 3

A mean, as the choice of a virtuous individual, is (quantitatively) a mean, but qualitatively (from the viewpoint of the good and the best) it is an extreme, i.e. it is the best there is.

Unless this be noted, we are liable to identify virtue itself with mediocrity, with "being average," with a not too much, with itself being a mean instead of a state of character which chooses the mean. To this point Nicolai Hartmann speaks:

1 - E. N. 1106a 10.

2 - Ibid, 1107a 6.

3 - Ibid, 1107a 5-8, also quoted by N. Hartmann, Op. Cit., Vol. 2, p 255.

"It is - absurd that a further enhancement of a moral good should lead back to a vice, even if to another one than that above which it rose as an opposite. Rather it is evident that a virtue can be augmented in itself, without ever losing its distinctive value, that is, that its quality is absolute and is an axiological extreme. Self control, bravery, justice, taken as values, (as states of character) have no upper limit at all. It is impossible to transcend them." 1

By way of comment on E. N. 1107a 5-8 (quoted above) Hartmann adds:

"Here it is clearly stated that virtue is always at the same time both a mean and an extreme, but in different connections. In every virtue two points of view stand over against each other, one ontological which refers to the existential form of the conduct, we might say, the material of the value, and one axiological, which concerns the valuational quality itself. In the sense of the latter virtue is an extreme; in the sense of the former a mean. This affirms unequivocally that as an ethical value it is something absolute, beyond which there can be no 'too much.' It is a mean only according to existential reality." 2

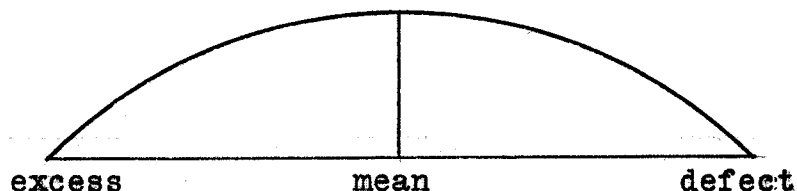
He here confuses virtue with the quantity that virtue chooses. The quantity that virtue chooses is a mean. This mean quantity is the best with reference to the telos. But this may still be chosen and the agent not be virtuous.

Hartmann reproduces the diagram of M. V. Kohoutek in which the horizontal line represents the quantitative and the vertical line the axiological dimension. The essence of the arete inheres in its double position as a horizontal

1 - N. Hartmann, Op. Cit. Vol 2, p 254.

2 - Ibid., Vol. 2 p 256.

mesotes and a vertical extreme. The diagram is herewith reproduced.¹



Of this diagram Hartmann says: "The essence of , as Aristotle understands it, inheres in its double position as a *μεσότης* (mean) in the first (horizontal) and as an *ἀκρότης* (extreme) in the latter (the vertical line)" and "It is to be understood that according to Aristotle there is no passing beyond *ἀρετή* in a further enhancement of the valuational quality of right conduct. For the extension of the curve cannot rise above its culminating point, but can only fall."¹

Hartmann's contention is true as far as the material content of virtue is concerned. As regards the material content, any extension of the curve (movement to the right or the left) can only lead into excess or defect. But of virtue itself (as a state of character) there can be definite enhancement. The agent may have been content to avoid excess only in so far as it would not denominate him as a gluttonous man, from an imperfect motive. Virtue can be improved upon. As there can be an enhancement of

1 - Ibid, Vol. 2, p 256.

sourness, sweetness, blackness or ugliness, so there can be an enhancement of graciousness or courage or temperance, or as the case may be. In kind, the virtues are "the best there is." There is none better, except and unless it be an enhancement of the kind itself. The virtues are extreme in kind. The quantitative mean is likewise an extreme, in so far as it is quantitatively the best there is, with reference to a given end, but with the difference that there is no passing beyond the apex of the parabola, no rising above its culminating point.

The diagram thus rightly depicts the quantitative mean as the extreme quantitative value with reference to an instrumental telos in a given single situation. But virtue as a state of character can not be thus depicted. If virtue were of such absolute exactness, then no mortal would exist who could be denominated virtuous. But by common consent some individuals are denominated as being more virtuous than others, and, with a full consciousness of moral imperfection, some individuals are nevertheless denominated as being virtuous.

Virtue (on the quantitative side) is a mean between extremes. But that same quantitative mean is the most valuable quantity, the most suitable quantity, for the purpose in hand and the end sought.

But virtue itself is on occasion referred to as a mean between two vices, thus:

"Virtue - is a mean between two vices, that which depends upon an excess and that which depends on defect." 1

Here "virtue," in the sense of "a virtue" is itself spoken of as a mean.

This matter will, we think, be clarified by referring to the diagram on page 46. In this diagram point M-N is the mean between X and Y. But the quantity M-N is the most valuable, useful, and therefore the required quantity for the purpose in mind, to actualize the end sought. Its valuational quality is higher than any other quantity or degree in the entire range of conceivable quantity. Range X to c is excess. Range d to Y is defect.

But virtue is a state of character that chooses the mean in the various instincts or activities. The person habitually choosing excess has a name, is called by a derogatory term. If the subject matter is the sense of humor, the person habitually choosing excess is called a buffoon. He who here chooses defect is called an austere person. But he who chooses the mean is called ready-witted. It is in the sense of being concerned with the choice of the mean between excess and defect, that virtue itself may be called

1 - E. N. 1107a 3.

a mean, - even as the virtues lie between excess and defect in the diagram above.

Referring to the diagram above, in any given instinct or activity, the individual who habitually chooses X or a or b - or - Y or e or g is called by a name signifying addiction to a vice. Thus:

The Choice of Excess

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Vice of Excess</u>	<u>Denomination of Agent</u>
Fear	Cowardice	A coward
Spending of money	Prodigality	Spendthrift
Shame	Bashfulness	A bashful person

The Choice of Defect

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Vice of Defect</u>	<u>Denomination of Agent</u>
Fear	Rashness	A rash person
Spending of money	Stinginess	A stingy person
Shame	Shamelessness	A shameless person

A Virtue in a Sense a Mean

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>The Mean</u>	<u>Defect</u>
Fear	Cowardice	Courage	Rashness
Spending of money	Prodigality	Liberality	Stinginess
Shame	Bashfulness	Modesty	Shamelessness

The above tables together with the diagram manifest conclusively the sense in which a virtue can be said to be itself a mean, viz: as the name for virtue operative in

choosing the mean in a given field, but not in the sense of identifying the mean with mediocrity.

c - The Right Rule for Employing the Mean.

A person believing himself to have attained some degree of clarity and finality in the matter of the mean is at this stage confronted with facts that are disillusioning. For at this stage complications of a serious nature set in. For, as indicated earlier, virtue is a state of character concerned with choosing the mean relative to us:

" - this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it." ¹

So we have now, not a mathematical mean, but a mean relative to us, which may vary with different agents in the same situation as well as with the same agent in different situations, the mean in each case to be determined by the rule (logos) ² that is followed. It is insufficient to say that reason chooses the mean or that the exaltation of reason is peculiar to Aristotle's method. Reason itself, for Aristotle, has a "rule" or "right rule" which functions alongside of the mean, and by which reason itself is to be guided. ³ What may this right rule be? Here the darkness

1 - E. N. 1107a 1-5.

2 - "Logos," transliteration of λογος.

3 - E. N. 1107a 1-5.

deepens. Aristotle has as the cardinal tenet of his system that reason is the authoritative principle in man and hence is man's differentia. But each method and system of ethics tacitly lays claim to being reasonable and to being the product of reason. Each considers its method of ascertaining the summum bonum, as well as its method of actualizing it, as being "according to reason." Thus we may say "It is reasonable that pain be avoided and pleasure chosen," or "that we follow what is natural" or "that we follow the dictates of our moral sense regardless of personal gain or loss" or "that we universalize ourselves" or that we engage in telos-fulfilling conduct. Each is reasonable, each is ascertained by reason, each require reason for its actualization.

Accordingly it is not in regard to temperance, as
¹ Ross thinks, but rather in regard to the logos, the right rule, that is to function along with the mean, that the mean comes closest to making its exit into the realm of the insignificant. For obviously, the mean chosen or sought depends upon the rule employed and if there be disagreement as to the right rule, or as to the representative wise-man exemplifying the right rule (and individuals are too frequently thus honored only after they are dead) there is not even a

1 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 207.

remote probability of a general agreement as to the content of the virtues, not even for similar persons under similar circumstances. It depends upon their having the same "rule", even granting that they are virtuous individuals.

The norm of hedonism is regarded by some as the right rule in ethical calculation in which case we could say; "lying in a mean as between the two outer limits of possibility is a point which, upon the application of the hedonistic calculus, will be found to yield the maximum of pleasure. Any movement to the right or to the left will immediately enter the realm of excess or defect, will diminish the pleasure and enter the realm of pain." The hedonistic calculus would then be the technique for ascertaining the mean. The tenets of hedonism would be the rule for guiding reason. The mean could equally significantly be spoken of as the mean of hedonism.

Hence it would appear that it is not the mean which is alone of importance, even granting the telos, but the mean plus the right rule, together with the disposition to employ it. The telos of a single act must first be visualized and a stable character must have been formed. It is only after the ought that contributes to the telos has been ascertained in a particular case, that the mean becomes significant. It is the right rule that determines the ought,

which sets the goal. Then by aid of the mean we seek to actualize that goal, that ought. The miser, the ascetic, the fanatic, the anarchist, the altruist, each follows and employs a rule in using his reason, but obviously from the view point of Aristotle's system not the right one. Thus the good visualized, the end sought, the "ought-to-be" which the agent resolves shall-be, are each rules according to which reason is to operate, as well as being themselves dictates of reason.

Matters are further complicated by the variableness of the subject matter. In the case of mathematics, if the procedure to be followed is multiplication or addition or subtraction, each has a rule to be followed which may be said to be followed without variability. It is not basically a matter of adding or multiplying "as a wise man would do it" for, given the figures, the procedure is ironclad by the very nature of mathematics. No representative wise man is required. There is a definite correctness and incorrectness (given the figures as valid premises). The numbers are exact, hence exact results can be obtained. The subject matter of ethics being variable, and the telos of the various ethical methods being different, and there being possible even a difference of opinion as regards what actually is an actualization of the ought that is visualized, the agent is

further confused by questionings regarding the right rule according to which telos fulfilling conduct, i.e. the mean, is to be ascertained.

Hence we must state as our conclusion that one aspect and the most important one of the right rule in the method of Aristotle, is Aristotle's concept of the human telos itself, viz: well-being, a life guided and controlled by reason. The mean is to be sought, not with naturalism or hedonism or some other norm as the determining rule, but well-being, which method itself is humanism. This involves a certain circularity in reasoning which, depending upon the manner of stating same, is inevitable. It may be stated thus:- Reason ascertains that the telos of man consists in living a life according to reason. What is according to reason? That which ministers to well-being. What is well-being? A life according to reason. There must then be a second aspect of the right rule having to do with ascertaining the mean within the latitude of possibility and variability which exists in opinion, even after the telos is definitely established and accepted as consisting of well-being. What may this second aspect be? In Aristotle's terminology, virtue is a state of character concerned with the choice of the mean, but choosing it "by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it." To reduce the manner of doing to a principle will in the

nature of the case result in a very vague principle, whose utility will be well-nigh nil. To state that the mean is to be chosen after the manner that a man who is practically wise and who has achieved well-being chooses it, and has chosen it in achieving well-being, will make the matter more significant. The requirement then is a practically wise man serving as a living standard, whose technique is caught and can only partly be taught. The elusiveness of the "rule" is such that it has not been successfully reduced to words by any of the commentators, and the writer doubts if it can be. They have only been able to formulate the rule in a manner as vague as Aristotle's statement of the right rule itself.

Ross translates "logos" "rational principle" in the text of the Nicomachean Ethics.

Griffin translates it "reason."¹

Stewart translates it, sometimes as "reason,"²
sometimes as "ratio" or "proportion." "The mesotes is

1 - A. K. Griffin, Op. Cit. pp 135, 136. "A virtue, then, is a habit of character, governed by choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being defined by reason, and by that reason by which the man of practical wisdom would define it."

2 - J. A. Stewart, Op. Cit. Vol. 1, p 200. "the object of reason is ratio or system, and the faculty of reason and its object are identical, according to a far reaching tenet of Aristotle, upon which he often insists."

'rationally determined' or 'determined according to the proper ratio or proportion.' This ratio is, of course, that of the organization which meets most successfully the conditions of human life. The man who realizes this ratio most perfectly, and is most clearly conscious of it, is termed the practically wise man.¹

But how is an individual to know when this ratio is being realized? Here we are confronted with the stubborn fact that Aristotle's ethics, which boasts reason as the crown and height of man, and the mean as the quantitative "universal" of telos-fulfilling conduct, (conduct such as reason chooses), must have a "practically wise man" as a "representative standard, which the bulk of mankind can easily see, and will, from a natural tendency to imitate social types, probably conform to."² Aristotle's position being that we become good or bad by habituation, the tyro will need to imitate the practically wise man in choosing the mean, until such a time as the tyro himself has acquired the technique of the wise man's conduct, has somehow gotten the feel of it, employing the particular logos that

1 - Ibid., Vol. 1, p 200 b 36.

2 - Ibid., Vol. 1, p 204.

the prudent man employs, achieving the rational life after the manner of the wise man. Analogy will here be illustrative:

In music the score is exact and by aid of a metronome the exact prescribed tempo can be maintained throughout the rendition of the composition. And yet we speak of a composition as being "played as an artist would play it" and we employ artists (relatively speaking) to teach the beginner so that he may learn to play a composition "as an artist would play it."

Stewart describes the rule which the virtuous man¹ observes in all circumstances as "correspondence with his social environment," "adaptation to the environment as one whole," and gives as the practical imperative: "So act in any particular case, that you heighten your power of acting well in any case."²

Mure states his conception of the rule in the following imperative: "So act that you, a man of a certain nature, faced with a particular set of circumstances, may

1 - Ibid, p 205. "The moral nature of such a man is like a highly organized animal, which acts in response to a particular stimulus in a manner which promotes the good of the whole organism as exposed in the present and future to a whole system of stimuli."

2 - Ibid, Vol. 1 p 205.

relate your response to your feeling in the same ratio as that in which the ideally wise agent would relate his response to his feeling in analogous but ideal circumstances.¹"

In any case, the man deemed as being practically wise by a given individual, serves as the norm for employing the norm, serves as the standard for employing the standard, on the part of a given individual. Thus an ascetic would employ a "representative standard" of one kind, a business man another, another person would apply still a different standard. An ascetic subjugates his instincts to a rule "though perhaps not to the right rule."²

In this connection the difference between the moral and the intellectual virtues become apparent. Grant identifies the right rule with reason itself. Reason "is the standard and therefore does not have to be regulated by the standard. The intellectual virtues are not mesotes because they are 'logoi.'³"

Ross shares in this identification of the "right rule" with reason itself, since it (reason) chooses the

1 - H.R.G.Mure, Aristotle, p 141.

2 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 207.

3 - Sir Alexander Grant, Op. Cit. Vol. 1, p 258.

1

mean in actions and impulses. But in so doing he evades the issue and glosses over the matter by merging the doctrine of the mean with the right rule according to which the mean is to be chosen, or the knowledge that the telos fulfilling conduct consists of means, is identified with the right rule.² He thus gives the right rule as "choose the mean, it is contributory to well-being. This do and thou shalt be morally virtuous"!

Accordingly it is not in connection with the single virtues such as temperance, but in regard to the rule for employing the mean that Aristotle's doctrine comes closest to a break-down.

We conclude that the first aspect of the right rule is the telos itself, which, in the case of Aristotle, is well-being. Stated as a practical imperative, it reads: Choose the mean that will actualize human well-being based on man's nature. To that dictum inexperience puts the question: and how shall I do that? The Aristotelian reply is:

1 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 220.

