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THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPT OF THE GOOD MAN
IN RELATION TO THE NOVELS OF HENRY FIELDING.

by

Mahmoud A. Hussein

A Thesis Submitted to the Department
of English, University of Leicester,
for the degree of Ph.D.

May, 1965.
Acknowledgements

I should like to thank the Teachers College, Cairo, for a scholarship that helped to make this study possible. It is a pleasant duty to acknowledge the assistance I have received from the administrative and teaching staffs of the University of Leicester, the staffs of the British Museum, the University of Leicester Library, and the libraries of the University of London. I cannot hope to make quite clear my gratitude to Professor A.R. Humphreys, the supervisor of this thesis, for his assiduous guidance and generous advice. Lastly, I extend my warm appreciation to my wife for her indispensable help in many ways.

M.H.
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INTRODUCTION

Henry Fielding knew the generality of men well enough to foresee harsh treatment at their hands. He was aware of this when he wrote to the good Lord Lyttleton, in the dedication of Tom Jones:

If there be in this work, as some have been pleased to say, a stronger picture of a truly benevolent mind than is to be found in any other, who that knows you, and a particular acquaintance of yours, will doubt whence the benevolence hath been copied? The world will not, I believe, make me the compliment of thinking I took it from myself. I care not ...

Indeed, the 'world' were adamant in discrediting both his person and his benevolence. During his life, and for at least a century and a half after his death, Fielding's reputation suffered from numerous barbs of calumny and unjust criticism. His greatest contribution to literature, his novels, were at times grudgingly acknowledged as good entertainment, but more often condemned as "florid", flippant, superficial, and narrow. Dr. Johnson was certainly unjust when he called Fielding a "blockhead" and a "barren rascal", (1) and when he questioned the insights in human nature displayed in Tom Jones. (2) His editor, Sir John Hawkins, was equally unjust when he accused Fielding of perpetrating a vulgarized version of Shaftesbury's morals, "a system of excellent use in palliating

(2) Ibid. 174
the vices most injurious to society." (1) Frederic T. Blanchard, who has carefully examined Fielding's reputation in the eighteenth century, quotes from an article by an unknown writer in the periodical Old England (November 12, 1748). The writer denounces Fielding who, "even in his own boasted way of Humour, is at best low, imperfect and dwindling into wretched Buffoonery and Farce." (2) Blanchard also notes that none of the great English novelists "has ever been so savagely and so continuously manhandled" as Fielding after the publication of his last novel. (3)

Fielding's moral purpose lay long obscured as a result of the consistent prejudiced attacks of his contemporaries. The political and literary wars he engaged in were a major factor in reducing his reputation as a moralist. Moreover, as Blanchard well points out, his fame as a humourist among his contemporaries seriously affected his acceptability as a moral writer. Despite his repeated avowals of religious and moral intent,

(2) Fielding the Novelist (New Haven, 1926), 33.
(3) Ibid. 35.
Fielding was regarded mainly as a dissipated, facetious writer, witty and humorous, but incapable of depicting the good life. The list of his detractors is long and crowded. It includes Dr. Johnson, Hawkins, Richardson, and his first biographer Arthur Murphy. Their detraction followed him into the nineteenth century, and is discerned in such criticism as Thackeray's in his *English Humourists in the Eighteenth Century*. Here Thackeray gives vent to his contempt for the conduct of Tom Jones; and though he commends Fielding's art and humour he remarks, "I cannot say but that I think Fielding's evident liking and admiration for Mr. Jones, shows that the great humourist's moral sense was blunted by his life, and that here in Art and Ethics, there is a great error". (1)

Even after Fielding's name was cleared by such investigators as Austin Dobson (towards the end of the nineteenth century) many critics found it difficult to accept him as a moral artist. F.O. Bissell, Jr., for instance, finds that Fielding is primarily a comic satirist, more interested in how to tell a good story than to teach. He writes, "Fielding turned in his two earlier novels to the purpose of entertainment because

of his desire to tell a good story, rather than to teach rules of conduct". As for Amelia, he finds it of little significance to Fielding's theory of the novel. (1) Other critics could not praise Fielding without detracting from his knowledge of human nature and moral intentions. Thus, Harold Child unjustly claims that Fielding "could have understood a saint as little as he could have understood an anarchist", and that he was blind to much of human life. (2) Another mixture of praise and censure of Fielding's moral outlook appears in the remarks of Sir Leslie Stephen's valuable History of English Thought in the Eighteenth-Century. Though Stephen asserts that "a complete criticism of the English artistic literature of the eighteenth-century would place Fielding at the centre, and measure the completeness of other representatives pretty much as they recede from an approach to his work", he repeats such strictures as that Fielding was not "an exalted moralist", that he lacked sympathy and delicacy of perception, and that Richardson was the greater artist. (3) Other detractors of Fielding's novels include Robert A. Moore, who considers them flippant, shallow, and

far less effective than Hogarth's six pictures entitled
Marriage a la Mode (1), and F.R. Leavis who finds Fielding's
novels monotonous, lacking in depth and subtlety, and
limited in range and variety. (2)

Fielding's preoccupation with religious and ethical
values is an important factor, inseparable from his art of
the novel. (3) This aspect of his work has been submerged
under a torrent of castigation and deserves more attention
than has been hitherto accorded it. His religious and
moral concerns are evident everywhere in the novels, and
are both explicitly announced and imaginatively rendered.
This subject has been notably handled in such works as
James A. Work's seminal essay, "Henry Fielding, Christian
Censor," J. Middleton Murry, "In Defense of Fielding",
George Sherburn's "Fielding's Social Outlook", Martin C.
Battestin's The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, and H.K.
Miller's Essays on Fielding's Miscellanies. These works,
together with the detailed biographies by W.L. Cross and
(1) "William Hogarth: The Golden Mean" in The Age of
Johnson, Essays Presented to C.B. Tinker (New-
Haven, 1949) 132-33.
(3) The sale catalogue of his library shows that he owned
over seventy volumes of ethics, philosophy, and theo-
logical commentary - including almost all the works
discussed in this study - among hundreds on history,
travel, law etc. It is interesting to note that, of
his own works, only Jonathan Wild is mentioned in the
catalogue. For all works cited on this page vide
Bibliography, infra, 400f.
F. Homes Dudden emphasize Fielding's basic morality, and some of them investigate the relation between his moral outlook and that of the Latitudinarian divines of the eighteenth century. M.C. Battestin, in particular, cogently argues that "it is the liberal moralism of the Low Church divines - not the principles of Cicero or Shaftesbury - that underlies the ethos, and much of the art, of Joseph Andrews. (1) These works are relatively few, and most of them exist in essay form.

The present study arose from the need to investigate Fielding's moral views in the larger religious and ethical contexts that conditioned them. Its purpose is threefold: 1) to explore the central concept of the good man in the prevalent religious and ethical thought of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, 2) to examine the salient aspects of Fielding's moral preoccupations and allegiance in relation to those of his time, and, 3) to demonstrate that his earnest faith in benevolence controls his intentions in the novels and shapes his idea and execution of character. The richness and complexity of Fielding's religious and moral background has made necessary the selection of religious and moral groups and

individual writers, and ample care has been taken to assess the general tone and temper of each representative. Moreover, this study does not presume to be comprehensive or extensive. Its general aim is to shed some light on Fielding's dominant moral theme of the good man, and contribute towards a deeper understanding of his novels. It would be gratifying if more attention is accorded to that HUMANITY of which Fielding sang:

And the, almost the constant attendant on true genius, Humanity, bring all thy tender sensations. If thou hast already disposed of them all between thy Allen and thy Lyttleton, Steal them a little while from their bosoms. Not without these the tender scene is painted. From these alone proceed the noble, disinterested friendship, the melting love, the generous sentiment, the ardent gratitude, the soft compassion, the candid opinion; and all those strong energies of a good mind, which fill the moistened eyes with tears, the glowing cheeks with blood, and swell the heart with tides of grief, joy, and benevolence.(1)