2 - Ibid., p 221. "The right rule is a rule reached by the deliberative analysis of the practically wise man, and telling him that the end of human life is to be best attained by certain actions which are intermediate between extremes. Obedience to such a rule is moral virtue."

observe a practically wise man who has achieved and who is achieving well-being. Act as he would act, until his technique is acquired by you.

But if, and to the extent that there is a difference in opinion as to who and what constitutes the practically wise man, there is room for widespread controversy and disagreement. The statement "Socrates is wise," based upon current knowledge of the life of Socrates, may be open to serious diversity of opinion as regards its truth. The rule that he followed was certainly not one for the rank and file to follow, nor a matter of successful adjustment to environment, nor a matter of acting in a particular case so as to heighten his influence or his power of acting influentially in any case, nor an observance of a mean. His life's effort was a search, regardless of consequences to himself, of the universals of conduct that is good for man qua man. Socrates in company with Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, goes to an extreme through which civilization is forever enriched, and of this extreme going (in so far as Socrates was the intellectual and spiritual grandfather of Aristotle), the doctrine of the mean is an eventual fruitage. Here again we have evidence that the telos with reference to which a man acts may be different from the rank and file telos of man qua man, and that the doctrine of the mean is secondary to the

telos itself. Further evidence that the doctrine of the mean is not primary is the fact that so called intuitionist ethics fares well without it (even though its virtues *aposteriori* can be accounted for by the doctrine of the mean, but hedonism can also account, in terms of its self, even for the martyr burned at the stake). And in like manner hedonism, naturalism, self-universalization, even the golden rule, could each employ the mean to give content to the virtues in terms of the particular "ism" itself. But the fact that the category of quantity can be successfully applied to man's passions and the quantitative side of simple virtues thus accounted for, the possibility of describing moral virtue as a state of character that chooses the mean, remains. The technique that the practically wise man employs must next be examined.

d - Technique for Ascertaining the Mean.

Having in mind an expert, an individual who successfully and expertly achieves well-being, we must now observe the theoretical and practical considerations involved in his technique for ascertaining the mean in a given situation or circumstance.

The very undertaking of a search for the mean in a contemplated or present experience is based upon the pre-supposition that, if the act is one that the agent will do,

that it then has a mean, which participates in neither excess nor defect, which quantitatively is such that it contributes to the end sought, and which lies somewhere within the range of possible action. The mean that he seeks is the best quantity or degree for the purpose or for the end sought. That quantity which does not actualize the telos sought, participates in excess or defect and is not the mean.

In so far as the mean, as the quantitative universal in telos-fulfilling activity is a positive and definite something, enabling a person to know what to look for, what to avoid, what to seek to achieve, the matter of ascertaining the mean in a given situation is crucial. For if the mean is something sufficiently real to be found in the expression of a given impulse, or activity with an end in view, it is vital. If the mean can be ascertained in a given situation, and if it is the quantitative universal of telos fulfilling conduct, it is a valuable contribution in the solution of the ethical problem, telling us what to look for, what to avoid, what to consider. Can then the quantity which meets the requirement of the end sought be found? Aristotle answers in the affirmative and indicates a procedure for ascertaining the mean.

To take an instance that does not require a decision of the moment, but one which admits of being mulled over,

the rational procedure in ascertaining the mean is as follows:

The first step necessary is to ascertain the quantitative range of possibility, in so far as that is possible. Aristotle nowhere says so in so many words but it is evident as the first necessary step.¹ What are the possibilities in the expression of the impulse or of this activity? What are the outer limits of potentiality for the agent? Having determined the range of possible conduct, (extremes quantitatively), the question becomes: What is the suitable quantity for this purpose or for this end sought? Predictable consequences as indicated by past experience on the part of the agent (or as observed in the case of others), and as determined by reason, determine the starting point in the quest, i.e. what we consider the mean to be. Consequences as met with in experience when it is undertaken, and when the experience is actually under way, may indicate that the action is participating in excess or defect, a warning that the mean has been missed, requiring us therefore to depart from the extreme in which the act

1 - Ibid, p 196. Ross says of this that it is not the way we ordinarily reach our decision. This is very true. Neither do we ordinarily cast our thought into the mold of syllogistic reasoning. When we check our conclusion, however, we do so after the manner of ascertaining logical validity.

participates. Destructiveness, being inimical to teleological conduct, is the mark of both excess and defect. A factor to be considered in the initial choice of (what is believed to be) the mean, is that:

" - he who aims at the intermediate must first depart from what is more contrary to it - - for of the extremes one is more erroneous, one less so; therefore, since to hit the mean is hard in the extreme, we must as a second best, as people say, take the least of the evils - " 1

The more dangerous extreme is initially to be avoided. In the case of courage it is

"not rashness, which is an excess but cowardice which is a deficiency which is more opposed to courage, and not insensibility, which is a deficiency, but self-indulgence, which is an excess, that is more opposed to temperance." 2

A further consideration is the personal bent or inclination of the individual, the extremes to which he himself naturally tends, the agent's particular weakness or besetting sin. From such we must drag ourselves away "as people do in straightening sticks that are bent." "In order to arrive at the just mean in the way of spending of money this rule would probably direct a Scotchman to aim at prodigality, but an

1 - E. N. 1109a 30-35.

2 - Ibid, 1109a 2-5.

3 - J. A. Stewart, Op. Cit. Vol. 1 p 220. "Find out the things you have a weakness for and avoid them as much as you can."

4 - E. N. 1109b 7.

Irishman to practice what he would consider sordidness."¹

But above all the seeker of the mean must guard against the "pleasant or pleasure," because of its seductive nature, the safe course being to regard it with suspicion, warily, as the elders felt toward Helen, viz: "though she lovely be, send her away." "For if we dismiss pleasure² thus we are less likely to go astray." "Pleasure registers the goodness of the isolated act; not the goodness of the act as related to the whole of life."³

Aristotle recognizes pleasure as a cause of "bad" deeds, and pain as a cause why people abstain from noble ones.⁴ Pleasure is not the good but is a good, not to be sought as an end in itself, but to be associated with the acts that reason prescribes. Pleasure is conditionally permissible. If the object of pleasure is right and the contemplative faculty "is what it should be" pleasure will be involved in the activity and will supervene on the activity,

1 - Edward Moore, Op. Cit. p 110.

2 - E. N. 1109b 11.

3 - Wm. De Witt Hyde, From Epicurus to Christ, Chapter 4.

4 - E. N. 1104b 10.

"as the bloom of youth does on those in the flower of their age."¹ But in the choice of the mean, pleasure is to be dismissed as a factor in making the choice, the virtuous agent habituating himself to feel and find pleasure in virtue's choice (the mean) after reason has chosen it, but avoiding pleasure per se.

But lastly we are told that the eventual decision in finding the mean "rests with perception," which we interpret to mean intellectual intuition, to which he gives insufficient scope. For (see Griffin's Analysis of the Soul) the animals also share in perception but we do not think of them as purposively choosing the mean. Perception is not the criterion in itself, as if reason as an analyzing and deliberating and calculating force were not required or needed, but rather is an intuitive act of reason itself, the intuition following or being contingent upon the deliberation, calculation and observation by reason itself. If perception alone were required, no technique for ascertaining the mean would be needed. But the wise man, when acting without having time for deliberation, will have acquired an eye for the mean, as an artist has an eye for the beautiful, or as (negatively) a craftsman will have an eye for flaws in his merchandise, recognizing, we might say intuitively, what

1 - Ibid., 1174b 34.

is not up to standard, but also recognizing intuitively (aided by reflection and examination) what is excellent and up to standard.

In ascertaining the range of potential action as it applies to a contemplated experience or act, the agent will find that the exterior limits of possible action are for him generally excess or defect, too little or too much, i.e. not the mean. On the basis of the above considerations the agent's first concern in a contemplated experience, say a gift to charity, will be to ascertain (in so far as it is possible) the possible range of action, and to then let the range of possibility determine the initial estimate or choice (guess) as to what the mean may be.

Thus Ross says:

"If I am considering what I should subscribe to a charity, I may start by seeing that a subscription of one hundred pounds is beyond my means and that one of half-a-crown would be stingy, and it may be by working inwards from these limits that I finally decide what it would be right for me to give."¹₂

(In justice to Ross it must be said that he does not consider Aristotle as regarding this as "an account of the way in which we always or normally decide what we should do.")

1 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 196.

2 - Ibid., p 196.

But the matter of first ascertaining the range of possible action is vital. Let us take as an instance the expression of the will. Suppose that an individual who is being tortured by his ambitions seeks rationally to determine the future control of his willing process with his *eydaimonia* as the *telos* of the judgment that he seeks, - or that an individual just entering upon his chosen profession is plotting his course and setting his goals.

His first concern (if he approaches the matter rationally) will be to consider the range of possibility in the matter of ambition, of willing in general, and then to fit his own range of potentiality into the general range, and then to seek the mean relative to himself. In the matter of the general possibility in the exercise of the will, the evident possibility is unlimited "yea-saying" as one extreme and utter negation or suppression, - "nay-saying" - as the other. He may have in mind living examples of each. If he be fortunate enough to know it, he will find illustrative documentations of both complete yea and nay saying to the will in the life and writings of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, respectively.

Schopenhauer is concerned with the negation of the will, leading us to the wrack of self-denial, bidding us to (well-nigh) extinguish the will. Will for Schopenhauer is the relentless task master which afflicts us with scorpions.

For him all willing arises from want, therefore from deficiency, therefore from suffering. The satisfaction of a wish ends it, yet for one wish that is satisfied there remain at least ten that are denied. The desire lasts long, the demands are infinite; the satisfaction is short and scantily measured out. Every satisfied wish at once makes room for a new one. Attaining the object of our desire "is like the alms thrown to the beggar that keep him alive today that his misery may be prolonged until tomorrow.¹"

There we have an expression of nay-saying to the will, a philosophy which leads one into the abyss of pessimism.

Nietzsche represents the opposite view. He extols and exalts the will, bids us speak a hearty "yea" to life, bids us surpass ourselves, to will the superman, to despise the human ground fleas and to regard the commonplace virtues as appropriate only to the ground fleas. (Whether his philosophy is the result of his madness or the madness the result of his seeking to actualize his philosophy in his own person is, for the purpose in hand, immaterial.)

As between those two men and their views he will have the range of possibility that is open to him. His own practical experience and observation in choosing the mean

1 - A. Schopenhauer, "The World as Will and Idea, p 253, Sec. 38, 2nd par.

and in recognizing it as the universal of telos fulfilling conduct, will cause him to recognize both views as extremes, which, as actualized and represented in the lives of their exponents, deprived each of well-being while living.¹

If we let the framework of general possibility be analogous to a propositional function, he can then substitute his own concrete possibilities for the variables, thereby indicating to himself the concrete range of possibility evidently open to himself. His "perception" (intuition) will cause him to see the outer reaches of the range as an excess or defect, as too much or too little to contribute to the end sought, to choose either of which would be a vice. (Without ascertaining the range of possibility open to him he may fall far short of the mean, as later experience will reveal it to him). He perceives the outer ranges of possibility to be excess or defect by intuitive analogy, by that human habit which causes an individual to contemplate himself in the other person's position.

1 - But paradoxically, the excess of each gave them their place in philosophy, bestowing upon them a posthumous fame at the expense of their well-being as "political animals" while alive. But multitudes of the rank and file by following one or the other, deprive themselves of well-being in life and achieve oblivion thereafter. However, without Nietzsche's excess in yea-saying and Schopenhauer's excess in nay-saying, humanity would have been deprived of the contribution which each made to the total insight into human nature.

If he knows himself to be of a naturally sluggish disposition, defect will be the extreme that he will especially avoid. If he knows himself to be a lotus eater, he will abandon his dreams while making his choice of the mean.

But at this stage even the wise man will come face to face with the fact of uncertainty and non-precision, this existing by reason of the variable subject matter, together with the lamentably deficient state of human knowledge, man's inability to predict consequences, anticipation being non-actualized by realization. Here apply Aristotle's words:

"The man - who deviates little from goodness is not blamed, whether he do so in the direction of the more or of the less, but only the man who deviates more widely; - but up to what point and to what extent a man must deviate by reasoning - such things depend on particular facts, and the decision rests with perception." 1

But - The perception may be wrong! The choice may be irrevocable! Very omniscience would be required to forestall the possibility of wrong perception.

The mean shares this with any instrument or rational device that seeks a quantity as related to an end by a moral agent, that seeks to concretely and "scientifically" ascertain or delineate the content of a virtue in the concrete. The factors relevant to the situation are so

1 - E. N. 1109b 17.

numerous and so uncertain that one can never be sure. The hedonistic calculus is another such instance.

As Aristotle employs the mean in ascertaining telos fulfilling conduct in regard to a feeling or impulse or to its expression, so the hedonistic calculus is employed by Bentham to pleasure, by seeking to ascertain (predict, forecast) its intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty, nearness or remoteness, fecundity, purity and extent.¹

But omniscience is required to do so. And to seek to predict the extent of pleasure (the number of persons to whom it will extend) complicates and upsets the calculations still more, by reason of the variability of the sensibility to pleasure.² The agent, in the choice of the mean in endeavoring to secure social adjustment, encounters a like variability on the part of his fellowmen. He will theoretically find it as difficult to predict the mean with refer-

1 - Jeremy Bentham, An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.

2 - Circumstances and factors influencing sensibility to pleasure are listed by Bentham as follows: "health, strength, hardiness, bodily imperfection, quantity and quality of knowledge, strength of intellectual powers, firmness of mind, steadiness of mind, bent of inclination, moral sensibility, moral biases, religious sensibility, religious biases, sympathetic biases, antipathetic biases and sensibilities, habitual occupation, pecuniary circumstances, connection in the way of sympathy and antipathy, radical frame of body and mind, sex, rank, education, climate, lineage, government, religious profession." Ibid, p 75.

ence to the expression of his impulses over against his fellowmen, as will the hedonist in applying the calculus. My mean may militate against my fellowman's mean causing conflict with my social environment and retarding my well-being, rather than fostering and promoting it. Here the question: To what extent shall I choose the mean with reference to the status quo and adjustment to environment, and to what extent shall I concern myself with the actualization of my potentiality apart from the status quo, asserts itself.

But yet and still, as the beautiful statue is composed of a quantity of material, so that a quantitative more or less in any part will destroy its beauty as a whole, so a virtue, from one aspect, can be said to be composed of a quantity of feeling or impulse in expression, which, in relation to the end sought is the best, which is quantitatively the mean, so that more or less of it would be destructive of its value with reference to the end sought. Experience will bear this out. The consciousness on the part of the agent that his action or response was excessive or defective, too much or too little, thereby militating against his well-being, theoretically induces an agent to seek the proper mean on a subsequent occasion. This may be experienced in the first or third person. The agent may have monopolized the conversation at a social gathering with resultant loss of good will or friends, resulting in

his conversing, as opposed to "monologuing" at a subsequent affair. He may have spent too little or too much money for a car, profiting by experience on the occasion of a subsequent purchase. He perhaps drank too many cocktails, in consequence of which he made a fool out of himself. He may have gotten too angry and lost his temper, thereby despising and branding himself as a hot-head. When his anger cooled he saw that the occasion was not worth it. In consequence he resolved to control his anger and did control it on the occasion of a subsequent provocation. In all such instances the category of quantity or degree can be significantly applied to the activity, desire or impulse, and there is that quantity, which from the viewpoint of the end sought, is the mean, participating in neither excess nor defect.

Basing the virtues upon the passions has the advantage of taking them out of the realm of the metaphysical and abstract and placing them in the realm of the good for an end, and the physical. It determines man's duty by man's nature, deriving the conception on the basis of man's essential nature, reason, in its control and employment of man's innate tendencies. But in rationalistic ethics we go beyond the concreteness of basing a virtue upon a single instinct and enter upon varying levels of abstraction, often in a manner as if the instincts of man were not existent.