I. THE RATIONAL BASIS OF VIRTUE

i. The Cambridge Platonists

The middle years of the seventeenth century were particularly rich in spiritual and intellectual experience. They teemed with a complex of forces bound to leave a permanent mark on subsequent life and thought. Religion was still dominating all spheres of activity, and, though the turbulence of earlier years was abated, religious and political prejudices persisted. The dogmatism of the Calvinists was matched by the Laudians and other sectarians. Each sect was vehemently defending its monopoly of Christian truth. Thus Christianity was enmeshed in polemics, theorizing, and intolerance. However, there was an increasing demand for moderation in religion, and stability in politics. Reasonable charity and tolerance were essential in an age worn out with strife, and intent on breaking from the past. The urge was for a politico-religious atmosphere conducive to the assessment and restatement of extant beliefs in the light of new scientific, social, and intellectual developments. Basil Willey aptly notes that "the fundamental impulse of the century was

towards the 'explanation' of what had hitherto been mysterious. (1) As the century advanced, attempts at clarification and restatement gained momentum. Vigorous intellectual movements were moulding an age "gravitating steadily towards 'enlightenment'". (2) One such movement was originated at Cambridge by a group of divines known as the "Cambridge Platonists" or "Latitude-men". These were primarily theologians who rose in the middle and later years of the seventeenth century. They were scholars, teachers, and preachers connected with Cambridge. Bishop Burnet mentions "Drs. Whichcote, Cudworth, Wilkins, More and Worthington" (3) as chief representatives; other leading Platonists are John Smith, Henry More, Nathaniel Culverwel, Peter Sterry, and George Rust.

The emergence of these thinkers as a more or less unified group is a curious phenomenon. Their teaching reflects a multiplicity of involved issues: it is directly related to the liberal theology of Hales and Chillingworth, but its aims are broader than toleration and comprehension; (4) it retains a deep tinge of neo-Platonism, but is predominantly Christian; while professing a break with

1) Basil Willey, Seventeenth Century Background (London, 1934) 119.
2) Ibid., 133.
medievalism, it displays the influence of the schools; it is rooted in an early Calvinism that upholds inquiry and practical morality, and yet its Arminian leaning is pronounced. These aspects, among others, point out the blend of forces contributing to its rise. The most immediate issues, however, were the sad condition of orthodox religion and the materialistic philosophy of Hobbes.

The Puritanism of the times was essentially a militant creed striving to impose its doctrines, ignoring the swiftly changing picture of the age. In the beginning, Puritanism was opposed not so much for its theology as for its initial rejection of ritual and system of church order. (1) From the very start, Calvinism with its severe moral character had exercised its influence on the people's imagination. But with the advance of the seventeenth century, its antagonism to any other doctrine became intensified. Elsewhere in Europe (particularly in France), Calvinism had clashed with the established Roman Catholic creed in civil war long before the close of the sixteenth century. In England, the comprehensive ecclesiastical settlement under Elizabeth I, with the temperate doctrines of Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie* (2)


2) The first four books *Of the Laws* were printed in 1593, and the long fifth book in 1597.
managed to achieve a measure of moderation. But during the seventeenth century the Anglican Church swung to a High Church phase under Archbishop Laud and Charles I (with suspicious signs of Roman Catholicism). At the same time Calvinistic and Presbyterian sectarians correspondingly moved into more violent opposition, and extremism bred extremism. While the Laudians emphasized tradition and the place of the Church, the Puritans relied on Scripture, and while the Quakers upheld the promptings of the Spirit, the early deists insisted on the unique supremacy of reason. Controversy and fanaticism were widespread, and the Church in England was facing a major threat from within.

From without, the Hobbesian philosophy was undermining the very foundation of religion: its spiritual and moral reality. Hobbes had claimed that the rules of reason proved that sense and motion were the only real things, that man was by nature selfish and in a state of war, and that human action was the reflection of either pleasure or displeasure. (1) Such hedonistic materialism was in itself enough to rouse the anger of all concerned for man's moral and religious life. But Hobbes had gone further in denying the freedom of human will, and in subjecting religion as well as ethics to the State. His emphasis on external

objects as the only reality and the sole spring of conduct implied the rejection of revealed Christian truth. It meant that "The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world, and therefore the spiritual authority has no claim to any sort of obedience". (1)

Faced with the danger of a general drift from religion because of the "tangs of atheism" in mechanistic philosophy, "this set of men at Cambridge studied to assert and examine the principles of religious morality on clear grounds, and in a philosophical method." (2) They discerned the widening gap between reason and faith, matter and spirit, appearance and reality. They noted that the problem of reality was at the centre of current speculation, and that, with reason in the ascendancy, it was acquiring a new dimension. Religion was in danger of being considered "dreams and imaginations". Thus they set out to clarify Christianity by restating its essential principles, by relating it to man's intellect, conscience, and feeling, and by emphasizing that the truth of Christianity is moral living.

The most prominent feature of their teaching is the vindication of reason as the basis of faith and conduct, as the supreme element in nature, and the equivalent

2) G. Burnet, History of My Own Time, op. cit., I, 334.
of God. Benjamin Whichcote declares: "To go against Reason is to go against God ... Reason is the Divine Governor of Man's Life; it is the very Voice of God." (1) To him, as well as to his disciples, the interpretation and application of the term 'reason' reflect the spirit of Platonic and neo-Platonic doctrines of Innate Ideas and the Idea of the Good; for reason to the Cambridge Platonists is a faculty inseparable from spiritual and moral experience.

To the speculative writers of the seventeenth century reason signified the human faculty employed in thinking in a connected logical manner. (2) Hobbes had used it in this sense emphasizing its dependence on sensation. But the spiritual connotation of the term as a God-given instrument for ordering the passions was still being used. (3) To the Cambridge group it had a threefold meaning; 1) The spiritual instrument of Truth; 2) the mystical quality of man which helps him communicate with the Divine; 3) the

1) Moral and Religious Aphorisms ... to which are added Eight Letters which passed between Dr. Whichcote ... and Dr. Tuckney (London, 1753), 76.
3) "It had already become a sort of watchword among men inside and outside the universities who claimed to be men of light and leading." F. Powicke, The Cambridge Platonists (London, 1926), 22. This "light and leading" was a matter not merely of intellectual acuteness but of spiritual enlightenment by clarity and charity of mind.
sum of man's faculties in the pursuit of the holy life.

1. Reason is frequently regarded as the inner natural light, "the best Instrument we have to Work withal". (1) It is "the candle of the Lord", and the "Instrument of Truth", which discovers what is natural and "receives what is Supernatural". (2) It is consonant with Scripture because both are spiritual endowments that enlighten us in our way.

2. The Platonists were practical mystics; they stressed moral works with the purpose of union with the Divine Mind. (3) Reason here has a deeper shade of spiritualism. It sublates man and links him with the order of the universe. To Whichcote, it functions through "the deiform seed" in man making him apprehend the reason in things. To More, it is "the Sacerdotal Breast-plate and the Oracle of God ... not to be heard but in his Holy Temple." (4) As such it is an essentially Christian characteristic, a special prerogative which Christianity has above all other religions. (5)

3. Reason denotes the unity of man's understanding, conscience, heart, soul, and body. The thorough purification of these makes the good and holy man. This is the central message of the Cambridge Platonists: the 'reasonable' and religious life is the moral life. Reason in this sense is the refinement and excellent practice of man's whole being; it is the "inner experience of the whole man acting in harmony, not to mere logic chopping which may leave conduct and even conviction unaffected." (6)

2) Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcote (1698), 449; and, Aphorisms, 99.
3) Cf. E. Underhill, Mysticism, 7th ed. (New York, 1958), Ch. IV esp. 72, 82, 83.
5) Vide, Cragg, From Puritanism..., 42.
From this essentially spiritual conception of reason emerge their three basic positions: 1) the unity of faith, reason, and conduct; 2) the spiritual nature of reality; 3) the immutability of moral laws and the freedom of human will.