But, obviously apart from the instincts, the individual is incapable of virtue. Yea, he is dead. The fact hence remains that whatever else the virtues may be, they are in individual cases a certain quantity or amount of an impulse or desire as the content of the form. Such a virtue, based upon a single passion, is an elementary virtue, a skeleton virtue.

P A R T I I I

THE MEAN AS AN AID TO CONDUCT

a - Some Objections Considered.

Did Aristotle employ the doctrine of the mean, not to discover virtue, not to help people toward a good life, but merely to record what were the accepted valuations of his day? Regardless of his motives, Aristotle accomplished more than merely that. He is concerned with the question: What is the good of man as of a kind? Accordingly as long as the kind remains and as long as the instincts or passions remain, the doctrine of the mean will be significant. From the viewpoint of the method he is concerned with the individual achieving well-being in the sense earlier indicated, (Eudaimonia). As such his question becomes: What is the nature of such acts as, by experience, have been shown to be contributory to well-being? What have such in common? What is their universal? In seeking the answer to that question

he records the accepted valuations of his day, describes the "virtues," seeks the universal in them and finds that universal to be that the virtues are each a mean between a range of excess and defect, and that virtue is a state of character that chooses the mean, as opposed to a state of character that chooses either excess or defect. In that sense a virtue is a mean between two vices.

By discovering the universal in existent values he (theoretically) enables the agent to know what to seek in subsequent situations. In so far as that is possible, he renders a service which is as lasting as the race. To the extent that he gave insight into life and direction for life, enabling the individual to know himself, and to know wherein conduct which contributes to well-being consists, Aristotle helped men toward a good life regardless of his motive. Hence an explicit investigation of the mean as an aid to conduct is in order, over and beyond that which has hitherto been manifest or implied.

The field in which the mean is operative is for Aristotle limited to that of the expression and control of the passions and appetites and to the actions which are impelled by them, or which are directly their expression. It is not applicable to the intellectual virtues, for such are themselves *logoi* (laws, rules, reason) and as such control the appetites, but are not themselves *mesotes*. The mean

does not enable us to determine the summum bonum, but its function is to achieve the summum bonum, once it has been ascertained, in that it is the universal that we seek to realize in acts and passions, and must realize if the summum bonum is to be actualized. The mean is applicable whenever the impulse or activity or desire admits of a significant application of the category of quantity or degree, "too much or too little." There must likewise be choice, voluntary choice, as regards the range of activity.

In this connection Ross points out that the trinitarian scheme of the virtues and vices is mistaken; that each virtue has, not two opposites, but only one opposite vice, and asks if this must not be the case from the very nature of vice and virtue.¹ For Aristotle's trinity he would substitute not one duality but two, as follows:

<u>Feeling</u>	<u>Virtue</u>	<u>Vice</u>
Fear	Courage	Cowardice
Love of danger	Discretion	Rashness
Hoarding instinct	Liberality	Meanness
Spending instinct	Thrift	Liberality

It is true, theoretically, that aside from the mean each virtue has but one opposite vice, but this vice must be

1 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 206.

called "vice" or "extremeness" of which, in the nature of the case, there are two varieties, viz: that called excess and that called defect. But it is also true that in the nature of things a virtue as characterized by Ross (see above) itself admits of a too much, admits of overshooting the telos on the quantitative side and thereby entering the realm of excess, except in those exceptional cases wherein the telos requires the maximum or minimum, which shall presently concern us. Thus a man may be too liberal for his own good, exercise too much discretion, such discretion as enters the realms either of cowardice or indecision. If a man cannot be too discreet or too liberal, what is he then when he gives too much for his own good, or when his exceeding discretion lets a golden opportunity pass by?

That one vice is generally more opposed to the mean than the other, Aristotle recognizes, and admits, as in the case of being insensate in the realm of temperance.¹ But a virtue that is not a mean, itself admits of an extreme which is a defect.

1 - E. N. 1109a 30 to 35. " - of the extremes one is more erroneous, one less so."

Ibid. 1109a 2-5. "it is not insensibility, which is a deficiency, but self-indulgence, which is an excess, that is more opposed to temperance."

But here we are faced with the fact (as Ross further points out), that not every virtuous act is a quantitative mean, that there are occasions when an impulse needs to be suppressed entirely, or expressed to the utmost. In fact Ross thinks that:

" - it seems to be an accident, though a very frequent accident of right action, that it should be intermediate between extremes." ¹

But if we bear in mind that Aristotle bases the virtues upon the impulses and instincts, or in connection with them, it is manifest that it is not an accident that right action is generally intermediate between extremes, but rather, that it lies in the very nature of the impulses which can be adapted to varying circumstances of life, of which we require now more, now less, as the telos may require. By analogy, an automobile has a range of speed, and it is hardly an accident that the speed required at different times and occasions should generally be a mean between the maximum and the minimum range possible. The appropriate speed will generally be a mean. On rare occasions it may be the maximum or minimum, and sometimes driving at all is not in order. Does the mean have any significance at a time when the maximum, minimum or complete suppression is

1 - W. D. Ross, Op. Cit. p 195.

required by the telos? This will concern us in the next section.

But there are other factors which Aristotle associates with the mean, some of which have no connection with it, and which give evidence that the mean is not the simple pathfinder in determining the individual acts that constitute the good life, as the statements of Aristotle would lead one to believe.

Thus in regard to bravery, the virtuous man is he "who faces and who fears the right things and from the right motive in the right way and at the right time." 1

The temperate man:

" - - craves for the things he ought, as he ought, and when he ought." 2

The liberal man:

" - - will give to the right people, the right amounts, at the right time, with all the qualifications that accompany right giving." 3

The good tempered man:

" - - is angry at the right things and with the right people, and further, as he ought, when he ought, as long as he ought." 4

1 - E. N. 1115b 18 ff.

2 - Ibid., 1119b 18.

3 - Ibid., 1120a 25.

4 - 1125 b 31.

From the above already it is manifest that Aristotle's description of the virtuous man, as his virtue is operative in various fields, aside from the choice of the mean, is partly a recording of the valuations of his day, as well as the idiosyncracies, for the wise man of Aristotle's day has a rule of his own, which rule the wise man of today would scarcely follow. Witness the proud "proud man"¹ which is Aristotle's ideal. Even though we denominate him "magnanimous" instead of "proud", the individual virtues are dwarfed and well-nigh obliterated by the fact that the proud man is proud of himself. We should possibly denominate such a one a snob. In the description of the virtues we have largely a recording of the virtues of his day, but this does not detract from the doctrine of the mean.

The matter of acting in a "mean" but doing it "as he ought," the "as he ought" (see above) is relative to the aesthetic taste of the age as well as to the "rule" (the particular wise man who serves as the representative standard). But the fact that in any age the mean is the universal of most instances of telos-fulfilling conduct, regardless of what name such activity be called by, remains. Hence the content of a virtue will differ on different occasions and as between us and the Greeks, but the fact of the

1 - Ibid, 1123b 27 ff.

universal in virtues choice being generally a mean, remains.

But what about the repeatedly recurring qualifications such as "the right people" - "at the right time" - "on the right occasion"? The mean here seems to shift with each agent, time and place. But if, instead of speaking of man in the past tense or in the abstract, we speak of him as acting in the present, this difficulty is removed. For it is obvious that any agent, while acting, is in a particular place, at a particular time, amid a particular set of circumstances, and that the agent is a particular type or kind of an individual. Aristotle's ideal is that the agent (whoever and wherever) be habituated to the choice of the mean in all situations confronting him. This is but the recognition that circumstances alter cases; that each case must be recognized on its own merits. Hence this matter of the variability of the mean is not derogatory to the doctrine. The mean shares both in a relativity and in an ultimacy. It allows for a varying and variable subject matter, both as regards the agent and the situation. It makes virtue vital and not conventional, determining the content of a virtue on the basis of things relevant. The stereotyping of morals is guarded against. So also is Protagorean moral relativism.

It is a matter of:

"Man's nature is of a certain kind on the whole, and his circumstances are of a certain kind on the whole, and if he does not act in a certain way on the whole, he will perish." ¹

Aristotle wisely stipulates that it is the mark of knowledge and intelligence to limit one's expectation for precision "just as far as the nature of the subject admits." ²

But we may ask again:- Is not the mean merely a rationalizing of and thus an accounting for the morals of a community, whatever they be? Does not, otherwise, the mean differ with each person, time and occasion? The individual virtues thus considered do not have the same quantitative content on all occasions, but all have as their universal that they are means twixt the two extremes in the possible range. Considered from the viewpoint of Aristotle's method, courage or liberality or modesty may be something quite different from what the (it may be stupid) morals of a community prescribe it to be. Instead of blindly subscribing to the morals of a community, or rashly despising them, thereby antagonizing its members, the moral person employing the mean seeks to determine for himself:

1 - J. A. Stewart, Op. Cit. Vol. 1 p 30.

2 - E. N. 1094b 24 (P28-29Thes).

What is the courageous, the modest or the liberal thing to do or say or give? In so doing, by deviating from custom, he may conceivably become the representative wise man of the community, altering in a measure the moral judgments of the community. He may conceivably be able to do this without incurring the hatred and distrust of the community, without impairing his social usefulness by reason of loss of standing, or without becoming an object of suspicion.

But in actual life, the difference between a new standard or new content to the virtues (as opposed to the mores or morals of a community) is frequently so great that those who fall below and those who rise above may be socially crucified together, as Jesus and the two malefactors were physically crucified together. This is the Biblical "stoning of the prophets", the next generation holding them in honor and rendering them lip service, while the lip service rendering generation is itself stoning the prophets of its own day. In such cases, as in the case of Jesus, some will accept the new standard, the new insight, the new content to virtue and thereby become the moral leaven of the community and society, and others will worship him, saying, "Lord, Lord" and yet remain blind or indifferent to his insights.

Thus, for Aristotle's method, the mean is not just another name for the morals of a community, but (theoreti-

cally) it gives (on a specific occasion) quantitative content to a virtue. The virtues (as names for the moral generalities of custom) exist in the common vocabulary of mankind. By employing the doctrine of the mean the content of a virtue is rationally determined in a given case. Through employment of the mean, when confronted by a contemplated experience wherein the agent must answer: 'What ought I to do? and where this can be answered in terms of quantity or degree, he gives content to the virtue called for by employing the doctrine.'

Does the doctrine of the mean make a definite contribution to the general Greek idea of harmony, order, and to the Justice of Plato, or is the mean merely to be understood in terms of them?

We may regard Plato as the exponent of harmony and order. Comparing Plato's justice and harmony and Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, we may say that Plato's justice and harmony are to Aristotle's mean as a landscape painting is to a map.

Each is charting the same country, one in broad and general outline, (Plato) reducing the cardinal virtues to four, which privilege may be granted Plato as a landscape painter within the ethical field of discourse. Aristotle, on the other hand, is rather constructing a map, with detailed sketches of the numerous details in and of the

ethical terrain. This is the improvement upon Plato's analysis of justice in the soul by which "he in fact largely spoiled it."¹ Spoiled it, as a work of art is spoiled when its details are viewed in a close-up and the pigments or material analyzed into its component parts, or as any generality is spoiled when one takes the trouble and effort to go into particulars.

Both are ultimately concerned with the state, and the place of man in the state, both considering the state to be more important than any one individual. For Plato, the ethical problem as it relates to the individual man is seen and viewed through the microscope of the state. State ethics is individual ethics writ large, or rather, the individual is regarded in the light of state ethics. Plato begins with an ideal state, the Republic, and from that deduces individual ethics and morality. His ultimate concern is justice. Aristotle designates Plato's justice as "virtue in general."

A state arises from the common need for adjusting the relations among various people living together, who find it to their mutual advantage to have a division of labor, a specialization of function. As the latter becomes

1 - H.W.B. Joseph, Journal of the British Institute of Philosophy, Vol II April 1934, pp 168-181. Aristotle's definition of moral virtue, and Plato's account of justice in the soul.

actualized, inner vitality and internal harmony result. This specialization of function and division of labor leads to the four cardinal virtues of the state as a whole, viz: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Wisdom is directive and deliberative, the source of wise government, and is the special virtue of the ruling class. Courage is the class virtue of the soldiery, being equivalent to ability and willingness to act in accordance with convictions previously formed by right education. It includes moral and physical courage. Temperance is the virtue of order, of self-control or harmony; compared by Plato to the proper tuning of the strings of a lyre. Justice includes all three and is more besides, it being realized when the soldiers fight bravely, when the industrial class is thrifty and industrious, when the rulers govern wisely, all being obedient to reason that governs. Externally, it is the perfect consummation of the division of labor, doing your own business and not interfering with other people. Justice is a combination of intelligence, strength and unity combined. It is complete virtue.

In society then there is a "wehr-stand, a lehr-stand and a nahr-stand," like unto the three estates of medieval times, to wit: "oratores, bellatores and labora-

tores."¹ The three are actually distinct as classes in the external organization of the state of Plato. Spirit, reason and desire being each present in the individual, the state is regarded as a human giant, as a larger counterpart to individual man, with the defective proviso, however, that in the state each man is limited to an aspect which corresponds to one element of his self only. Those who are placed in the desire or spirit class must abnegate their own reason and submit to that of the ruling class or be damned if they don't. The external reason of the perfect guardian must be his reason. Each of the psychical elements in man is turned into a separate social class. Plato's ideal is that for each "my station and its duties as assigned to me by the perfect reason of my guardian" shall be my chief and only concern. It is Goethe's "mache ein Organ aus dir"² in the political life, even though within the limits of the "organexistenz" he may live with his whole mind. But his reason as an individual man, is determined to a rationalization to himself of his place in the state. His reason is free only in so far as it may adjust itself to, or rationalize to itself that the station in society in which it finds itself is good for itself, etc.

1 - Barker's Terminology, Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle, p 112.

2 - Ibid, p 117.

To the three classes in the state correspond for Plato the three faculties of the soul: reason, spirited emotion and desire. Each is an essential element in human nature, whose virtue consists in fulfilling its proper function. Wisdom is the special virtue of the rational part, courage of the emotional. Temperance is the obedience of the emotions and desire to reason, while justice is the harmonious exercise of intellect, emotion and desire under the guidance of reason. It is to the soul what health is to the body.

Aristotle is also concerned with man in society, considering politics the highest of all the sciences. But instead of beginning with the state, he begins with the individual, inquires as to the good for man, his function as an individual, and then concerns himself with constructing the kind of a state that shall make the realization of man's function possible. He considers ethics as prior to politics. But in his consideration of ethics, Plato supplies him with a starting point, and more besides.

The doctrine of the mean is an amplification and a development of the Platonic doctrine of temperance and justice as expounded in the Republic, and of the harmony theory propounded in the Philebus.

In the *Philebus* Socrates suggests "the division of all things into three or four classes"¹ to wit: the finite, the infinite, the union of the two and the cause of the union. Anything that is, can be placed into one or the other of these classes. Here the Pythagorean apeiron, the unlimited, definitely enters in. Limit means determination, number, ratio, measure. The "mixed class" designates a precise and definitely determined magnitude or intensity of any quality.² Thus: it is noted that health of the body, proper attunement in music, beauty, or proportion in body or face, health and good climate, all depend upon the imposition of a limit, or ratio or proportion upon an apeiron. This aspect in Plato, together with the "mixed life" (including both intellectual activity and agreeable feeling) forms the direct starting point for Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. He used Plato's very words in leading up to its application in the field of Ethics.

In the *Statesman*,³ excess and defect are definitely introduced in connection with "good and bad men," habituation to the mean being the mark of difference between good and bad men, this being applicable to their speech and in

1 - Jowett's Translation, p 23.

2 - *Philebus* 25 and 26, p 592, Vol 4, Dialogues of Plato translated by Jowett.

3 - *Ibid*, p 283.

their action. The existence of the arts is here regarded as absolutely dependent upon a mean standard.