1. The Cambridge Platonists promulgated a faith completely harmonious with reason and morality. The 'natural light' of man's intellect is derived from the Eternal 'Ocean of Light'. The common notions of God and virtue are inherent and voluntarily realized by intuition and inference. They are antecedent to Revelation, for "The written word of God is not the first or only discovery of the duty of man". The importance of Scripture lies in repeating and reinforcing them. (1) Hence, the virtuous heathens, who follow the "truths of first inscription", go to Heaven. Man sins because of wilfully extinguishing the light within, by depending on the deceptive sensations. It is this deception that faultily creates the antitheses between reason and Faith. The "eye of Reason" was weakened after the Fall, but not completely destroyed. It is our duty to regain its full lustre by charity and goodness. Truth and goodness are inseparable because one is the fulfilment of the other.

Such fulfilment is achieved through what Whichcote terms "a State of Religion":

A rectified Understanding, that hath a settled Judgement of Truth, a Sanctified Nature, reconciled to Goodness; a pacified Conscience, discharged of Guilt. These things are contained in a State of Religion. (1)

2. The Cambridge Platonists' epistemology is consistent with their conception of reason. They unanimously hold that knowledge is not something alien to the mind, but native and familiar to it. (2) Hobbes's interpretation of reality is false because of its dependence on the senses. But the rejection of Hobbesian materialism does not exclude the existence or importance of external nature. Tulloch finds that their conception and study of nature are highly religious, for nature "may modify or enlarge our thoughts, but it has no tendency to shut out from us the presence of the Deity". (3)

In an age witnessing vast achievements in the physical sciences, the Platonists attempted to relate the new science to religion. They conceived of knowledge as a whole and attacked the current trend to segment it into

2) Vide, J. Seth, English Philosophy and Schools of Philosophy (London, 1925), 85 f.
3) Tulloch, op.cit., II, 156.
secular and spiritual, rational and revealed. The 'Book of Nature' reflected the full harmony between God and his creation. (1)

3. The chief emphasis of the Cambridge Platonists lies on the freedom of human will and the immutability of moral law. Hence their severest attacks against Hobbes's doctrine of 'necessity' and their passionate rejection of all forms of deterministic philosophy. Thus, More calls Calvinistic predestination, "the black doctrine of absolute reprobation". Man's will is free, and his moral responsibility is to identify himself with the notions of good in him. Moral truths, like mathematical truths, are always the same. They are discerned by reason, a principle which is uniform and satisfactory in all men. (2)

The Platonists' view of human nature is consistent with their conception of God, nature and reason. They vindicate man as a potentially moral being capable of supreme intellectual, emotional, and spiritual achievement, that is, capable of the utmost happiness in this best possible of worlds. Man, they maintain, can attain the

perfection of both his reason and passions through leading
a truly religious life. It is an optimistic view, and in
sharp contrast with the Calvinistic picture of a depraved
humanity, struggling in a mesh of temptation.

In addition to their insistent call for a rational
religion and a holy life, the Platonists emphasized the
function of the good passions, particularly human
sympathy and fellow-feeling. They regarded charity,
benevolence, and good-nature as the supreme affections
that lead to human happiness and social well-being. These
virtues are the foundations of Christianity, for, as
Whichcote declares, "An uncharitable christianity, un­
merciful, void of good-nature, is no more religion, than a
'dark Sun' is a Sun or a 'cold fire' is fire. - He only
can dwell in God who dwells in Love, 1 John iv.16". (1) By
stressing the great value of the heart's affections the
Cambridge group initiated a respect for feeling as the
criterion of virtue, an idea that was bound to pervade
eighteenth century ethical thought. "It is in the warmth of
feeling with which they pleaded for human kindness (and,
incidentally, humankind-ness), in the approach to God
through sympathy with man, that there lies the refutation
of seventeenth century fanaticism and the basis of
eighteenth century social gospel." (2) The following

1) The Works of the Learned Benjamin Whichcote, D.D.,
2) A.R. Humphreys, "The Friend of Mankind (1700-1760) -
An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century Sensibility", RES,
No. 95, Vol. XXIV, 1948, 205.
discussion of individual Platonists and their conception of goodness will, it is hoped, illustrate this point.

Benjamin Whichcote (1609-1683) is generally regarded as the founder of the Cambridge movement. (1) Both his life and teaching set an outstanding example of the dedicated divine. There is a sense of impelling urgency and vigour in his utterance, the outcome of an intense awareness of the forces and needs of his age. "The Times, wherein I live", he writes to Dr. Tuckney, "are more to mee; than anie else: the workes of God in them, which I am to discerne; direct in mee both principle affection and action." (2)

The special emphasis of his sermons, discourses, and aphorisms is on an intelligible Christianity, whose norm is man, and whose criterion is human conduct. To him, Religion is an inward, operative quality realized by man's whole being before it is expressed in conduct. Its seat "is the inward Man; it is first the sense of a Man's Soul, the Temper of his Mind, the Pulse of his Heart". (3) Religious truth, i.e. "the principles of reason and morality", is final, but of "a different Emanation". It is "either of first Inscription", as "all the Instances of


3) E.T. Campagnac,ed., The Cambridge Platonists,containing selections from their works with an introduction by the editor (Oxford, 1901); "The Work of Reason", 56.
Morality", "and these have a deeper Foundation... than that God gave the Law at Mount Sinai", or truths of Revelation, by which defecting man is recovered. (1) Both morality and Religion complement each other, but the former comes first as it constitutes the major part of religion. The individual is free to interpret religious institutions, and is bound to interpret them correctly if he lives according to the Gospel. (2)

To Whichcote the sum of religious truth is practical goodness. His conception of the good religious life is interesting in that it lays aside the ascetic ideal and focuses on practical living. The good man is he who strives to know, do, and be. He excels in "Meekness, Gentleness, Modesty, Humility, Patience, Forbearance; and these are eminent Endowments, and mightily qualify Men to live in the World." (3) He is "an Instrument in Tune; Excite a good Man, give him an Occasion, you shall have from him savoury Speeches out of his mouth and good Actions in his life." (4)

Whichcote stresses charity and good-nature as the distinctive Christian qualities that embody all religious truth. These are expressed in love, liberality, tolerance,

1) Ibid., "Evidence of Divine Truth", 4,5,10.
2) Ibid., 12.
3) Ibid., 19.
righteousness, understanding, and goodwill. The good-natured man is heedful of the Christian spirit and graces in his carriage, behaviour, and conversation. For:

Religion produceth a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind; calm in itself, and loving to Men. It causeth a Universal Benevolence and Kindness to Mankind. For, these are the Things of which it doth consist; Love, Candour, Ingenuity, Clemency, Patience, Mildness, Gentleness, and all other Instances of GOOD-NATURE. (1)

The perfection of good-nature is the product of both a sound reason and a good heart; the former is "a Principle Uniform and Satisfactory", the latter is "a great advantage towards Orthodoxy of Judgement". (2)

Man is originally good-natured and reasonable, but his senses and faculties were corrupted after the Fall. Thus the mind may have malignity in it which would reflect on words and actions. But the mind of a good man

is the Best part of him; and the Mind of a bad man is the Worst part of him: because the one hath more good in his heart, than he can perform; the other more evil in his heart, than he can execute. (3)

The worst forms of malignity are reflected in apostasy and gross neglect of "a State of Religion". These result in a breach of charity and veracity. Whichcote

1) Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcote, (with a Preface by the Third Earl of Shaftesbury.) (London, 1698), Sermon Sixth, 431.
2) Moral and Religious Aphorisms, op.cit., 886 and 308 respectively.
3) Ibid., 251.
particularly attacks the dissembler and the flatterer,
for

The Dissembler does not think within himself, what he says; The Flatterer does not Think of you, what he says: The Dissembler intends not the Truth, the Flatterer means not the Good, he speaks: The One speaks contrary to Veracity; the other, contrary to Charity. (1)

The good man, who is the representative of God, should be free of hypocrisy, sensuality, faction, and false zeal. "Nothing spoils human nature more than false Zeal", Whichcote writes, and finds the good-nature of a heathen more god-like than "the furious Zeal of a Christian". (2)

It is this conception of universal good-nature that impressed Shaftesbury. In his preface to the first edition of the Select Sermons (published posthumously in 1698), he hails Whichcote as "the Preacher of Good-Nature", and notes that Whichcote insists on good-nature everywhere in his works.

Whichcote's call for a consensus of belief in an intelligible, tolerant religion, based on good-nature and benevolence seems to have exercised a greater influence than that of any of his group. It was in line with the needs and language of the age. During the period of his

1) Ibid., 124.

2) Campagnac, 67.
tutorship at Emmanuel (1632-1644) and during his twenty years of lecturing in Trinity Church (1636-1656) (1), he had many disciples who repeated or amplified his teaching. The most prominent members of the movement he initiated were Smith, More, and Cudworth.

The thought of John Smith (1616-1652), is basically similar to that of his former tutor. Its distinctive features are a complete freedom from polemics, and a stricter Platonism which shows in the mystical character of his Discourses.

The dominant theme of his work is the "Divine Life", and how to achieve it. In his view, true goodness can only be attained through the active application of the moral and religious principles inherent in man. The only way to seek divinity is to practise the 'Archetypal' virtues revealed in our reason. "A good man", Smith writes, "finds not his Religion without him, but as a living Principle within him". (2) The holy life is realized not so much by notions as by actions. Religion must be rooted in real human experience, for, in the words of St. John, "We must see with our eyes and hear with our ears, and our hands

1) Whichcote, as Archbishop Tillotson records, usually preached four sermons every Sunday, besides one on Wednesdays, in the period 1647 - 1651. Cf. Powicke, 31.
must handle the word of Life". (1) It is the only means of rectifying and enlarging all faculties of the soul, and the begetter of all free and generous spirits in the minds of good men.

Though he stresses reason as the foundation of a truly virtuous and religious life, Smith emphasizes the importance of warm feelings. It is the heart that "sends up good Blood and warm Spirits into the Head, whereby it is best enabled to its several functions". (2) The ultimate goal of every Christian actuated by the good passions is happiness. Such a state is the equivalent of Heaven, and can only be attained by living righteously above the world, by conquering pride, self-love, wild passions, and earthly pleasures, by constant "converse with the Divinity". Smith emphasizes self-denial in the process of ascending to the 'Fountain of Goodness'. To be nothing is the only way to be all things, for "self-love is the only principle that acts wicked men". (3)

The moral teaching of John Smith underlines the extent of the Cambridge Platonists' departure from conventional theology, in their preoccupation with moral conduct as the fundamental issue of religion. (4) Its

1) "Discourse concerning the True Way or Method of Attaining to Divine Knowledge", Campagnac, 83.
2) Select Discourses, op. cit., 3.
3) "The Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion", Campagnac, 187.
mystical quality indicates the direction Platonism was taking after Whichcote.

With Henry More (1614-1687), as with Smith, the reality of spiritual experience is the supreme Christian truth. But More's interpretation of religion adheres more strictly to Platonic metaphysics, and reflects a variety of other formative influences. These range from the physical sciences of his day, to Cartesian dualism, to Platonism, and the vagaries of occultism. His final position is a belief in the Spirit as the only controlling, active energy in the universe, whose function is to stimulate man to purify his life.

More's ethical teaching is expounded in his *Enchiridion Ethicum*,(1) which was a methodical attempt to lay down the theoretical basis of the Cambridge Platonists' conception of human nature. To More, man's intellectual and passional powers are essentially good, for they come from God, and if followed according to the law of nature, would lead to the greatest good. This is nothing but the most intense pleasure man is capable of enjoying. But More guards himself against accusations of hedonism by defining pleasure as that which arises from actions

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done in accordance with true human nature. As men are rational beings, their actions should conform with virtue. More holds that virtue is not a habit, but "an intellectual Power of the Soul, by which it over-rules the animal Impressions or bodily Passions; so as in every Action it easily pursues what is absolutely good and simply the best." (1)

It seems that the term "over-rules" here does not signify "represses"; for More is in accord with Descartes (and against the Stoics) with regard to the doctrine of the passions.

He conceives of the passions as essentially good in themselves. (2) They constitute the desire that impels man to reach out to God. As such they are not only good but fundamental to the good life. (3) But, in order to attain the greatest good, our passions must aim at a proper object, and seek to fulfil their purpose with exactitude, justice, and balance. More thus explains his conception of the passions:

PASSIONS therefore are not only Good, but singularly needful to the perfecting of human life. Yet must they be with these two Conditions. First that our Desires steer toward a proper Object which may be called, The true Impulse: For those who offend herein are the worst sinners; such as are the malicious and those that delight in Blood, and Torturers.

1) Ibid., 11.
2) Ibid., 78.
3) Ibid., 41.
and others of that strain.

The second Rule is, That the Desires be adequate to the Object, or the End; and that ... the best and greatest things be pursued with the chiefest Passion; the middle things with less; and the lowest with the least. But this also in such sort, as never to allow any such violence in the Desire, as may either eclipse the Light of Reason, or obstruct that end to which Nature aspires, by the help of those Affections wherewith she has endowed our Souls ....

But if any man should propose the rooting up of all Desires, in order to free the Soul from Discord; and to end all strife and combustion which the Passions maintain against the Soul, or among themselves: This to me would sound no better, than as if one, to prevent Discord on the Harp, should let down all the Strings; or than as if another should with Drugs set all the Humors of his Body in a Ferment, for fear of falling sick. (1)

More's good man, then, has the true impulse to virtue together with a sound judgement and equable, harmonious passions. His original desires are not corrupted by contact with worldly matters, and the objects of his passions are necessarily good. Such men, More points out, are few, because the bulk of mankind are deceived by "Apparitions of Good" and can never discover "What is the Ultimate Good, and what is the most Excellent Object of Human Life". (2) The wicked have swerved from the course of their true nature by giving in to the

1) Ibid., 41-42.
2) Ibid., 184-85.
'corporeal impressions' which warp the soul. (1)

The good man knows that his passions are adequate to the object by 'Right Reason.' By reason More means an innate principle of mind which, if properly cultivated, leads to the required harmony of the passions. He admits that any attempt to define such a principle is extremely difficult: "tho it be easie to agree this Best to be that which to Reason is consonant; yet what this Reason is, or what is the measure of it, seems a most difficult matter truly to resolve." (2) He seems to regard it as a property not of intellect but of being, and seems to conceive of it as a form of intuition, for only those who have such a power possess it "not as they are knowing, but as they are Good". (3)

1) More mentions five sorts of 'corporeal impressions':
   1. Sensation - "a certain corporeal Impression, by which the Soul is prevailed on to believe that things are such in their own Natures as they appear to our external senses";
   2. Imagination - a sense that gives the impression that certain objects exist, while, in actuality, they do not;
   3. Temperament - a sense that prevents the soul from contemplating peculiar Things;
   4. Custom and education that delude the soul;
   5. Peculiar Fancy - a sense that impels the mind to love or hate for external and trivial circumstances. Ibid., 84-90.

2) Ibid., 16.
3) Ibid., 14.
Moral good is that which is grateful, pleasant, and congruous to a conscious being, and contributory to its preservation; but not all that is pleasant is good. Absolute good can be distinguished by reason; but its full apprehension is by the "boniform faculty". This is a general power by which the good man perfects his soul and attains to virtue. It combines perceptive, regulative, and guiding capacities. In his general definition of this faculty, More emphasizes that it is an "inward Sense, or an inward Faculty of Divination"; that it is a property of the will, and a rectitude of the affections:

   it must be agreed, that the Desires of the Soul fly not to their Object, as it is intelligible, but as it is good or congruous, or grateful, or at least tending to these ends; and so filling the mind with all the Joys and Pleasure it can comprehend. Hence it is plain, that supreme Happiness is not barely to be placed in the Intellec; but her proper Seat must be called the Boniform Faculty of the Soul: namely, a Faculty of that divine Composition, and supernatural Texture, as enables us to distinguish not only what is simply and absolutely the best, but to relish it, and to have pleasure in that alone. Which Faculty much resembles that part of the Will which moves toward that which we judge to be absolutely the best, when, as it were with an unquenchable thirst and affection it is hurried on towards so pleasing an Object; and being in possession of it, is swallowed up in satisfaction that cannot be exprest. (1)

1) Ibid., 6-7.
The boniform faculty is a natural energy in man that urges him to imitate divine perfection. It is "a passion that can only make a Man Divine; For such the Man is, as his Affections and Inclinations make him.'Tis not here enough to have simple intellection; no, it rather calls up and summons the Boniform Faculty, which is replenish'd with that Divine Sense and Relish, which affords the highest Pleasure, the chiefest Beauty, and the utmost Perfection of the Soul." (1) It motivates man to achieve the greatest good human nature will permit.(2) This does not mean that all men have the same degree of goodness in them, for More says that men should pray to God for direct support in the pursuit of virtue.(3) Moreover, he is convinced that the majority of men are deluded by 'apparent good'. Here the question of will arises, and More, like the rest of the Cambridge Platonists, emphasizes that human will is free. He conceives of man as having the ability to direct himself either to lower or higher being. Whether a man is good or bad depends upon his actual behaviour. More holds that, insofar as the soul can partake of higher being, it is good, even though it is capable of being deceived by appearances.