"For all these arts are on the watch against excess and defect, not as unrealities, but as real evils, which occasion a difficulty in action; and the excellence or beauty of every work of art is due to this observance of measure." ¹

"There are two divisions of the art of measurement; the first compares excess and defect with each other; the second compares them with the principle of the mean."

Again, in the "Statesman" the "brave," "calm" and
²
 "temperate man" is praised, but Stranger replies:

"But when, on the other hand, either of these is out of place, the names of either are changed into terms of censure."

Young Socrates: "How so?"

Stranger: "Too great sharpness or quickness or hardness is termed violence or madness; too great slowness or gentleness is called cowardice or sluggishness; and we may observe, that for the most part these qualities, and the temperance and manliness of the opposite characters are arrayed as enemies on opposite sides." ³

Plato begins with a Utopian state, and fits the individual into it. By the process of reducing the essential virtues to three (wisdom, courage and temperance) whose proper functioning and coordination constitute the fourth (justice), he has formulated a totalitarian state ethics

1 - A. E. Taylor, Plato, p 484.

2 - Ibid., p 306.

3 - Ibid., p 307.

which is his individual ethics writ large. To even begin to put his theory into practice he must needs send all the elders to the country and practice state totalitarianism to the "nth" degree.

Aristotle too considers political science as the highest, in virtue of the fact that it is concerned with the good of mankind. Yet, since the state is composed of individuals, one part of political science takes the form of an inquiry into individual good, so far as it is attainable by action, as far as it lies with the individual. He does not hold to the determinism of knowledge as does Socrates, but knowledge in the sense of apprehending does form a definite part of virtue, so that "no knowledge, no virtue." The giving of insight into the virtue, without which the virtue cannot be actualized, thus basing his methodology upon more comprehensive psychology, and concerning himself with the detailed investigation into the good for the individual man living in the society of his fellows, is the contribution of the specialized ethical inquiry of Aristotle. As such he applies to ethics the doctrine of harmony, of the mixed life, and the mean in art which was touched upon in the *Philebus*, the *Republic* and the *Statesman* by Plato, and attempts to give definite and precise characterization and delineation to virtue in its far flung range and setting by the doctrine of the mean. Here is

evident the reason why Plato's harmony cannot be identified with Aristotle's mean.

Empirical man is as a matter of psychological fact, not "tri-departmentalized" into an appetitive, an emotional or volitional, and a reasoning department, with a distinctiveness and clarity and decisiveness such that like "all Gaul" it is divided into three parts, with a virtue for each part. Aristotle's introduction of comprehensive psychology into the study of the good for man, is but one instance of his attention to the particular. Beginning with individual potential excellence (arete), actualization of which is his primary concern, his state is henceforth there for the individual.

Plato and Aristotle agree, and rightly, that the world needs to be governed by the wisest, but for knowledge as to wherein that wisdom which leads to excellence consists, and the steps towards attaining it, we turn to Aristotle rather than Plato. Aristotle's concern is the full development of man's capacities.

His view of the world and its contents is individualistically teleological, rather than having a "single teleology." Thus, instead of having a single end of all being, like Plato's idea of the good, Aristotle believes in single ends, i.e. in the case of man, in a single end of human action, viz: the human good. To act for this end is

to act teleologically, is to act rationally. To act rationally is to act morally. To act both rationally and morally is to act according to the principle of the mean relative to us.

For Plato thus the highest good for the individual consists in so living as to constitute a consciously organic portion of the whole (the highest good of the universe) and in so living to realize his own deepest happiness and well-being.

For Aristotle the concern is not with realizing the teleology of the universe alone, but with man the individual, living in the society of his fellows, realizing the teleology of his species, which latter is rational activity in accord with virtue, the essence of which latter is a state of character which chooses the mean.

b - The Mean in Operation.

In this section the writer seeks to show the wider contribution which the doctrine of the mean makes as an aid to conduct, and how conduct is classified when the doctrine is employed.

The individual employing Aristotle's method of ethics will have well-being as the ultimate goal of conduct. He acts on the assumption that conduct, acts and feelings such as contribute to well-being are, as a general rule, means as

between a range of excess and a range of defect, between all and one, yea saying and nay saying. This is not an absolute condition but the general and the most usual one. It is usually the case, not admitting of rigorous ultimacy,¹ there being exceptions.

The Conditionally Permissible

Hence, the most general question that an agent can ask himself in a contemplated or present experience is: What is the mean in this action or passion? If, in ascertaining the range of potentiality it is evident that for the situation in hand there is a maximum which is excess and that there is a minimum which is defect, it will be self-evident to the agent that the passion or action has a mean. All such actions and passions as have a mean that is the choice of virtue on the part of a given agent in a given circumstance, we shall designate as belonging to the class of the conditionally permissible. It is within this class of acts and passions that the mean has its application, and in a sense, strictly considered, only here. Once a possible excess and a possible defect are recognized, then Aristotle's technique for ascertaining the mean is in order. A conditionally permissible state or action is not in itself and in all degrees bad, but is potentially good or bad,

1 - E. N. 1107a 9.

its potential goodness being actualized when the mean is chosen. Excess, defect, and the mean, are made of the self same stuff, but differ quantitatively, and with reference to the end chosen, qualitatively. Although it is only in this realm that the mean has its full significance, the doctrine of the mean also makes a contribution when no mean is involved.

The Class of Non-permissibles

When it is evident that there is no mean in the action or passion, or that even a minimum amount or degree would militate against the agent's well-being (in society, with reference to all of life), such an act or state must be designated as being for the present a non-permissible, and as belonging to the class of the non-permissible for that agent, at that time, in that particular set of circumstances. To choose such a non-permissible voluntarily, and with knowledge that it is such, is a vice, the agent being denominated vicious. For an agent accustomed to making moral choices and decisions there is a definite class of such acts and passions which are non-permissibles. But this class is not in detail the same at all times for the same person, nor for different persons at the same time, and neither the same for all people. This realm of the non-permissibles forms in Aristotle's method a class of passions or actions which takes the place of the taboo of primitive

society. For Aristotle it is the class of the ethical taboos. Acts, passions, and feelings which need suppression completely at a given time and in a given circumstance, come for the time being in the class of the non-permissibles.

In this realm, the fact of the non-existence of a mean is generally an indication that the act is a non-permissible for a man seeking well-being, or in rare cases it may be an instance where the extreme is the choice of virtue, i.e. is telos-fulfilling.

Realm of Non-applicability of the Mean

There are also cases wherein the telos requires that a particular impulse shall be expressed to the utmost, and where the quantitatively right amount is definitely not a mean, but an extreme. Instances where the telos requires the minimum can also exist but are rare. There we may say that the search for the mean, the avoidance of defect, leads us toward the maximum extreme, until the extreme itself is reached. The avoidance of defect (one aspect of the mean) is responsible for finding the extreme which is not a mean, but is the choice of the virtuous man who seeks telos fulfilling conduct and activity. Circumstances wherein a virtuous man would find the utmost in anger to be telos fulfilling are not hard to imagine. But these are the exception and not the rule. Hence the Aristotelian generality

remains that virtue (generally) is concerned with the choice of the mean.

Contemplated acts or passions for a given agent employing the doctrine of the mean at a given time, in a given circumstance, then fall into those three classes. If they, on the occasion, admit of a possible excess or defect, they come under the class of the conditionally permissible.

Then Aristotle's technique for ascertaining the mean is in order. When it is evident that even a minimum amount or degree or number would militate against well-being, (since well-being is sought), that act or passion is at the time a non-permissible, a *conditio-non-permissible*. When the situation is such as requires the maximum or minimum of a passion or activity, the choice of the virtuous man is that minimum or maximum. The latter alternative is the exception and not the rule.

An individual in society has his various feelings and impulses aroused by stimuli from without and within. In so far as situations admit of choice, the question then becomes: Is this act a non-permissible? Is it a *conditio-permissible*? Is it an instance where the maximum or the minimum is required?

If it is a non-permissible, the feeling or impulse requires complete suppression, or the action cessation.

If, as is rare, the *telos* requires the utmost of feeling or

activity or, as is rarer still, the minimum, that maximum or minimum will be the choice of virtue. If, as is generally the case, it is a conditionally permissible, revealing a range of excess, and also a range of defect, the application of the technique for ascertaining the mean is in order.

In the foregoing there has been no talk of the "virtues." We have been speaking of telos-fulfilling conduct. But men being all of a kind, in the widest sense, and our experiences being sufficiently alike to make the experiences of another significant to us, it becomes possible to make a still further generalization regarding the above four divisions, and to speak of them in the abstract. The question then becomes: Can we give definite content to those classes, especially the non-permissibles and the conditionally permissibles? Again we must answer: Yes, in general. Aristotle implies this. Speaking of the instincts of man, he says: "All things have by nature something¹ divine in them." This "divine" he seems to regard as a potential usefulness with reference to well-being, which is possible of actualization. So considered we can speak of the entire list of human instincts and emotions as being conditionally permissibles. Each has something "divine" in it, each is a potential good, when considered and

1 - E. N. 1153b 53.

expressed in the mean, degree or amount. This involves a yea-saying to entire man. The virtue in the realm of these various impulses have all been given names; Courage in the realm of fear, liberality and thrift with reference to money, chastity with reference to sex, etc. People in different periods of history have virtues which serve as standards; What the content of the virtue may be in a given age will inevitably vary by custom. But Aristotle's virtuous man is not concerned merely with the customary virtue of his people, but by the doctrine of the mean he seeks to have the agent give definite content to that virtue in a given case, letting his own judgment decide how much or how little, i.e. what is the mean? in the particular situation. Theoretically, a morality could be built up by the doctrine of the mean, within teleological ethics, aside and apart from the virtues as we know them. But to give a definite content to a virtue as binding for all times, is manifestly impossible. And yet the virtues are in a sense permanent, (being the desirable action in that particular impulse); we today being concerned with the same ones (among others) as were the ancient Greeks.

Can we make a list of non-permissibles which are and will be considered such for all times and ages? Aristotle, employing an ethic for a time of peace, makes up

such a list, of which individual items even a minima in number or degree, would be destructive, and which accordingly do not admit of the mean that is the choice of virtue. For a time of peace, and as applying to and in a given land or nation, there obviously would be considerable agreement regarding this list. The fact that humanity of all times and ages is united by the bond of kind makes the moral prohibitions and taboos of even the Greeks of Aristotle's day significant for us. For Aristotle as for us there are acts and passions which always and at all times (generally speaking) are considered bad, of which not even a minimum contributes to the well-being of the individual living in the society of fellow citizens. Such acts and states are destructive, are antivalues, and as such are placed in the same category as excess and defect, being always such in an ethic of peace. (In time or case of war some of the non-permissibles of peace might become, not only the permissibles (over against the enemy), but the very imperatives). So to the vices of excess and defect then can be added other vices which are neither excess or defect but which are likewise inimical to well-being for man, the citizen.

" - For some actions have names that already imply badness, e.g. spite, shamelessness, envy, and in the case of action, adultery, murder, theft; for all of these

and such like things, imply by their names that they are themselves bad, and not the excesses or deficiencies of them." 1

Regarding the above, Aristotle says it is never possible to be right.

" - one must always be wrong. Nor does the goodness or the badness of the act depend upon committing adultery with the right woman at the right time in the right way, but simply to do any of them is to go wrong. It would be equally absurd then to expect that in an unjust, cowardly and voluptuous action there should be a mean, an excess and a deficiency; for at that rate there would be a mean of excess and deficiency, an excess of excess, and a deficiency of deficiency." 2

Being a non-permissible, as it pertains to some acts and passions, is wholly dependent upon time, place and circumstance. This last class is the *conditio-non-permissible*. Aristotle's list above consists of what he considers standing non-permissibles. For Aristotle the supreme value is well-being. This is the kind of life that the individual seeks, and it is not among the good things of life. The virtues (courage, temperance, thrift, etc.), receive their significance by reason of contributing to the supreme value. A reasonable being would theoretically choose these for themselves, but they are chosen, (in Aristotle's method), especially by reason of being contributory to, advancing the

1 - E. N. 1107a 10-15.

2 - Ibid., 1107a 15-23.

agent to, and being for the sake of well-being. From one point of view they are ends; from the other they are means to an end. But the contribution of the standing non-permissibles (theft, adultery etc.) is the same as that of excess or defect. They are obstacles, stumbling blocks, hindrances, which militate against well-being in like manner as excess or defect.

The realm of life's standing non-permissibles, as indicated by Aristotle¹ is practically identical with the "thou shalt nots" of the commandments of Moses, to wit: (in essence)

Thou shalt not kill (Aristotle "murder").

Thou shalt not commit adultery (Aristotle "adultery").

Thou shalt not steal (Aristotle "theft").

Thou shalt not bear false witness (Aristotle "spite" which induces this).

Thou shalt not covet (Aristotle "envy").²

These standing non-permissibles are what we may call the experienced bads in passion and action, constantly observed anti-values, for a time of peace. The aim in the prohibitions is the conservation of life, family, property, reputation, and other contributory values. These are suffi-

1 - Ibid, 1107a 10-15.

2 - Exodus, 20, 13-17.

ciently grievous to well-being that their prohibition is usually made a matter of the law of the land. If well-being is to be realized these must be avoided.

"They are actions and feelings which cannot be modified so as to form parts of an orderly character and life, but must be eradicated by education." 1

Whether or not the non-permissibles are always such, is a question that has already been partly answered. We can but say, in time of peace they are generally, almost always, such. In time of war, with victory as the goal, they would practically become the imperatives over against the enemy, for instance, for the patriotic Chinaman vs. the Japanese "invader." But for man the citizen, in time of peace, the situation is otherwise. If he be among those "having parents, children, wife, friends and fellow-citizens," his very having them creates certain values without which life would be intolerable. His very self is bound up with the well-being of his family, with their good name, with their material possessions in so far as such contribute to their well-being, with having the confidence, respect and good will of the members of the family in relation to each other. Whatever is inimical to the well-being of his family and

1 - J. D. Stewart, Op. Cit. Vol. 1, p 10.

2 - E. N. 1097b 10.

whoever trespasses against them, arouses the instincts of the possessor, among them anger, hatred, jealousy, desire for revenge. The non-permissibles are of that kind, are states and passions which threaten values, or deprive of values and in so doing arouse the passions and instincts which call into being "a state of war,"¹ if not of each against all, at least against the person who trespassed against the relevant values.

If we grant the existence of the aforesaid values (home, family, confidence of members of the family, life, liberty, private property, good name, etc.), and grant that trespass against or deprivation of such is a loss to the possessor, and will arouse his bellicose passions, thereby unsettling the peace of the community, and if there is agreement as to what constitutes trespass, the non-permissibles are always wrong. Exactly what will be a non-permissible among a given people at a given age depends of course upon their customs and values. From the viewpoint of Aristotle's method (as opposed to intuitionism which claims to directly perceive certain things to be "right" regardless of consequences), the non-permissibles are practically determined by definition, viz: Certain values are initially prized by the group. The group

1 - Hobbes Terminology.

consists of individuals of a kind. Forceful or deceitful deprivation of the values that they prize will be inimical to their well-being. They, the group, will in turn wreak vengeance upon the trespasser against value. The trespasser will in turn be deprived of his standing in the community. But what those values are, depends upon the community. Conjugal fidelity is with some people expected and required. Among the Eskimos (in the case of honored visitors) the case is said to be otherwise. Only to the extent that all people everywhere have the same standards, prize the same values, and react in the same manner to deprivation of their values, can a fixed table of standing non-permissibles be formulated. But actually, this table varies even as between citizens of the same community. It is in this particular realm, as in others, that specialized research in such fields as the hygiene of the individual, as well as the hygiene of the race, must come to the aid of ethics.

Otherwise stated, though the list of non-permissibles might be verbally the same, their content would vary as between land and land. Thus adultery may mean one thing in America and be a shade or two different in China or France. Each people may have a different shade of meaning for adultery, but all mean something by it which arouses their ire. The same applies in regard to what constitutes theft, envy, etc.

The same may be said of the permissibles, i.e. the virtues. Each country has a virtue with respect to fear and confidence, and we would possibly translate that virtue by the name of courage. But what is considered courage in one nation (Japan, for instance) might be denominated by another name in America. Likewise with regard to chastity. This leaves us with a table of permissibles (virtues) and a table of non-permissibles (vices) each of which we recognize by name as being operative in and with reference to some particular field of action. But what the content thereof may be in a particular case is hard to tell.

By the doctrine of the mean Aristotle would give definite content to a given virtue at a given time, determining for instance, just what should constitute liberality on a given occasion, by employing the technique for ascertaining the mean, and not by what may be the customary idea of liberality in the community.

Speaking again by way of the greatest possible generalization, passions, feelings, and actions, divide themselves into the following classes:

The *Conditio*-permissibles: such are the instincts and the general and usual activities of man, which require neither full expression nor full negation.

The Virtues: i.e. the ethically fully permissible. These are usually means, in exceptional cases maximum or minimum.

The Conditio-non-permissibles: Excess and defect at a given time or occasion (these vary).

The Standing Non-permissibles. These are generally permanent in a stable community.

c - Supplementary List of Means

(These means are related to the virtues (mesotes) given by Aristotle, but the shades of meaning in many cases vary from those explicitly set forth by Aristotle in his skeleton list).

<u>The Feeling, State, Action or Subject</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>The Mean</u>	<u>Defect</u>
Civility	Gushiness Overpoliteness	Courteousness Graciousness	Rudeness Ungraciousness
Friendly association with one's fellowmen	Familiarity	Sociability	Hermiticalness "Reclusiveness"
Affection for fellow men	Sentimentality Amorousness	Love Liking people	Acrimoniousness Antipathy
General attitude to- ward one's fellowmen	Apathy	Good will	Malice
Sympathy towards sins of fellowmen	Indifference Lack of firmness	Charitableness Mercifulness	Severity Shylockianism
Sympathy towards mis- ery of fellowmen	Soft-hearted	Compassion	Indifference
Attitude toward one's beliefs	Credulity	Faith	Despair
Confidence in the future well-being of mankind	Utopianism	Hope	Despondency Desperation

<u>The Feeling, State Action or Subject</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>The Mean</u>	<u>Defect</u>
Habitual attitude of confidence or despair	Optimism (blind to thorns)	Healthy realism (every rose has its thorn, but aren't the roses sweet)	Pessimism (sees only thorns)
Reaction to offenses against me and mine	Moral indifference	Forgiveness upon contrition	Revenge "Grudgeousness"
Appreciativeness	Over-grateful	Gratitude	Insensibility to benefits
Regard for our fellow- men	Homage	Respect	Derision
Recognition of merits of others	Flattery	Appreciativeness	Disparagement (to damn with faint praise)
Attitude toward own sins	Self-humiliation	Contrition Desire to amend	Obdurateness
In matters of delicacy	Squeamishness	Decency	Vulgarity
Attitude toward criminality	Severity	Justice	Leniency
Sensibility or insensi- bility over life's roughness	Hysterical Impulsiveness	Serenity Equanimity	Pachydermousness Callousness

<u>The Feeling, State Action or Subject</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>The Mean</u>	<u>Defect</u>
Elation of spirits	Silliness Hilarity	Geniality Happyheartedness	Mopishness Gloominess
Satisfaction with our lot	Complacency	(Contentment for the present) (Interim Contentment)	Gloominess
Self-regard	Conceit Pretension	Modesty Self-respect	Self-abasement Self-humiliation Self-belittlement
Caution	Unenterprising	Discretion	Impetuosity
Sense of admiration	To be dazzled	Sense of wonder	Blase Nil admirari
Personal pride	Vanity	Dignity	Self-depreciation
Making display of one- self and accomplishments	Ostentatiousness	Naturalness	"Hiding one's light under a bushel"
Insistence on our rights (self-expression)	Domineering attitude	Self-assertion	Servility Backwardness
Evaluation of efforts of others	Uncritical laudation	Discriminating- appreciation	Disparagement or Depreciation
Attitude toward customs differing from ours	All-tolerant	Tolerant	Intolerance

<u>Feeling, State, Action or Subject</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>The Mean</u>	<u>Defect</u>
Giving vent to our emotions and feelings	Impulsiveness Sentimentality	Equanimity Poise	Apathy Lethargy
Accuracy in conversa- tion	Overstatement Boasting	Veracity Truthfulness	Belittlement Understating of facts
Concern with self as regards present and future	Only with present (an excess)	The whole life span considered	Only with future (also excess)
The sexual expression of man	Promiscuity	Purity	Prudery-apathy
Conversation	Monologuing (talking only)	Conversing (synthesis)	Non-communicative- ness (listening only)
Attitude toward enter- prise or causes	Fanaticism	Heartiness Enthusiasm	Indifference Half-heartedness

The foregoing list of virtues are means, and are among those commonly prized in our own day and age. But in saying so we are still measurably in the dark as to what the specific content of a particular virtue may be. And possibly no two individuals would agree completely as to content on a given occasion. There would, however, be the agreement that in each field of action there is, with reference to a telos, generally a range which is excess and another range which is defect, regardless of what name either the excess or the defect might be called by. And in like manner there is a mean, with reference to the telos sought, for which the name may vary. We are not essentially concerned with the customary content of either the vices or the virtues. The terms themselves could, under different circumstances or by different persons, be used variably. Nor are we especially concerned with the names given to excess, defect, and the mean in these different fields. To give names to them that are suitable and agreeable to all, is manifestly well-nigh an impossibility. But that for an agent with his well-being in mind there is in a given circumstance generally a range of excess, which would militate against him, and a range of defect which to choose would be a vice, and also a mean which is telos fulfilling, to that there is common assent. The particular term by which the mean is designated is not thereby prevented from

being used disparagingly in a given context through euphemism or irony. But the vices as well as the virtues have in each case a definite quantitative referent, which is either telos-fulfilling or non-telos-fulfilling. The non-telos-fulfilling is generally either excess or defect. The telos-fulfilling is a mean. The supplementary list is thus not merely a confession or a recording of what the writer in his day and age approves in conduct and attitudes, but he seeks to name the excess, the mean, and the defect, in various subjects and fields, feelings, passions and activities. Thus, in the matter of civility there is an excess which may be denominated gushiness or over-politeness, and which is offensive, as is the civility of a Japanese citizen if adopted by an American citizen. There is also a lack of civility which is (positively stated) rudeness, and (negatively stated) ungraciousness. There is also the mean in civility which we may call graciousness and which expresses itself in courteousness.

Thus, throughout the list we have in each instance a theoretical range of potentiality, of possibility, the outer reaches of the range being teleological excess or defect, the telos-fulfilling lying in a mean. But in saying that absence of, or too little of civility is rudeness or ungraciousness, we are not giving the entire content of rudeness. Rudeness is absence of civility, negatively.

It is also ungraciousness. But is an action (as regards its civility) rude, when it is simply lacking courtesy? Or is disparagement only lack of appreciation for the merits of others? Or vulgarity merely lack of appropriateness in matters of delicacy? In each case we must acknowledge that absence (defect) is a vice. But it is also obvious that the vice has in each case a positive element in it which is not brought out from the viewpoint of Aristotle's method, but which the character of the individual unconsciously supplies. Mere absence or defect of civility, or of lack of appreciation of the merits of others, or lack of appropriateness in matters of delicacy, is rather associated with ignorance, with lack of proper training, or with faulty environment. But rudeness, disparagement and vulgarity are generally considered as something positive, having (in the case of rudeness and disparagement) as their objective, insult to or detraction from the worth of another, possibly with a view of adding luster to himself.

Here then we are faced with the fact that even though with us, as with the Greeks, there is common and frequent reference to "too much" and "too little," yet the vices are thought of as embodying more than a mere choice of too much or too little, as having in them a positive element. This is evidence that our thinking along ethical

lines is after all not in the Aristotelian mold. We have left behind the "tri-departmentalized" psychological ethics of Plato together with more complex psychological ethics of Aristotle, and instead, normally do our thinking on the more abstract and metaphysical levels, except and unless we are concerned with such fundamental and basic values as health of the body, reputation, and living in peace with our fellowmen. The mean begins with the promise of dawn, but when the lower ethical values are achieved, the point is reached wherein we can no longer speak in terms of the mean of the individual passions, but must rather speak and deal in terms of instinctive response units, without knowing the instinct ingredients, or else in terms of attitude toward possible situations or factors such as may concern us. On the instinctive side the dawn-brightness then fades into a physiological mist and we must speak and think in terms of the mean in possible attitudes, either on the part of the attitude itself, or of its response activity. Instances of the latter kind will be obvious in the supplementary list of means.

But the question still remains: In becoming habituated to these attitudes and in choosing these means, to what extent "ought" correspondence to one's social environment, a part of which environment are the mores of the community, determine one's conduct, especially when one's

conduct may be of a pioneering variety and which is liable to invite and arouse the antagonism of those that stand pat for the status quo.

James H. Tufts characterizes the stages in the ethical development of the race or individual as being "from custom to conscience, from the morality of the group to the personal morality of the individual."¹ In this, passive acceptance and compliance with the mores of the group gives way to reasoned standards or to a reasoned set of values. Voluntary personal choice and interest take the place of unconscious identification with the group and its welfare. This results in a conflict between the authority interests and habits of the group which stands for stability, custom and order, against the individual who is concerned with independence, with the interests of the individual, with what is conceived by the pioneering individual to be progress or reconstruction. Shall the pioneering individual then seek well-being with reference to adaptation to his environment, to the status quo, or shall his concern be the actualization of his potentiality regardless of friction with the upholders of the status quo?

1 - Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, Chapter V written by Mr. Tufts, Revised edition, 1932.

d - Relation of the Mean to Synthesis.

The doctrine of synthesis has been presented, not as a destruction but as a fulfillment of the doctrine of the mean. Aristotle's position is that the mean is that point or degree or quantity in a passion or in its expression at which it is telos-fulfilling. Theoretically, apart from concrete situations, and granting the recognition of the passion that plays at least the major role, this procedure accounts for what we may term the ground virtues, skeleton virtues, the virtues in embryo on their quantitative side. These are in abstract the means of the respective passions or of their expression. A perusal of Aristotle's list of the passions will reveal nearly the entire list to consist of conditionally permissibles, in connection with each of which there is a virtue. The specific amount or degree of any one of these passions that shall constitute a virtue on any particular occasion is determined by the doctrine of the mean. We have here a simple basing of a virtue upon the passion that has been aroused, with telos-fulfilling as the norm. The good for an end is not thereby excluded from being good in itself, or from being chosen for its own sake by reason of prior habituation thereto. It is evident that in the abstract there is a virtue for each passion, but to say that a

given virtue is nothing but the mean of some one passion, in the nature of the case, leads us astray.

In view of the fact that in the nature of the passions the majority of the virtues are means between two extremes, both of which extremes may be bads on a specific occasion, the position can be taken that virtue is a synthesis in a variety of senses.

(1) Virtue can be regarded as a synthesis of the bads which constitute the extremes, as if the union or synthesis of ethical negatives resulted in an ethical good, two disvalues in synthesis yielding a value. This view does justice neither to the mean nor to Aristotle's position.

Nicolai Hartmann thinks that Aristotle was on the way to¹ inferring virtues from their relation to anti-values. But in that he is mistaken.

(2) A second possibility is to regard virtue as a synthesis, the virtue in two or more conditio-permissibles, an instance of such being what we have termed thrift and liberality, the synthesis of which would then be the ultimate virtue with reference to money.

(3) A third possibility is the view that behind each excess and defect there is hidden a value and that the mean

1 - Nicolai Hartmann, Op. Cit. Vol. ii, p 412. "Aristotle was evidently on the way towards inferring the character of values from their relation to disvalues."

is the synthesis of those concealed values. This is the view of Nicolai Hartmann. But this procedure, as Hartmann employs it, turns out to be at bottom a synthesis of a healthy passion (a moral pre-requisite), with the control of that passion a moral virtue. Instead of being a synthesis of two tendencies, it turns out to be but the control of one.

Hartmann's position is that "behind the Aristotelian virtues there are in fact two values always concealed, and these manifest a distinct oppositional character."¹ These virtues are "complex values which never consist of onesided enhancements of single valuational elements alone, but of inner organic combinations of two materially contrasted elements" having in them "the unification of such elements as have a tendency to go to a one sided extreme and to exclude each other . . . Both sides of an alternative are always required of man at the same time, . . . not until there is a synthesis of the values in one and the same disposition of the man is there real virtue."²

1 - Ibid., p 414.

2 - Ibid., p 415.

The foregoing would lead one to assume that synthesis, in Hartmann's sense, would be a synthesis of such conditio-permissibles as appear to oppose each other, as for instance what we have termed the spending and the hoarding instincts. But such does not appear to be the case. The writer concludes that the idea of synthesis when applied to the Aristotelian conception of virtue and the virtues is unsuccessful.

Hartmann says "In juxtaposition to σωφροσύνη (temperance, self-control)¹ stand ἀκολασία (licentiousness, the tendency to go to extremes) and ἀναισθησία (apathy); only in contrast to the former of these is it properly self-control; in contrast to the latter it is the fully developed capacity to react emotionally, to live in the affections. In contrast to δειλία (cowardice) bravery is spirited endurance, in contrast to οραρότης (foolhardiness) it is deliberate foresight, cool presence of mind. Seen against ὀργιλότης (irascibility) πραότης (mildness) is mildness, but seen against ἀοργησία (lack of passion) it is the capacity to be righteously indignant" etc. 2

According to the above then, σωφροσύνη has as its first element self-control over against licentiousness, and as its second element "the fully developed capacity to react emotionally, to live in the affections." The synthesis of these two elements is the essence of self-control. Likewise bravery has as its components: Spirited endurance and cool presence of mind. Hence at bottom and in substance

1 - English translations are mine.

2 - Nicolai Hartmann, Op. Cit. p 414.

Hartmann's synthesis is a synthesis of, we may say, a lusty (healthy) passion (one positive element) and the control of that passion as the second. He seems perturbed by the fact of Aristotle "installing" virtues between two bads, as if there were two disvalues for each value. But to be more specific, there are not two disvalues for each value, but what is more, and from Hartmann's viewpoint worse, there are two graduating ranges of disvalues for each positive value, as manifested by the diagram on page 47. Hartmann seeks the specific value corresponding to each disvalue, and construes the mean as being the synthesis of, and embodying in itself, the values hidden in the excess and the defect. But when he comes to carrying this out, the synthesis turns out to be at bottom a matter of an individual possessing a lusty (healthy) passion, and acting upon the mean in that passion.

In the case of two opposing instincts, such as those which Ross denominates the hoarding instinct and the spending instinct, it is doubtful if a legitimate synthesis can be constructed. For manifestly a man cannot walk in two directions at the same time. Thrift is something distinct in itself. It in no way has liberality as its antinomy. A man's liberality is in fact limited by his thrift. A man may be thrifty for the purpose of being liberal.

He may hoard for a while in order to acquire the wherewithal with which to be liberal. A synthesis of thrift and liberality can hardly be spoken of.