1) Ibid., 106.f.
2) Ibid., 107.
3) Ibid., 205.
We have "a Power to Act or not to Act within ourselves", and, though potentially good, our duty is "with principal Care to find out, in what this chief Happiness (of the soul) doth consist, and how we may attain it". (1)

More has been considered "'the heart of the Cambridge movement... as Cudworth was its brain'", (2) and his thought seems to have spread widely during his time. His teachings bore fruit in the works of Joseph Glanvill, John Norris, and Peter Sterry, and his conception of the boniform faculty may have influenced the 'moral sense' school of the eighteenth century. (3) It is his spiritual conception of reality and his insistence on the freedom of the will, however, that are most pronounced in the work of his contemporary Platonist, Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688).

Cudworth is the conspicuous philosopher of the Cambridge group. More than any other Platonist, he felt the need to establish moral and religious truth on a firm philosophical basis. His preoccupation with the ethics of religion appears as early as the thesis he defended for his doctor's degree. (4) This is also

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1) Ibid., 176,184 respectively.
4) The thesis was: "de boni et mali rationes eternas et immutabiles".
reflected in his bold sermon to the Presbyterian Commons on March 31, 1646, which underlines his real concern for religion as moral conduct. Its object, he writes, is "not to contend for this or that Opinion; but onely to perswade man to the Life of Christ, as the Pith and Kernel of all Religion," (1) and its central teaching is that "Christ was Vitae Magister, not Scholae". Thus,

He is the best Christian, whose heart beats with the truest pulse towards heaven, not he whose head spinneth out the finest cobwebs. He that endeavours really to mortifie his lusts, and to comply with that truth in his life, which his Conscience is convinced of; is more of a Christian, though he never heard of Christ; then [sic] he that believes all the vulgar Articles of the Christian faith, and plainly denyeth Christ in his life. (2)

Like Whichcote and Smith, Cudworth is here calling for a rebirth of Christianity as a vital social force. His sermon is a fervent exhortation to a truly religious life actuated by a spiritual, all-pervading principle in the soul of every man. For Christianity is not a dead letter inscribed in books and wrangled about in controversial writings:

Inke and Paper can never make us Christians, can never beget a new nature, a living principle in us; can never form Christ, or any true notions of spirituall things in our hearts. The Gospell, that new Law which Christ delivered to the world, it is not merely a Letter without us, but a quickening Spirit within us. (3)

2) Ibid., 14.
3) Ibid., 5.
He vehemently repels speculations about religion, and considers them the immediate cause of the negative attitude towards the good life. Such speculations include "cold Theoroms and Maxims, dry and jejune Disputes, lean Syllogistical reasonings". (1) All this is Whichcote's self-evident teaching given official utterance. But Cudworth's peculiar achievement is in setting up a rigorously planned and massively executed system to substantiate his moral tenets. His two published works, The True Intellectual System of the Universe (1678), and the Treatise on Immutable Morality (1731), are only part of a vast moral design he did not complete. Nevertheless, they embody his ethically oriented epistemology, which is generally regarded as the first and most cogent attempt to refute all forms of materialistic philosophy. (2)

His professed purpose in the preface to The Intellectual System is to confirm the three essential truths of religion: 1) the existence of an omnipotent, understanding Being, 2) the eternal nature of His goodness and justice, and 3) the fundamental freedom of human will. (3) These points are considered again in his Treatise.

1) Ibid.
and, together with his insistence on social love, constitute his central position. They are all interdependent and form the rational basis of the good life:

For to seek out God here, is nothing else but to seek a Participation of His Image, or the recovery of that Nature and Life of His which we have been alienated from. And these three Things, namely, that all Things do not float without a Head and Governor ... and that the differences of Good and Evil moral, honest and dishonest are not by mere Will and Law only, but by Nature; and consequently, that the Deity cannot act, influence, and necessitate men to such Things as are in their own Nature Evil; and, lastly, that Necessity is not intrinsical to the Nature of every Thing, but that men have such a Liberty or Power over their own Actions, as may render them accountable for the same, and blameworthy when they do amiss; and, consequently, that there is a Justice distributive of Rewards and Punishments running through the World; I say, these three ... taken all together, make up the Wholeness and Entireness of that which is here called by us the True Intellectual System of the Universe ... (1)

All materialistic philosophies, he holds, have failed to explain sense, mind, and soul. What such philosophers as Protagoras call sense and motion is simply 'phantasms' and 'appearances', inferior to intellect. Cudworth maintains that sense is not a mere passion, but "a Passive perception of the Soul, having something of vital Energy, and is a Cogitation". (2) Materialism,

1) Ibid., I, 46.
2) A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality, (London, 1731), Bk IV, Ch. 1, et passim.
particularly that of Hobbes, is dull and gross, for it depends on the senses as the only judges of external reality. To Cudworth the real and the absolute can only be apprehended by intellect: a superior power different from sense, and capable of grasping the eternal and immutable essences of things and their unchangeable relations to one another. (1) It precedes motion and causes it, both in man and in the universe: in man, it is the source of all knowledge and activity, without which there could be neither motion nor volition, in the universe, it is at the head of the Scale of Being.

The soul is a "derivative Participation of one Infinite Eternal Mind"; it is not "a meere 'Rasa Tabula', a Naked and Passive Thing" (2), but a self-active 'store-house' of eternal truth, comprising such ideas as "Morality, Art, Ethics, Politicks and Law". All these come "in the first order of nature before hard and soft ... therefore more real and substantial". These ideas "cannot be possibly arbitrary things", and are intuitively realized by the faculty of free will. (3)

Cudworth stresses the function of reason as a free power, independent of God and sovereign. God cannot

1) Ibid., 283.
2) Ibid., 286-87.
3) Ibid., 292.
alter the nature of truth. The divine will has no
'imperium' upon human or even divine understanding, "for
if God understood by Will he would not understand at
all". Cudworth is particularly emphatic in denouncing
Hobbesian, Cartesian, and theistic determinism, and
in asserting man's right to think and act for himself.
He resorts to ancient and 'modern' philosophy to prove
that "things are what they are not by will, but by
Nature." (1)

To him, goodness is the supreme attribute of God.
It is prior both to His wisdom and will in the Scale of
Being. (2) Human goodness is a participation in the
divine, and its perfection is achieved through the right
use of free will together with the assistance of divine
grace. For the good man is "habitually fixed in moral good,
or such a state of mind as that he doth freely, readily,
and easily comply with the law of Divine life..." (3)
Man should be actuated by love which is the desire of
good and happiness. Cudworth stresses this principle of
love and considers it "the source, and fountain, and
centre of life". (4) The inextricable objects of love
are God and human society. Like his fellow Platonists,

1) Ibid., 14.
2) Ibid., 35, 36.
3) Treatise of Free-Will (London, 1838) in a volume
entitled The Ethical Works of Cudworth, Part I, Of
Freewill; First edited by John Allen; 64.
4) Ibid., 30.
he conceives of good as essentially of a social nature. Society is one unified whole: the sum of individual parts that constitute a harmonious entity. Though these parts may be different physically, they are joined by the strong ties of reason and feeling, and form a whole which aims at the common good. (1) Men have by nature a threefold unity, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Such unity should lead to the realization of social and political justice. This conception of society is again in the face of those who uphold man's selfishness and subjection by authority, who slander human nature and make a villain of it. Throughout his works, Cudworth sharply denounces Hobbes's conception of man as an instrument of self-regarding desires. A basic theme of his writings is to demonstrate that the selfish passions are the source of all evils. "At bottom", he says, "all vices are one and the same thing, they agreeing in one vital source or centre, 'selfdesire'." (2)

To Cudworth, then, the good life is an active, rational imitation of divine goodness. Its distinction is freedom of the human will and a spiritual conception

1) Vide Muirhead, op.cit., 61,62.