But granting Hartmann's conception of synthesis as the union of two contrasted elements, each tending to go to a one-sided extreme (which union he does not demonstrate) Hartmann would have the two opposing tendencies limit each other. His concept of the good is "the good in itself," each being such apart from utility or teleology. He must therefore have a particular instance of his concept of the good in itself (a mental picture of it) to serve as a telos in the mutual limiting on the part of the tendencies that would go to a one-sided extreme, if and when an instance of the good in itself is to be actualized. In that case he has a telos as dialectically effective as the telos of Aristotle. If the concept of the good in itself is not a telos which determines the respective bounds of the contrasting elements, then we must hold that the contrasting elements (passions) mutually limit each other. But in such a limiting, the stronger element to which the individual has a bent, would inevitably dominate and control the weaker, and itself preempt the field, a fact commonly experienced and observed. If these tendencies are not regarded as limiting each other, or if each is regarded as being self-limiting with reference to human good or

the good in itself, it remains that a telos must impose a limit upon each passion individually, or else in the struggle of the passions determine which shall triumph on the occasion, and generally, what concession one shall make to the other and to what degree. Thus, ultimately, they do limit each other but are limited by a telos. Hartmann believes that:

"What Aristotle so strongly felt in the lower moral values, without being able to formulate it, was just this, that all valuational elements, taken in isolation, have in them a point beyond which they are dangerous, that they are tyrannical and that for the fulfillment of their meaning in their real carrier there is always a counterweight. Because of this profoundly justified feeling, he assigned virtue to no one of these elements but to their synthesis." 1

The writer finds this assumption to be unwarranted. Hartmann ignores Aristotle's telos. Aristotle rather "strongly felt" that in potential response activity there is a point or degree which is telos fulfilling, and that if the telos is overshoot or undershot, the domain of disvalue is entered. Aristotle's concern is with the overshooting and the falling short of the telos, and it is this which determines the "dangerousness" of the action. For Aristotle the telos limits the activity. He does not have a mutual limiting of opposing tendencies. Aristotle has a limiting telos rather than fulfillment of meaning through

1 - Nicolai Hartmann, Op. Cit. Vol. 11 p 424.

counterweight, the telos giving meaning to the limitation. Instead of conceiving of a value as attaining its maximum when merged with its axiological counterweight, it seems more in accord with empirical observation that tendencies must be mutually respected.

We thus agree with Hartmann when he says:

"Only a sense of justice which is at the same time loving, only a brotherly love which also considers the far distant, only a pride which could be likewise humble, could be valid as an ideal of moral conduct." ¹

But we are here thrown back upon Plato's conception of the unity of the virtues as expressed in the concept of justice, and we must go farther still and say, nonsensical though it may sound, a virtue must itself be virtuous, must respect the other virtues or lose its own virtue. A virtue must honor and respect its neighbor virtues, must love them as itself, must not trespass against a neighbor virtue. Thus justice must not only be loving, but to be justice at all it must be mindful of and respectful toward all other relevant virtues such as decency, self-control, thrift, etc. In fact, the concept of what is the essence of one virtue is linked up with that of others. And what is to determine the essence of these other virtues? Unless we shall offer to humanity in a will-to-power motivated world an empirically quite fruitless concept of

2 - Ibid, Vol. 11, p 425.

"the good in itself" which is not for the sake of anything else, and the essence of which concept has been taken from now here a little, now there a little, and shall endeavor to awaken, inspire, or what seems more remote still, REASON humanity into a passionate desire to actualize the "good in itself," we must resort to grounding ethics upon man's essential nature, this resulting in teleological virtues. The concern of our age is not that of managing life's overflow, but rather that of acquiring some degree of fullness on the basis of human potentiality.

Hartmann conceives that all values, including the moral, are:

"genuine in their own right, possess their peculiar autonomy, which can be diminished by no kind of dependence upon anything else. The whole meaning of the realm of values, so far as it is a world of ideal self-maintaining entities, stands or falls with this foundation principle . . . what is beautiful is beautiful for its own sake; what is comical is comical in itself; what is noble or lovable is noble or lovable intrinsically. All reference back to something else for the sake of which it is what it is, is fantastic speculation." 1

His general position is that all values, including the moral, constitute an absolute realm of essences which man discovers apriori, which values are independent and autonomous, and of which values the world is the depository. Each value is its own ought. Thereby are united Plato's conception of the good (the idea of the good) and Kant's

1 - Ibid, p 29.

"ought." That position is theoretically permissible. It is ideal.

Aristotle's position is that man has a potentiality capable of actualization, and that man is of a certain kind on the whole, and must act as of a certain kind as a whole, and that unless he do so, he will perish and will not achieve his potentiality. Aristotle's virtues are for man as of a kind, on the basis of his essential nature, determined by his potentiality, having its actualization as the goal. Man's potentiality actualized is virtue supreme. The individual virtues are the building stones of the total structure of virtue. The concern of the doctrine of the mean is the actualization of the individual building stones out of which alone the structure of virtue complete, i.e. well-being, can be built, the telos determining the shaping of the stones individually and with reference to each other and to the whole.

Hartmann's virtues are apparently considered apart from a telos. But to actualize such a virtue it is necessary to envision it, which latter then serves as both a dialectical as well as a practical telos. Hence the question: What shall constitute the essence and what shall determine the concept of the good in itself?

Aristotle's virtues participate in the idea of telos-fulfilling. They contribute to the actualization of the

potential. Hartmann's virtues participate in the good after the manner of Plato's conception of participation in the good. Their recognition constitutes at the same time an ought to their actualization, which ought is autonomous and "for the sake of nothing else." His "good in itself" is a category. Can we divorce it from all teleological considerations? The writer believes NOT. For we cannot conceive of a good in itself which would be considered such apart from such factors as excellence, difficulty of achievement or attainment, rarity, usefulness in the majority of cases, etc. Hartmann's good in itself, divorced as it is from consequences and from the nature of man qua man, is a category different from that of Aristotle's virtues and the *summum bonum* for the sake of which and in relation to which the virtues are virtues.

Hartmann's virtues are, after all, the products of experience to which the various cultures and civilizations have contributed their bits. They are complex. To actualize them we must have in mind their content. That mind content (concept) then serves as a *telos*. For its actualization we must let that *telos* impose the limit upon the elements in the synthesis, or, as it actually turns out in Hartmann's case, the limit upon the healthy passion, eventually singly considered.

Dealing in terms of value concepts alone, an instance of the good in itself as an abstraction must specifically be a compound or synthesis of abstractions in which there is a counterbalancing of axiological factors, in such proportions as one's idea of the good in itself may warrant and prescribe. A value concept is inevitably a synthesis. But applying the synthesis idea to Aristotle's mean results in a mere paraphrasing and weakening of Aristotle's doctrine, it being at bottom but the imposition of a limit upon an unlimited, with the added weakness that the limit is to be self-imposed by the counterbalancing of opposing tendencies, or if not that, then the envisioned concept of this particular instance of the good in itself serving as a telos. The fact that a virtue of Aristotle can be complexly construed is incidental. That it is between two bads lies in the very nature of the instinctive endowment of man of which energy we need now more, now less.

We conclude that Hartmann's imputation of the idea of synthesis to the Aristotelian virtues in a humanistic ethics is unsuccessful. Aristotle achieves the virtues, not by counterbalancing opposing tendencies, but by having the telos impose a limit upon each passion as encountered. From the viewpoint of Hartmann's conception of the good in itself, considered apart from a telos, other than the concept itself, a synthesis of abstractions is inevitable, is

permissible, and as Hartmann states, there is a dialectical possibility, and for one so inclined there is the "tremendous temptation" to undertake an ultimate and final synthesis and "by a bold stroke - take by storm the whole starry realm of moral values with the aid of a heaven-assailing dialectic . . . to pile synthesis on synthesis up to the highest and all-embracing synthesis, in which the essence of the good must needs be fulfilled and must maintain a unity of meaning."¹

For Aristotle the unity of meaning in moral values is achieved through the potentiality-actuality principle. He has a telos. By the telos-determined mean, the various passions, individually or in combination, are limited with reference to man's well-being. Concern for the latter is thrust upon man by the pressure of life. The telos achieves and retains unity of meaning in all the virtues, carves out the virtues with reference to the telos and the other virtues, and leaving aside whether or not such virtues may each and all participate in the good in itself, they at least all participate in the good for man, in society, for all of life. The individual habituated to the choice of the mean will thus, in acting upon the mean as a voluntary

1 - Nicolai Hartmann, Op. Cit., Vol. 11, p 421.

self determination, have determined himself to the virtues with reference to all his passions.

When that, (after the manner of incompleteness and imperfection of mortals), is achieved, then a number of virtues may be actualized side by side in a given individual at a given time. In a given transaction a man may at the same time be just, honest, goodtempered and courageous, the virtues naturally making room for each other because of the meaning-unifying telos and mean.

P A R T IV

CONCLUSION AND ALTERNATIVE

a - Conclusion.

Notwithstanding the apparently central position of the mean in Aristotle's Ethics, the mean is not directly and distinctly the norm of Aristotle's method. Telos-fulfilling conduct is the norm, and we may say that the mean is treated as the norm of telos-fulfilling conduct on the quantitative side. The appearance of the mean as the norm is a matter of the virtues on the quantitative side being means, and hence the mean takes the central position which the norm occupies in other methods. But telos-fulfilling conduct is ultimately the norm and criterion.

Basing ethics upon what Aristotle called the "passions" is, on the quantitative side, the only thing upon which the virtues can be based. Basing a virtue

upon a single passion or impulse makes possible an accounting for the virtues in simple terms, but such accounting is inadequate, human virtue sharing in the complexity of human nature itself, whose physiology and psychology we know and understand but in part and see as through the proverbial glass, darkly. The doctrine of the mean within the framework of Aristotelian teleology is of sufficient clarity and adequacy to serve as a "premise for action."¹ Other impulses are linked up with the major one and play a supporting and sympathetic role, without whose contribution the virtue would be crude, crass and barren.

An examination and comparison of Aristotle's list of passions, with the lists of instincts given by modern psychologists, definitely establishes two things: that man is equipped with a dynamic something which latter is the referent of the passions of Aristotle, the instincts of (for instance) James and McDougall, the "appetites" of Chadbourne. It further establishes that the above referent (instincts, passions, appetites) are not distinguishable with clarity, as are for instance the senses (smell, sight, etc.), hence the disagreement among psychologists themselves. The latter indiscernibility is reflected in

1 - The writer is indebted for this term to Prof. Howard D. Roelofs of the University of Cincinnati, who employed it in his lectures. The writer has never seen it in print.

humanistic ethics, in that the complete basing of a virtue upon a single passion presupposes the isolation of that passion and the possibility of dealing with it separately, of treating it as a simple. And further, it is commonly agreed that tendencies may be manipulated (witness the conditioned reflex of Pawlow). Several instincts may be aroused simultaneously, and, as Aristotle's doctrine of habituation explains, (and McDougall's theory of the sentiments) habits may so condition responses in one individual that another's judgment of either his ethical motive or of the instincts involved in a given actualized virtue, would be far afield.

The injection of an anecdote may here not be amiss. Three intellectuals were staying at a Maine hunting camp. The stove in their cabin was four feet from the floor, truly an unusual position. Speculation began as to the "why." One delivered himself as follows: These woodsmen are shrewd. They know that thus the heat strikes the roof sooner and the circulation of the air is so quickened that the cabin heats faster. The second opined that the stove had been elevated so that sleepers would get the pure pine-aroma-filled air at night. The third reasoned that the stove was elevated so that a good supply of wood could be placed underneath. That evening they appealed to the owner of the cabin for the "true" explanation. He explained

with a grin, after having heard their opinions: It is like this, "When I came down stream with the boat this morning, two lengths of stove pipe rolled off into the river. I had to put the stove up like it is to get the pipe through the roof so that you fellows wouldn't be smoked out tonight."

An *aposteriori* accounting for an actualized virtue is liable to a like misjudgment as to its physiological basis. In the case of the elevated stove all three explanations are rational but each is far afield as to the "final cause," and is incidental thereto.

The charge of rationalization in the case of the mean is thus a weighty one. The virtues listed by Aristotle were existent at the time in all their Hellenistic fullness. He gives a list of passions upon which they appear to be based, and the active imagination, when "the will to believe" is present, clothes the skeleton (whose real identity may be still uncertain) not only with flesh and blood, but also with the particular style of dress of the virtues, i.e. accordance with the aesthetic taste of the age. But for an individual to create the virtues *de novo* out of the passions, singly considered, with Aristotle's doctrine of the mean as his guide, would be to achieve at one stroke what only time and the fruitage of

experience can achieve. The virtues grow out of life's varied experiences. They are not discovered by reasoning. But once virtues have been achieved or envisioned, they are at once rationalized into the various systems by the particular method employed. The virtues, even on their instinctive side, are inter-related and intermeshed, as Plato senses when he ultimately embraces all virtue in justice. Man's complexity thwarts the simplification and the simple quantification of virtue as well as of the single virtues, at every turn. On the basis of the classical methodologies there are five approaches each of which accounts for the virtues, serves as a guide for conduct and, within the scope and intents of its author and with the field to itself, has been deemed a satisfactory solution of the ethical problem, at least, we presume by its author.

Aristotle's mean as a device or doctrine for accounting for and achieving moral values in contemplated experience, is on the concrete and elementary level, rudimentary in nature, serving as a point of departure to the levels of the abstract and the more complex. But without the concrete basis, the abstract in the realm of the ethical evanesces into nothingness. Man's drives, instincts and impulses, morally indifferent though they be initially, constitute the basis, without which the ethical values are

impossible of achievement. But so inter-related are such passions as fear, anger, hate, and desire for self preservation as examples, that an *aposteriori* analysis of the instinctive element upon which a given virtue is based, is exceedingly difficult.

ON THE MERIT SIDE of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean may be ranged the factors that follow. His mean is a telos-determined mean. The telos is based upon the potentiality-actuality principle as applied to man as a kind. Acts that actualize man's potentiality are of a kind. The universals instanced in the majority of the cases of such conduct is that they are means between excess and defect. But the value of the doctrine does not end there, for the technique for ascertaining the mean within the framework of Aristotle's system is such that the search for the mean results in finding the telos-fulfilling point or region in the potential range of expression which itself may be an extreme for the agent based upon his potentiality.

The doctrine is further based upon individual man as of a kind, and is concerned with the expression of the passions innate in him. Protagorean relativism is thereby avoided. Taking these passions individually, with reference to the doctrine, we are enabled to name the virtues connected with the individual passions. Man's native endowment on

the physiological side is thus considered with reference to man's total essential nature, resulting in an ethic which is concerned with the development of his full latent possibility, viz: a humanistic ethic. Man's instinctive side is neither condemned or suppressed, but each tendency is permitted expression to the extent that it contributes to the telos, to the well-being of the whole man as an individual. This in turn furthers the well-being of the part.

Observation and experience enable us to say confidently that in contemplated action there is a too much and also a too little with reference to a telos. But we err if, when and in so far as we hold that a virtue as encountered in action or as completed, is merely and only an instance of the mean of that particular passion whose virtue happens to bear the same name. Thus, if we grant that the virtue (Mesotes) of the spending instinct is liberality, it does not follow that a given instance of liberality is merely and only an instance of the person's spending instinct being aroused and his choosing and acting on the mean in it. His being liberal and choosing the mean in the spending instinct may be but the outward aspect of a complex process. On the motivational side, his self-regarding instinct, the instinct of self-preservation, hate, fear, or love, may each be involved. To even speak of the spending instince being involved may, in the nature

of the case, be far afield. But even so, the agent, regardless of his motivation, may yet, when it comes to handing out the cash, feel that his telos requires liberality in his gift, and he may employ the technique for ascertaining the mean in determining the figure of his gift, and he may be said to be acting on the mean of the spending instinct. But in so far as by Aristotle's doctrine we are enabled to name and describe the virtues of the various instincts, thereby furthering a humanistic ethics, and in so far as it enables us to recognize and name the virtues in connection with ranges of response possibility for which we may not be able to give an accounting on the instinctive side,¹ (factors such as acquired kinds of attitudes over against specific kinds of situations), and to give content to such virtues on new occasions, the doctrine of the mean is helpful.