2) Quoted by J.A. Passmore from Cudworth's Collection of MSS entitled Loci Communes Morales and Collection of Confused Thoughts Memorandum relating to the Eternity of Torments; 4983, 82; cf. J.A. Passmore, Ralph Cudworth, An Interpretation (Cambridge, 1951), 76. The MSS are kept in the British Museum.
of reality. It is primarily a Christian life that emphasizes charity, toleration, and a love of God and society to be manifested in working for the public good, and realizing that the source of all evil is the selfish desires of men. For to Cudworth, as Passmore well points out, "happiness, freedom, goodness, rationality, spirituality are different names for the same thing: the escape of the soul from human bondage, the bondage of egoism". (1)

The contribution of the Cambridge Platonists to English thought is particularly rich. In the sphere of religion, they aimed at comprehension and toleration. This entailed the repudiation of dogmatism, 'enthusiasm', and superstition. It also called for a sound, almost modern approach to Scripture. They rejected the current literalism which was at the root of faction, and advocated the support of the revealed by the rational, and of the spiritual to the intellectual. Their attempt to provide a rational basis for Christian truth is both satisfying and convincing. It indicates real insight and

1) Ibid., 78. Passmore's study is interesting in that it notes Cudworth's increasing emphasis on instincts and inclinations as the source of human activity. He finds Cudworth's stress on the passions as the first principles of motion very similar to Shaftesbury's conception of the 'ruling passion'. Ibid., 52, 53, et passim.
sound understanding of the human predicament. Much scholastic theology, or indeed seventeenth century polemics, uses reason as its method, but by failing to convince us of insight into spiritual truth it remains barren. The Platonists' arguments are both rational and spiritual, and hence evoke our respect. (1)

Their departure from Calvinism was balanced by their asserting its general moral temper. True, their teaching played a part in the decline of Calvinism, but this was not their express purpose. It was an intelligent, far-sighted attempt to preserve and universalize the old truths by relating them to the new intellectual and scientific trends, to conserve the depth and dignity of Christianity in its new role as conduct. Their preoccupation with morality reflects the growing interest of their time in man's place in the universe and in his immediate society. They recognized his immense potentialities, and emphasized his liberty in the face of all forms of authoritarianism. They defended his legal and political rights, and pointed out the way to his individual and social happiness. In all this they were

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sincere theologians. Their moral teaching was not an attempt to substitute morality for religion. In their view, practical morality was the greatest part of Christian truth. They conceived of knowledge and action as an indivisible whole, and provided a moral vision which was resilient enough to give men the sense of traditional religion, while it provided them with a system of ethics most congenial to their times.

The Cambridge Platonists were not isolated thinkers living in ivory towers. They were primarily dedicated divines who, for twenty years after the Restoration, were earnestly practising and expounding their views. Their pupils at Cambridge, and the audience flocking to hear their frequent sermons, testify to their impressive and successful teaching. Some of their publications ran into frequent editions during their life-time, and part of their work was issued and reissued posthumously. (1) Except for

1) Before More's death, "his writings were so much in vogue that Mr. Chishull, an eminent bookseller, declared that for twenty years together after the return of the king The Mystery of Godliness and Dr. More's other works ruled all the booksellers in London". Powicke, 155. Some of More's books ran into several editions, e.g. A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings of Dr. Henry More (four editions before 1712). Whichcote's Aphorisms was still being reissued as late as 1753. Culverwel's works ran into four editions before 1669: Spiritual Opticks was published by William Dillingham in 1652, and the complete works in 1654, 1661, 1669 respectively. Cudworth's Treatise on Immutable Morality was published posthumously by Bishop Chandler, 1731. Smith's Select Discourses were wholly printed in four editions: 1660,

(continued on the following page)
More, who seldom left Cambridge, they participated in public affairs. (1) On the whole, they were all committed teachers, eager to catch the public ear.

The extent of their influence, however, is not easy to assess. They did not form a school, in the current sense of the term, with a clear-cut, unanimously acclaimed set of principles. Their teaching was a body of thought embracing a wide range of topics, advocated with varying degrees of emphasis. (2) All of them, nevertheless, emphasized a pleasant, cheerful religion, an optimistic view of human nature, and the importance of imitating a God of love, benevolence, and good-nature. Their influence was mainly a spirit and a temper, and as such, succeeded in permeating the thought of their contemporaries. Whether collective or individual, it was transmitted through several and varied channels. (3) The most prominent of these were their immediate successors, the Latitudinarians of the eighteenth century.

(continued from the previous page)

(ed. Worthington), 1678, 1821, and 1859, respectively. Extracts from, and abridgements of his sermons were frequently published before the end of the eighteenth century. For accounts of publications, vide Tulloch and Powicke, op. cit., passim.

1) Whichcote and Cudworth were intimate friends of the leaders of the Commonwealth, and their advice was sought and valued. Vide. Tulloch passim, and Cragg From Puritanism, op. cit. 38.

2) Thus Whichcote stresses reason and good-nature, Smith the divine life, More spiritual experience, and Cudworth free will and immutable morality.

3) E.g. Locke, Shaftesbury, and the Deists. Vide, infra, 52 ff., 131 ff., and 57 ff., respectively.
ii. The Latitudinarians

The first appearance of the Cambridge Platonists was met with a storm of invective, ridicule, and contempt. Accusations of Arianism, Socinianism, Romanism, scepticism, and atheism were hurled at them by bigots from all quarters. To the Roman Catholics, they were downright heretics and atheists, to the Puritans, at best lax indifferentists, and to the High Church extremists, innovators and sceptics undermining the very basis of the ecclesiastical tradition. They did not even escape the censure of some extreme advocates of liberalism who branded them scholastic reactionaries. Their nickname was 'Latitudinarians', "the word of a foot and a half long", denoting 'trimming' in religion, and a "wide Swallow" in matters of faith. (1)

But the abusive, ill-defined term was destined to become both permanent and respectable. Soon after the Cambridge divines, it was extended to include, and finally affixed to a larger group of disciples led by Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Patrick." (2) The list of distinguished Latitudinarians in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries includes such prominent men as

1) E. Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, The Principles and Practices of certain Moderate Divines of the Church of England (greatly mis-understood) Truly Represented and Defended ... (London, 1670); 9, 10.
2) Bishop Burnet's History of My Own Time, op. cit., I, 335.
Isaac Barrow (1630-1677), Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680),
Thomas Tenison (1636-1717), Samuel Clarke (1675-1729),
and Benjamin Hoadly (1676-1761). Their outstanding success
testifies to the changing temper of the age, and to their
own acute awareness of the cultural patterns around them,
an awareness that resulted in a vigorous interaction
with their times and in their establishing a distinct
frame of moral and religious reference. Before 1688, most
of them were very influential preachers in London and
elsewhere (1), and it was not long before many of them
were translated to bishoprics. Tillotson and Tenison
attained the highest position in the Church of England. (2)

The mature works of the Latitudinarians of the
Restoration and Revolution periods reflect the deep
influence of the Cambridge Platonists. (3) Both groups of

1) Burnet preached at the Rolls Chapel, Stillingfleet at
St. Andrew's, Holborn, and at St. Paul's Cathedral,
Tillotson at Lincoln's Inn Chapel and at St. Lawrence
Jewry, Barrow at Varsity Church, Cambridge, and
occasionally at Whitehall, and Tenison at St. Martin's-
in-the-Fields.

2) They became archbishops in 1691 and 1695 respectively.

3) It has been claimed that Tillotson was not a disciple of
the Cambridge Platonists, for "he had no sympathy with
their mystical fervour and spiritual intuitions". James
Moffatt in The Golden Book of Tillotson (London, 1926),
Introd., 2. Tillotson's religious views, however, are
very intimately related to those of the Cambridge
Platonists. Notwithstanding a general toning down of the
evangelical character of religion, his sermons echo
Whichcote, More, and Cudworth at many points. Parts of
his sermons are similar both in form and content to
some of Whichcote's. Cf. for instance Moffatt's
selections on 217-38, et passim.
divines shared the same cultural and religious climate, and transmitted a consistent strain of religious liberalism most congenial to their times. Although the members of each group may differ among themselves, they are all agreed about the reasonableness of Christianity, its simplicity, clarity, and practicality. They reject schism, false zeal, and superstition, and advocate the essential goodness of man. Both groups uphold a Christian way of life at the core of which lies God's beneficence and universal charity. In their sermons, the humanitarian aspects of religion are brought to the fore and emphasized as the basic rule of faith.

The disciples, however, can easily be distinguished from the masters. The elevated and intense spiritual fervour of Smith and More is almost impossible to match in the writings of Tillotson and Barrow; the depth and learning of More and Cudworth can only be approximated in Stillingfleet and Patrick. Thus the mystical dimension of reason tends to be gradually relegated to the background. The Latitudinarians were more directly involved in the immediate political, social, and legal problems of the day, more keen on providing the ordinary man with a religiously oriented art of life. They were more successful than the Platonists in both reaching and
convincing an extensive audience, and in the permanence of the influence they exerted on English life and thought for over half a century. Historians of religion may cast aspersions on their orthodoxy and lament the absence of the grand and the heroic from their teachings; nevertheless, the Latitudinarians, especially their early leaders, were generally sincere and in full earnest. Their legacy of genuine religious liberalism is a strand of incalculable value in the complex texture of the Enlightenment.

Basic to their tenets was a belief in the supremacy of reason, an institution which was increasingly commanding respect in all quarters. Like their teachers, they considered it the test to be applied to every aspect of human existence. The 'Age of Reason had dawned', and Christianity was to undergo a severe, prolonged, and complex trial. (1) God had to be defended against Hobbists, Deists, Atheists, and free-thinkers on the one hand, and against Romanists and 'enthusiasts' on the other. To achieve this twofold purpose, even at the risk of inconsistency, the Latitudinarians found it imperative to emphasize the authority of reason, an authority then almost universally acclaimed albeit variously understood. (2)

But they were fundamentally eclectic, and their conception of reason had to be elastic enough to comprise seemingly contradictory elements: the natural and the supernatural, the purely intellectual and the purely passionnal.

Perhaps it is their eclecticism, motivated by an earnest effort to preserve and diffuse their notions of a practical Christian orthodoxy, that made them use the term 'reason' in a rather loose and general way. To Archbishop Tillotson it broadly signified 'understanding', 'conscience', 'judgement', 'wisdom' or 'direction'. (1) Barrow would "not undertake accurately to describe [it]", but understands by it a primarily practical capacity, "an habitual skill, or faculty of judging aright about matters of practice, and choosing according to that right judgement, and conforming the actions to such good choice". (2) To Stillingfleet, it was "natural light", "a perfection above sense", a function of the rational soul"to deduce the evidence of truth and vindicate divine Providence ". (3) It is capable of improvement and perfection through the apprehension of the common notions

1) The Works of Dr. John Tillotson...with a Life of the Author by Thomas Birch (London, 1820), 10 vols.; Sermon XXVIII. Future references to Tillotson's works will be to this edition, except where otherwise stated.

2) The Works of Barrow with a Life of the Author by James Hamilton (London, 1841); 3 vols., I, I.

3) Edward Stillingfleet, Origines Sacrae, 1662, 374, 370, 428, respectively.
inherent in man's nature. (1) Frequently, the Latitudinarians refer to it as conscience, which is "no distinct power or faculty from the mind of man, but the mind of man itself applying the general rule of God's law to particular cases and actions". (2) At times it means 'the heart' (3), but more often it is distinguished as the rational faculty whose function it is to regulate the passions. Thus the Latitudinarians did not attempt to formulate a specific fixed definition. To their early leaders reason was not so much abstract and logical speculation as a divine power common to all, a standard of truth stamped on the soul of man, enabling him to evaluate, discriminate, and judge rightly. The later Latitudinarians would tend more and more to conceive of it as the ordinary rational processes of the mind, but Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Barrow still retained much of the Platonists' conception: that it is primarily an agency whose principles are "either innate to our minds or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external

1) Ibid., 599,606.

2) Robert South, "Of the Nature and Measure of Conscience", included in Illustration of the Liturgy and Ritual of the United Church of England and Ireland, by J. Brogden, London, 1842. Although South's Latitudinarianism is disputed on doctrinal grounds, his rational and moral views are very much similar to those of the Latitudinarian divines.

3) Ibid., 453.
In the last decades of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries the reason of the Latitudinarians occupied a central place between two extremes: the cold calculations of deists, Hobbists, and freethinkers, and what they considered the dark, credulous slavishness of Romanists and 'fanaticks'. Tillotson was particularly critical of the latter group. After emphasizing the importance of rational belief, and warding off the accusation of Socinianism from Dr. Chillingworth, he remarks,

I cannot imagine how men can do a greater disservice to religion, than by taking it off from the rational and solid basis upon which it stands, and bearing the world in hand, that men ought to believe without reason; for this is to turn faith into credulity, and to level Christian religion with the vilest and most groundless enthusiasms that ever were in the world. (2)

The Latitudinarians' conception of reason, however, fluctuated between a belief in its complete and final authority on one hand, and the necessity, owing to its weakness, of subjugating it to divine revelation on the other. Barrow speaks of "the weakness and shortness of our reason, even about things most familiar and easy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmost diligence

1) Barrow, Works, op.cit., Vol.II, 64.
can attain to know..." (1) Thus the rational faculty to them was not the stagnant, rigid reason of the schools, nor was it an all-powerful, infallible, autonomous machine. Their conception was balanced between the rational and the supernatural, and intended as a sobering view to both groups of extremists. They regarded men as "naturally endowed with a sufficient power to assent to any truth that is sufficiently propounded to them."(2) If men fail to grasp eternal truths, this is due to their "own perverseness and obstinacy, which usually proceeds from opposition of their lusts, or passions, or interest..." (3)

Though nature and man were still suffering from the Fall, they were gradually emerging from the precipice to which they had been previously condemned. Human reason and free will were frequently emphasized, and the Latitudinarians were joining hands with the rank and file of physico-theologists in disseminating an optimistic view of human nature. The doctrine of human depravity was giving way to a belief in man's inherent goodness, and in his natural inclination to virtue and social good. Nature in its broadest sense was being vindicated from the stigma of corruption, and man was considered capable of attaining

1) Barrow, Works, op.cit., II,65 et passim; cf. also Stillingfleet, Origines Sacrae, op.cit., 345.
2) Tillotson's Works, op.cit., IX, 250.
3) Ibid.
the highest good. Barrow writes:

...the wisest observers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and sociable, inclinable to and fit for conversation, apt to keep order, to observe rules of justice, to embrace any sort of virtue, if well managed, if instructed by good discipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wise laws and virtuous governors. (1)

The emphasis on man as a social being had been earlier pronounced by the Cambridge Platonists. The Latitudinarians now dwelt upon man's essential 'relation' and 'likeness' to his fellow-men. Human nature, they held, has vast potentialities for goodness. They attacked Hobbes's egoistic principles, and asserted that "'men are naturally akin and friends to each other'. Some unhappy accidents and occasions may make men enemies, but naturally every man is friend to another: and that is the surest and most unalterable reason of things which is founded in nature, not that which springs from mutable accidents and occasions." (2) Equipped with sufficient reason and good social inclinations, man is perfectable and worthy of the greatest happiness.