Aristotle bases a virtue upon a passion in his search for the universal of telos-fulfilling conduct. But for the Greeks already the virtues had acquired embellishments which have no connection with the mean and which are the expression of the particular aesthetic taste of the Greeks plus the accumulated fruitage of experience. The mean in importance is overshadowed by the telos that

1 - cf. - Supplementary list of means, pp 125,126,127,128, Thesis.

determines it. Telos-fulfilling conduct is the norm. In a sense that fact makes the mean but another name for the telos-fulfilling, causing the mean to come close to entering the realms of the insignificant. But that is forestalled by the fact of the mean being the quantitative universal of the telos-fulfilling, serving both as a means for achieving and an aid for understanding its nature. A difference of degree in quantity makes a difference of degree in quality, hence: no quantity, no quality. The idea of telos-fulfilling is paralyzed by inertia except for a technique for manipulating the matter which shall actualize it. The manipulation of the matter to achieve the form sought is the concern of the mean.

The doctrine makes a definite contribution as an aid to conduct in enabling the agent to classify contemplated conduct under such heads as non-permissibles, condition-permissibles, fully permissibles, etc. It enables him to put a principle into his conduct which imposes a limit upon the variety of his tendencies regardless if such be simple or complex, resulting in a harmonious whole. To ascribe the idea of synthesis to the virtues as conceived of by Aristotle, is beside the point. At best the synthesis idea is incidental. The fact of the mean avoiding extremes does not therefore make the mean a synthesis either of those extremes

or of the values supposedly concealed behind those extremes. The effort to do so (to ascribe that motive to Aristotle) was shown to be unsuccessful. A given extreme, maximum, is not always a bad. It is only teleologically such, from the viewpoint of an end. In a concept of the good in itself a synthesis is in the nature of the case successful. It becomes a synthesis of abstractions, of concepts. In the nature of the case there is nothing to prevent a synthesizing of one valuational element with another indefinitely, culminating in a final ultimate all-embracing synthesis, after the manner that Plato's Justice theoretically embraces all the virtues at the same time retaining and giving a unity of meaning.

From the viewpoint of Aristotle's doctrine, however, the telos well-being unifies meaning, and its actualization results in an actualization of all the virtues, of the virtue in each passion, each of which has been limited by the telos (as an ideal) and each of which contributes to the actualization of the telos. It promotes a telos-conditioned yea-saying to total man.

ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE of Aristotle's doctrine an imposing array of defects can be cited. The mean being telos-determined, we must conclude that Aristotle's doctrine of the mean as an aid to conduct stands or falls with his telos. If the telos be a misrepresentation, the mean is all the more an instrument of error. It has been earlier shown that the mean could equally well be employed by hedonism and other ethical isms, and to the writer it seems surprising that it has not been. It is not the fact of a telos which the writer questions but the particular telos of Aristotle. Hence the well-nigh deification of reason, the absence of an adequate doctrine of volition, the scant place given to intuition, must alike be charged against the account of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. Aristotle's volition is reason-determined. Reason and will are practically identical. Reason and intuition are merged. Man is the slave of his reason. The ego has nothing to say. Although he speaks of involuntary actions as such as are determined from without, and where the agent contributes nothing, and voluntary actions as those which originate from within, yet it is reason which is enthroned within and which "is the man." Hence man is reason determined.

The intuitive element is almost completely lacking. When he says "the decision rests with perception" in the case of ascertaining the mean, it is evidently a matter of

"seeing" the mean in an actual situation which allows of perception, after both the too much and the too little have already been perceived.

The element of standardization is paralyzing. The kind is indeed one, the universal man as a kind, viz: "manness" is a reality, as much as the universal oak or oakness. But within the kind are still other kinds between which are variations as distinct and real as between Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, as one kind of a kind, and the illiterate hewers of stone and drawers of water as another kind of a kind. For a Socrates to follow a standardizing doctrine of the mean with reference to his well-being in the society of his day, would have deprived posterity of knowing Socrates. He was among the blessed despisers of well-being in society, without which despising posterity would be the poorer. The actualization of the potential was not his well-being in society, unless we consider well-being in total disregard of the contemporary generation. But well-being considered apart from society, in spite of society, and with total disregard of material good (instruments), is contrary to Aristotle's definition thereof.

At the other extreme stand those of meager ability, the actualization of whose potentialities, even with the goodwill of their fellowmen, still is not well-being. For theirs must be a state of discontent, as they perceive

themselves, by reason of lack of native endowment, deprived of the goods shared by the middle and upper strata of potentiality, together with being deprived of the wherewithal for actualizing their desires. Hence the mean is in a sense the doctrine for those in the middle class of potentiality who actualize their potentiality amidst a generation that is at least not antagonistic to them. The mean is here a standardizer wherein those of meager ability cannot achieve well-being, and wherein Socrates, in achieving well-being, would be "mediocrized." Socrates' potentiality is such that its actualization will bring him a well-being which is such by definition only. Actualization of potentiality is present. But such actualization leaves out the element of contemporary goodwill, stops the ears of the present generation against him, and gives him the hemlock.

Unless some principle other than well-being (in the case of Socrates the desire to "know what I don't know") be present, - present in the form of a passion, a burning desire, even apart from desire for well-being, - the man's potentiality will in all possibility remain unactualized. Self-actualization made a direct goal in life appears to be less effective than making it so indirectly. For instance, being spurred on by the pressure of need for basic goods such as shelter, family, prestige, etc. may be the prime incentive in the acquisition of which the larger

good, Aristotelian well-being, is achieved. Socrates and his kind appear motivated by desires other than that of actualizing potentiality. Regard for well-being from the viewpoint of receiving the acclaim of their fellowmen is out of the picture. Were it in the picture, Socrates might have been a congenial entertainer of his contemporaries, and might have left posterity a Socratic version of "How to win friends and influence people." Actualizing his potentiality came about through his quest for truth. But to what end truth? Ultimately truth in regard to human well-being, we may say, for the rank and file. The recklessness of Socrates, the "madness" of Nietzsche while in his prime, the extreme pessimism of Schopenhauer, which resulted not only in "The World as Will and Idea" but also in his diatribe against women, were the result of motivational forces far superior in strength to the desire to actualize their potentialities. The latter appears rather incidental to the former. The former achieved the latter.

On the other hand, if the potentiality-actuality doctrine is applied to those capable of little else than menial labor, their actualization leaves them minus well-being. But they participate in manness. Others who also participate in manness have greater potentiality. In consequence, on the basis of reciprocity, the latter's share of life's goods is larger. But each is an individual

sharing in manness, each is one. This finds expression in the utilitarian principle "each to count for one, no one to count for more than one," and which has happiness as its conscious goal. Participation in manness further issues in a doctrine of pseudo-equality, which for theoretical purposes would eliminate and gloss over the fact of kindness within the kind, and ought on that basis (in view of a practical limit as to what any one individual can consume) to issue in a like sharing of this world's goods, in communal living as opposed to competitive enterprise such as has larger private ownership as its goal. This seems to be at the root of a communistic ethic.

Aside from an ethic of communism or an ethic of socialism, such as for practical purposes results in a more equitable sharing on the basis of an individual participation in manness, it remains that those of meager potentiality share so meagerly in the material goods of life,- are so haunted by the specters of hunger, unemployment, etc.,- are so crippled by temporary reversals,- that we cannot pronounce them as participating in well-being. This, to the writer, appears as a justification and a necessity for confronting an ethic of humanism with an ethic of utilitarianism and individualistic ethic with a communistic ethic.

An ethic based upon the fact that in the broad wide sense an individual responds to stimuli from within and from without as he does, and that he cannot otherwise, is within limits a part truth (Spinoza's determinism has made it the whole truth) which in turn supports the theory that the meagerly talented individual cannot become the Biblical five talented man, that the kinds within the kind are insurmountable realities. The meagerly talented are in a situation wherein the actualization of their potentialities still leaves them without the ability to acquire the physical goods which Aristotle (and we) deem as necessary equipment to well-being, and which consigns them to a hand to mouth existence such that the fact of kindness prevents one from pronouncing them as possessors of well-being. In their case also, the potentiality-actuality principle as pertains to the person individually, leaves him without the well-being which other kinds within the kind¹ know, and which the latter kind would not and could not pronounce as well-being.

1 - It can here be objected that we do the individual an injustice by dealing with him as of a kind, or even as of a kind within the larger kind; that each individual is different, down to the last person; that we must ultimately deal with the individual as is, without labeling him with a kind-tag; that kinds are a myth. This objection can in one sense be sustained. But sustaining this objection we are yet confronted with the

The larger kindness, we conclude, is the binding link between the kinds within the kinds. But the kinds within the kinds are so diverse that on the basis of the potentiality-actuality principle part can achieve well-being and part cannot. The fact of man-kindness cries out against that situation. The abundantly talented are apt to bless that order and bid the meagerly talented: Be content, or else to do as they, the abundantly talented did, which, in the nature of the case, is impossible. The latter fathers

fact that there are differentiae within the human race, (other than physical and language), which make possible logical division and without which division we would be utterly at sea. This logical division can be on the basis of one fundamentum divisionis or another, depending upon the purpose in mind. Differentiae on the basis of intelligence quotients, when expressed in terms of superior, average, and low, is an instance of such division (The public schools have become sufficiently "scientific" to list the intelligence quotient of an individual by a NUMBER! - which should make Pythagoras rejoice). But even when the fundamentum divisionis is "intelligence", and the division is made on the basis of such broad concepts as "superior, average and low," we are then still left with the disturbing border-line cases, with individuals that are superior in some things and stupid in others, regardless of formal intelligence quotients, and with individuals that one just does not know how to classify. Intelligence quotients are in a sense such by definition, to wit: If (genus): and individual, (differentia): responds thus and so, he is superior. This individual responds thus and so. This individual is superior. As Bacon would ask: Are we certain regarding the major premise? In any case, though we ultimately deal with an individual, we recognize him to be a kind of an individual and deal with him accordingly. Kinds serve, if not as premises for proof, then at least as premises for action.

ideas such as the dictatorship of the proletariat, which aims to be an actualization of the potentiality-actuality principle PLUS, in that the fact of the larger kindness shall be made a criteria for at least a basic return for each and all, guaranteed by the state, so the "equipment" needed for well-being shall not be lacking, and so that well-being shall be possible of achievement for all.

Human nature being what it is, it seems to the writer a pertinent question to ask: To what extent (in organized society) does the ethical sense of an individual bid the state step in and make provision (on the basis of participation in manness) for the meagerly potential to share in the material basis of well-being, granting the actualization of their full potentiality? The foregoing are factors inherent in an application of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean.

A humanistic ethic is self defeating when carried to its ultimate conclusion. Man, (not as an abstraction, but as a being with a body that has a stomach, a body that needs shelter, clothes and medical attention, a body that may wear out before the heart, a body that refuses to be lent to drudgery when labor saving devices are on the market, that wants not only bread but also roses) must for

his own good let the fact of kindness¹ issue on the one hand in a disposition (attitude) that will give the meagerly potential a return above what their actualization may justify in present society, based on the fact of participation in manness, the world being considered as the heritage of the kind, the kind including the present and future, near and distant individuals. On the other hand it must allow for the actualization of the potential on the part of the richly endowed minority, upon whom ultimately (in an ordered society) depends the well-being and progress of the majority. For it is the highly endowed minority that must and does ever supply both the ethical and intellectual leaven, without which the middle class sinks into stupidity and becomes custom-bound and intolerant. The well-being of the ultra potential must be regarded as consisting in the actualization of the potential in the here and now, but whose fernsten-liebe causes them to despise the despisings or the persecutions of their contemporaries, if necessary, in the interest of the remote.

But at that, the actualization of the potential as the ideal of education remains. It is the fact of the diversity of kinds within the kind which creates a situation which appears to constitute a cosmic injustice. This latter

1 - Being of a kind.

must be rectified by the fact of a wider kindness, in which indeed each human counts as one and no one for more than one.

Thus a humanistic ethic with the actualization of the potential as its goal for the individual (desirable and necessary as we conceive that to be) must take specific account of the factors which are thereby created, and which in practice militate against the very well-being that the doctrine seeks to achieve. An achieved individual potentiality actualized on the part of the individuals composing society, does not presuppose the well-being of the whole, so long as the individuals intermingle and live side by side. Neither does the well-being of the state presuppose the well-being of the individuals that compose it. Neither can an ultra endowed individual participating in well-being, and who is conscious of the larger kindness, (which the writer believes to be at the root of sympathy), be said to be happy in his well-being when and as he sees his fellows living in squalor and insecurity. His kind-consciousness will determine him not only to liberality toward those of the meagerly endowed whom he directly contacts, but will likewise determine him to seek to crystallize kind-consciousness in practical measures of legislation, in institutions, or in statutes. If ethics ends with the individual, it ends. The ethical sense of a person who has become kind-conscious impells that person to go beyond ethics into

politics, or otherwise stated, he seeks to make his ethical principles effective and to universalize them through politics.

Individual self-actualization, though an end, is not sufficient unto itself, having a tendency to result in the snobbery of the ultra-endowed, and in a state of resentment on the part of the meagerly endowed, who must depend upon their own efforts for life's bread, roses and gadgets. This fact presents us with the following alternative: Either there must be cultivated in man such kind-consciousness and kind sensitiveness on the part of the ultra-endowed and those of medium endowment as will result in at least a basic level of security. This is an idealistic dream. The other alternative is that the philosopher-kings (legislators) crystallize the larger kind-consciousness into constructive and protective statutes. Ethical principles, not being able to enforce themselves, must either be voluntarily adhered to, or else must be crystallized into mandates and institutions, the "ought to be" being made a mandatory "ought to do."

b - An Alternative.

Obviously we are herein concerned with the humanistic type of ethics rather than with ethics in general or with the good in general, or with the good in itself. Hence our concern is not with abstract concepts of the virtues, but with virtue and the virtues from the viewpoint of humanistic ethics, based upon what Aristotle calls the "passions." This type of ethics in the case of Aristotle culminates in the doctrine of the mean. Aristotle's doctrine of the mean may be said to be the out-growth of his teleology, which is based on the nature of man as of a kind. Our concern is not with the mathematical mean or in the abstract with a mean non-teleologically relative to us, but with Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. We shall attempt to suggest the factors that are relevant and necessary to a more adequate doctrine of the mean within the framework of humanistic ethics.

The writer accepts in general the potentiality-actuality principle of Aristotle, holding that in the case of man, his supreme ought over against himself, as well as over against society, is the actualization of his potentiality, in so far as that is a life according to reason. He accepts that as the intention of nature, if nature can be said to have an intention for man; as the function of man, as by analogy the eye and ear can be said to have a

function. He also accepts that which follows from it, viz: the teleological concept of the individual virtues (which are both ends and means) which are means to the supreme end, the actualization of man's potential nature, well-being. He also accepts a doctrine of the mean (not precisely Aristotle's) as the universal of the overwhelming majority of instances of telos-fulfilling conduct, and to which Aristotle's technique for ascertaining the mean is pertinent and applicable. He further accepts (from the viewpoint of humanistic ethics) Aristotle's doctrine of virtue as a state of character that chooses the mean (not necessarily Aristotle's mean). He holds that from the viewpoint of humanistic ethics the mean is the quantitative universal of the telos fulfilling, the concept being an aid to conduct even if and when an instance of the telos fulfilling is not a mean.

The first requisite for a more adequate doctrine of the mean is a reinvestigation of the nature of man with a view to determining his telos in the Aristotelian sense. This inevitably requires a statement of what we conceive man to be, and what we conceive the good of man to be on the basis of man's nature. This in a sense is an ethic which is the issue, the offspring, of the union of physiology and psychology, in so far and to the extent that those two disciplines can give us information and light on

the essential nature of man as of a kind, and of the variations in kinds within the larger kind.

In this reinvestigation the writer would grant man's differentia as being reason. But he would ask a full investigation and correlation of reason with the will, of reason and intuition, of reason and the "transcendental unity of apperception," viz: the ego. Such an investigation needs to be consequent, and each factor must be formulated with reference to the other, and each with reference to the whole, and the whole (the working picture) with reference to ethics. This, on the theoretic side, will prevent ambiguity in definition and description, will prevent overlapping of functions, will clarify their interrelations, and will give us a delimited reason, or rather a picture of reason that is equipped with, or at least has at its disposal, intuition and will, and which is itself under the direction of the ego. Aristotle's reason is thus modified and conditioned as the nature of man warrants and prescribes it, apart from mere theoretical considerations.

Aristotle being of gigantic intellect himself, can be forgiven his emphasis on reason to the well-nigh exclusion of these other factors. We concede reason as man's differentia, but hold that it must be modified by the above factors. Accordingly, a doctrine of volition must be

developed, not by itself but with reference to a humanistic ethics. This is a standing challenge which both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche incidentally hurl at Aristotle's conception of reason as "being the man." Schopenhauer convincingly argues that "will" is the man, and that his salvation lies in willing not to assent to the universal will, as that will would express itself in and through him. The will is the man, for Schopenhauer.

Sir Isaac Newton is said to have stood at the foot of his class until a certain day when a classmate provoked him to wrath. He is said to have vowed to give the offender a thrashing, which, after a time he mustered courage to do. Thereupon he is said to have vowed to beat him scholastically also (involving long term effort) which he is said to have done in grand style. Reason was present, intuition may have been involved, but it was not until he willed a long term effort that the latter victory was won. Volition requires a place in the realization of an ethical ideal over a longer period of time. Reason may set the goal (or it may not), but the element of volition cannot be identified with reason itself. If so, then every reasoned conviction would of necessity determine a man to the actualization thereof.

An attempt to formulate a doctrine of volition is¹ made by William James, among others. He holds that the essential achievement of the will, its fiat, is to "attend" to a difficult object, to keep a given idea before the mind. He regards it a mere physiological incident that immediate motor consequences should ensue when the object or idea is thus attended to. If his conception of volition be granted, then the function of the will in ethics would be to keep the idea of telos-fulfilling constantly and consciously before the agent in any course of action, thereby determining the individual to the motor consequences following upon that idea. The function of reason on an occasion would then be to ascertain what is the telos fulfilling on the particular occasion, and the means for ascertaining it. James makes the ability to deal with novel situations or data the technical differentia of reasoning. But it appears that such ability can be employed as well as be permitted to remain passive. Unless we hold to a determinism of ideas, it appears that a fiat of the will determines whether there shall be activity or passivity.

1 - Wm. James, Principles of Psychology, Vol 2, p 561.

2 - Ibid, p 330.

But what is it that determines the factor of willing? Reason may check and alter the will. But something else in turn appears to preside over the will AND to determine it. The "transcendental self," the ego, which abides through many body changes, from year to year, from youth to age, which can employ the will to refuse to reason, which can, as a result of reasoning, determine to will, which by reason of memory can alter the will, which by reasoning can ascertain the limits of willing, which is not the "stream of consciousness" but which presides over it, must have a place in the total picture in which reason holds the position of "man's differentia."

For Aristotle reason is the man, and under it are subsumed the functions that are ordinarily ascribed to reason, plus will, intuition, and the ego. To regard reason as man's differentia requires that it be a reason functioning alongside of will and intuition under the direction of the ego, the respective functions of the latter defined and described, and their inter-relations manifested.

A further requirement is research relative to the instinctive side of man, with reference to a humanistic ethic. This requires more than a mere listing of man's passions or instincts. It must include definition and description of such adequacy as to leave the referent without the ambiguity resulting from undefined terms, broad

generalizations, and undescribed functions. The foregoing procedure must have interest within it a working theory of the mind-body relation.

With the foregoing factors considered, with reason buttressed by the will, with reason and will under the direction of the ego, with intuition to supplement reason and reason to check and verify intuition, we are presented with reason which is a differentia of another sort than that which Aristotle presents as the unqualified differentia of man. This latter will not alter man's telos in name. It will continue to be well-being, a life in accord with reason, actualization of the potential. But it will definitely alter the concept of well-being, will have a better informed reason, enlightened reason, which has at its disposal the fruits of psychology and physiology that have ripened since the day of Aristotle. In the nature of the case the specific content of well-being will be altered in accord with new evidence admitted into the total testimony.

Ethical judgment pronounced after the manner represented by the goddess of justice, with eyes blindfolded, holding a scale in her hands, thereby becomes taboo. The balancing of the scales signifies, no doubt, the weighing of merits and demerits of the individual judged. The blindfolded eye is said to signify lack of regard for the

person judged, i.e. not being a respecter of persons and being blind to outside influence. But she evidently has been judging on the basis of abstract principles regarding man, from the viewpoint of his participation in manness, as belonging to the larger kind, but ignoring the kind within the kind. It is the blindfolded ethical judgment which deals with man solely as of a kind which is avoided by this procedure. Reason is put into its place. It remains man's differentia. But it is reason which is conditioned, which knows its aids, which knows and recognizes the passions (in Aristotle's sense) with which it has to deal, which criticizes itself. Thus a telos-determined mean, in this latter sense, will vary from the mean of Aristotle. But Aristotle's general principle remains. The technique for ascertaining the mean remains. The virtues connected with the individual passions can continue to be named. Virtue can continue to be defined as a state of character that chooses the mean. An *a posteriori* accounting for the virtues on the instinctive side is apt to be more accurate. An individual conscious of missing well-being is better able to control himself and to sublimate his passions, physiological and psychological self-knowledge being for him power for self-control. We shall call that mean the new mean.

An instance of the influence of specialized research upon the new mean might be given, relative to sexual morality. Earlier it was shown that what is considered adultery by one people may not be considered such by another, etc.

But the new doctrine of the mean would give a positive basis for sexual taboos. Thus an authority in psychiatry asks: "What standpoint are we to take in the sexual domain, which is free from prejudice, with regard to true human morality?"¹ He replies: "The first principle is the old medical adage: above all things do no harm; the second is: Be as useful as possible, both individually and socially. The commandment of sexual morality will thus be: Thou shalt do no harm willingly to any person, nor to humanity, by thy sexual appetite or acts, and thou shalt do thy utmost to promote the happiness of thy neighbor and the welfare of society."

He gives instances of ethical taboos based upon the welfare of offspring, the hygiene of the race, involving heredity factors as well as factors of habituation. Morality for him is intimately connected with hygiene, and "wherever there appears to be a contradiction between hygiene and ethics this is due to the fact that individual

1 - August Forel, The Sexual Question, p 451.

hygiene has only been considered, and not public or social hygiene."¹ In the case of individuals of a kind within the larger kind, that factor which Forel calls "sexual pathology"² must be considered. Individual hygiene as well as racial hygiene may make the marriage of two given individuals a positive non-permissible. Neither custom nor Sentiment, but the hygiene of the race and the individual, becomes the force of the taboo. A further instance of this he gives in the following: " - - the modern tendency of women to become pleasure seekers, and to take a dislike to maternity, leads to a complete degeneration of society. This is a grave evil, which rapidly changed the qualities and power of expansion of a race, and which must be cured in time, or the race affected by it will be supplanted by others."³ In this case again, neither custom nor abstract principle are authoritative, are the deterrents, but factors as real as a mentally and physically degenerate society are the deterrents.

⁴ John Rathbone Oliver, in his treatise on Psychiatry, characterizes psychiatry as being "not interested in

1 - Ibid., p 446.

2 - Ibid., p 208.

3 - Ibid., p 137.

4 - John Rathbone Oliver, Psychiatry and Mental Health, p 4.

what everybody ought to do because it is normal and right; but we are interested in what many people do in spite of their heredity, their environment, their training." Among the enemies of human well-being he reckons such factors as "some mental maladjustments, some permanent source of anxiety, some obsession or tormenting phobia, as well as - any definite mental illness."¹ and considers knowledge and acquaintance with such factors a prerequisite for seeking the well-being of our fellowmen.

The foregoing indicates the value of some of the factors that will be considered in the new mean, together with factors that reason must weigh, not blindfolded, but with the bandages that make one blind to kinds within the kind definitely removed. Armed with such information, the individual can employ his reason, determine his willing, and check his intuitions with a greater degree of accuracy over against himself. Over against his fellowmen it will make for tolerance and intelligence in judgment as opposed to judging on the basis of abstract principle, apart from the relevant factors which must serve as the material for actualizing such principles.

The degree of success in isolating the passions of man may be problematic. The attempt may be but partially

1 - Ibid, p. 4.

successful. A formulation of instinctive response patterns, in which one recognizable instinct predominates, but which involves other instinctive factors in the capacity of supporting roles, appears as a possibility. The matter of isolating the passions or of formulating response patterns in which some one passion predominates, will have as its chief worth that it makes possible a physiological self-knowledge and understanding of the nature of the telos-fulfilling on the quantitative side, together with knowledge for the manipulation of the matter which is to actualize the form. These might be termed the instinctive units involved in a given response activity. The quantitative mean in the single passion, or of the predominating passion, or of the instinctive unit, then serves as the quantitative skeleton of the given virtue, which must then in turn be clothed in accord with the particular aesthetic taste of the individual, the community or the age.

A supplement to the foregoing, in the cases wherein the instinctive side cannot be clearly discerned, would be a formulation of virtues on the basis of situational responses, the reaction-to-situation-potentiality as acts, considered apart from knowledge of the instinctive element involved. This latter procedure can in some instances be successfully carried out, apart from knowledge of the instinctive element

involved. The mean in the activity would then be our concern. This might be in terms of miles per hour in driving a car, a definite figure in the giving of money, type or amount of dress, etc.

Instead of speaking in terms of an instinct for speed, or a spending instinct, or an instinct for display in clothes, all of which "instincts" on occasion are questionable, and, in the case of clothes, may be but one phase of a broader instinct, viz: that of aspiring to be envied or admired by one's fellows. This latter procedure enables a conditional yes saying to total man, with all his instincts, drives and urges, and furthers a humanistic ethics. This latter procedure, in view of the physiological mist which one encounters by reason of the complexity of human nature and human instincts, deals with the response possibility apart from knowledge of the instinctive element involved. But in these cases the response activity is motivated by complex and less compelling urges or instinctive combinations, in which case knowledge of such is of less importance than in the case of the control of, say anger, for in the case of anger it is obviously the passion which must be controlled, and we cannot expect control of the response except and unless the passion anger be controlled, inhibited, and suppressed at its source. Hence we must not dispense with our concern for control of the

passions and think that it is only the response activity that need concern us. In the case of the pronounced passions, their inner control is indispensable.

In addition to (1) the control of the passions and acting on the mean in them, and (2) acting on the mean in the response activity in such cases where the instinctive element is mild and complex, so that we must concern ourselves with the mean in the activity alone, there appears a third alternative. The third alternative consists of applying the mean to habitual attitudes possible over against situations, persons, projects, undertakings, our fellowmen, etc. etc. This latter procedure reveals that in the matter of attitudes there is likewise an excess, a deficiency and a mean, the mean being the choice of virtue. The supplementary list of means (pages 125, 126, 127, 128) reveals the possibilities of this third alternative. We can then speak in terms of attitudes toward, for instance, our fellowmen, wherein excess may be termed apathy and meddlesomeness, and the mean kindly interest; or the attitude toward the misery of our fellowmen, of which the two extremes may be called soft-heartedness and indifference, and where the mean is an attitude of compassion; or the attitude toward the merits of our fellowmen, wherein the two extremes can be said to be flattery and disparagement and the mean appreciativeness. An attitude is complex,

and in seeking to account for the virtues in terms of attitudes, we are going beyond the simple virtues based upon a single passion. These attitudes are not, however, a synthesis in Hartmann's sense (in that they instance the conception of fullness through counterweight, through the counterbalancing of opposing tendencies) but involve various passions, and may be the result of a complex process. But attitudes are sufficiently of a kind so that a classification of attitudes looms as a possibility. Research regarding these, and insight into them, would be a definite aid to conduct. Here as in regard to the virtues based on a single passion, there are not two attitudes which are excess, but definitely two ranges of excess.

An ethics that is fathered by physiology and psychology, has inherent within it the possibility of clearing up the confusion in humanistic ethics. The confusion in psychology and physiology is inevitably mirrored in humanistic ethics. The study of psychology and physiology with direct reference to the ethical problem, to human well-being and conduct, (as distinguished from psychology and physiology written without reference to each other or to human conduct or the subject of ethics; without the over-amplification that is inevitable when one phase of human life or one phase of man is considered without relevance to, or without the counter-check of other phases or factors of man) will

render a double service. It will clarify at least some of the confusion in psychology and physiology with a corresponding lifting of the mist in which humanistic ethics is compelled to grope and by reason of which it cannot be sure of itself. The clarity and certainty of humanistic ethics is conditioned by the clarity in psychology and physiology.

But granting a society wherein individuals have actualized their potentialities, the factors which then still remain inherent in such a situation by reason of the higher and lower potentialities, must be attended to. It is apparent that all the eggs of ethics cannot be carried in nor hatched from the humanistic basket if and when we cease with the potentiality-actuality principle as applied to individual man as of a kind. Ethical principles must be universalized and must be made fruitful by being made mandatory, by virtue of which they cease to be ethical principles and become the laws of the land. The fact of kinds within the kind in connection with which the fact of the broader kind-ness bids that each shall count for one (one of the kind) and no one for more than once, is here involved.

An eventual question confronting any one that employs the mean, and is concerned with well-being, is this: To what extent shall I make my well-being a matter of

actualizing my potentiality and to what extent a matter of correspondence with my environment, with the status quo, which latter involves the goodwill and respect of my fellow-men? Actualization of potentiality may involve a break with the status quo, destroying my usefulness to the present generation. Actualizing my potentiality only in so far as I can do it, and still retain the goodwill of my contemporaries may reduce the genius to mediocrity.

In matters such as the preservation of health and reputation, getting along with people, having friends, being a responsible and respected citizen, character building, actualizing the common virtues, the mean is useful. But if potentiality is actualized with reference to well-being in contemporary society, the mean is useful also as a standardizing doctrine, which process of standardization will crucify Jesus and the malefactors side by side, will give Socrates the hemlock and will drive Nietzsche to the madhouse (where he possibly belongs).

The writer further regards some of the maxims of "Intuitionism" (which can hardly be said to have any connection with the mean) as indispensable to ethics. Among such are Sidgwick's own three principles which he, (Sidgwick) regards as "self-evident," viz: those of Justice, Prudence, and Benevolence. The "self-evident" principle of Justice reads: " - whatever action any of us judges

to be right for himself, he implicitly judges to be right for all similar persons in similar circumstances."¹ (This takes into consideration the kinds within the larger kind which was given earlier as a requirement for the new mean). His maxim of Prudence reads: " - a smaller present good is not to be preferred to a greater future good (allowing for difference of certainty."² The principle of Benevolence is briefly that "I ought not to prefer my own lesser good to the greater good of another."³ The writer regards these principles as indispensable to ethics, as edicts of the moral sense of ethical individuals, regardless of the particular metaphysics underlying their ethics. Adherence to the principle of Benevolence (see above) comes under, we might say graciousness or magnanimity. Concepts such as those that Hartmann designates "magnanimity, generosity, large-heartedness, high-mindedness,"⁴ and that which Nietzsche designates "radiant virtue" can hardly be accounted for, much less actualized, by the doctrine of the mean. Such are in a category of their own, are "something specifically new" and "The opposite of the noble is the common." In the foregoing we have instances of concepts and principles that the writer regards as indispensables in ethics. Maxims

1 - H. Sidgwick, Op. Cit. p 379.

2 - Ibid, p 381.

3 - Ibid, p 383.

4 - N. Hartmann, Op. Cit. p 192.

such as those of Sidgwick, concepts such as those of magnanimity, large-heartedness and high-mindedness, go beyond system. They serve as a check upon the various systems and reveal their limits. But aside and apart from the "common" virtues that the systems actualize, the so-called higher virtues do not exist. The higher virtues are the fruitage of the lower and blossom forth in a category of their own. They defy actualization by method, including the humanistic method of Aristotle.

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