Though the Latitudinarians stressed reason as the principal motive underlying virtuous conduct, they realized the important role of the passions and affections.

1) Barrow, Works, op.cit., II, 146.
2) Tillotson, Works, op.cit., Sermon XXXIII, "Of Forgiveness of Injuries and Against Revenge", II, 34.
They considered human nature controlled by two main passions: fear and hope. "Hope is as it were the spur that quickens us to our duty, and fear is the curb that restrains us from sin; and the greater the good hoped for, or the evil that is feared, the greater power and influence these passions have on us." (1) These passions should direct human conduct in such a way as to avoid eternal punishment and to achieve eternal reward. The divines insistently preached the control and government of the evil impulses. "A good man", Tillotson writes, "is not enslaved by passion, his reason is not subjected by inferior faculties, sensual appetites, and 'brutish passions'". (2) The worst among these was harmful self-love. To Barrow, this passion was 'culpable' when manifested in an immoderate form of self-interest, thus disregarding "the rules of justice, of humanity, of Christian charity". (3) To the Latitudinarians, as well as to the Platonists, the most beneficial affection to both individual and society was the inward principle of love expressed in an active, universal benevolence and good-nature.

The term 'good-nature' was very popular in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It

1) Tillotson's Works, Sermon CCXXIII, IX, 264.
was upheld as an exclusively English trait as well as a unique English expression. The Earl of Clarendon had set a tradition when, in 1660, he had appealed to the Lords and Commons to restore England to its old good-nature, "a virtue so peculiar to you, so appropriated by God Almighty to this Nation that it can be translated into no other language, hardly practised by any other people." (1) Later, he referred to this quality emphasizing what could be taken as its moral constituents. Good-nature to him was a compound of good manners, good humour, integrity, generosity, justice, compassion, friendship, and love of the common good. (2) This view was repeated by several influential writers and preachers, thus becoming a reiterated commonplace in the literature of the period. Among those who echoed Clarendon's words were Bishop Sprat, Edward Chamberlayne, and several other preachers and essayists. (3) From the


mid-seventeenth century onward good-nature was eulogized in general terms that were vaguely defined. It mainly signified an amiable, benevolent, public spirit concomitant with an active disposition to do good. Public spirit was frequently identified with good-nature (1), and was defined as a "settled and reasonable principle of benevolence to, or hearty concern for the welfare of human society" (2), "Neither the 'philanthropy' of the Greeks, nor the 'humanity' of the Romans", but "a quality absolutely necessary to finish a character truly amiable, manly, and divine". (3)

The Cambridge Platonists as well as the early Latitudinarians played a chief role in popularizing the concept of good-nature and benevolence, and in imparting to it a deeply religious significance. To them, good-nature and benevolence were not social platitudes, but genuine, active qualities inextricable from Christian love. These constituted the main part of Christian duty, for, as Benjamin Hoadly asserts, "Love, and Good-nature, and Humanity ... [are] the distinguishing Mark of a Christian". (4) They were manifested in universal charity

4) Benjamin Hoadly, Sixteen Sermons Formerly Printed..., (London, 1758), Sermon II "Of the Divisions, and Cruelties, Falsely Imputed to Christianity", 33.
of mind and temper, and denoted sympathy and fellow-
feeling. Good-nature was regarded as the distinctive
civilizing attribute of English Protestantism, and
Tillotson had reason to declare in the House of Commons
that Christianity "is not only the best, but the best-
natured institution in the world, and so far as any church
is departed from good-nature, and become cruel and
barbarous, so far is it degenerated from Christianity".(1)

To the Latitudinarians, then, good-nature was a
disinterested, generous disposition exalted above all
other passions. Its expression was in charity, the
quintessence of virtue and the sum of religion. It was
essentially the outcome of the tender feelings of the
heart. R.S. Crane well observes that in the sermons of
the Latitudinarians,

the words 'charity' and 'benevolence'
had a double sense, connoting not only
the serviceable and philanthropic actions
which the good man performs, but still more
the tender passions and affects which prompt
to these actions and constitute their
immediate reward. (2)

1) Works, op.cit., "On the 5th of November 1678, Before
   the Honourable House of Commons", II, 229.

2) "Suggestions toward the Genealogy of the Man of Feeling",
   ELH, I, December 1934, 214. He also points out the
   importance of their sermons as a source for the cult
   of benevolence, and stresses the intellectual and
   emotional constituents of this quality. Vide his
   remarks in PQ, XI, 1932, 203-5, 205-6, and Martin C.
   Battestin's admirable study of Latitudinarian ethics
   in his book, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, A
   Study of Joseph Andrews, (Middletown, Connecticut, USA,
   1959), 14-25, et passim.
The principal qualities of good-nature were cheerfulness and practicality. To the Latitudinarians, cheerfulness was an essential tenet, perfectly consonant with their liberal view of religion and optimistic view of man. This was in the face of the Calvinistic legacy of moroseness and morbid zeal. Between the two extremes of pessimistic Puritanism and Restoration immoral practices, they strove to inculcate a golden mean, stressing the cheerfulness and amiability of religion and morality. They denounced those who conceived of religion as "altogether sullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life". The truly good Christian, Barrow held, is

the most jocund, blithe, and gay person in the world; always in humour and full of cheer; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenor of carriage; no black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion, should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any frown, any cloud, doth sit ill upon his face... (1)

This cheerfulness, they all agreed, was both the cause and effect of a benevolent temper that impelled to virtuous actions.

1) Barrow, Works, op.cit., I, 410, 411, respectively.
The Latitudinarians preached the vital importance of an active Christian life as the ultimate end of Faith. They were acutely aware of the widening gap between theory and practice, the idea and the execution. Their emphasis on good works brought them into open conflict with the Antinomians who upheld the doctrine of unconditional justification by faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ, without regard to actual conduct. The Latitudinarians were unanimous in stoutly defending their conception of Christianity as a primarily practical religion. They went so far as to claim that "a charitable and good-natured Pagan has a better Title to [God's] Favour, than a cruel and barbarous Christian; let him be never so orthodox in his Faith". (1) Their emphasis falls on man's duty to regain his original perfection through the actual imitation of the Deity. All other considerations, such as piety, devotion and a belief in regenerating grace, were toned down, and were mainly regarded as instruments in realizing the good life. Their sermons are replete with demonstrations of such texts as St. Luke vi, 44, "For every tree is known by his own fruit &c.", and such maxims as "The Practice of Morality leads to the Practice of the Gospel". (2) All this at a time when George


Whitefield, John Wesley, and their followers were preaching man's natural depravity. Whitefield is reported to have declared that "Man is by nature, half-brute, and half-devil". To him, the teaching of the Latitudinarians was nothing but a refinement of Deism. The latter took up arms against such a conception of human nature, and decried the belief in an angry God. To them, the focus upon fear and tribulation, upon the spiritual struggle within the individual, and the necessity for a redeeming grace was irritating. Their primary concern was the actualization of man's innate divine potential; hence their lack of that sense of powerlessness in the face of evil which constitutes the driving force behind the doctrines of 'dark' Protestantism.

The benevolism of the Latitudinarians was the outcome of a confluence of various streams of thought, a curious blending of incompatible elements: the neo-stoical and the anti-stoical, the rational and the passional, the utilitarian and the eudemonistic, the temporal and the eternal. It is inseparable from


the discussions about natural law and moral law, and the relations between them. Such discussions dominate the thought of the period, and are indispensable for understanding the rise and prevalence of the idea of benevolence, its constituents, the divergent attitudes towards it (often explicit in the writings of the same author), all of which hinge upon what may be termed the head-heart dichotomy. The most significant aspect of these discussions is, it will appear, the gradual shift of emphasis from the importance of the head to that of the heart, and the increasing insistence on the superiority of public to private interest.

The discussions about the respective spheres of reason and passion in man constitute one of the basic ethical issues of the eighteenth century. The divines and moralists were then much concerned with the question whether distinctions between good and evil are made by reason or by sentiment, or by both. In 1751 David Hume noted that much confusion and numerous arguments, concerning the general foundation of morals, were prevalent. Nobody, he says, seems to have been aware of the opposition of reason and passion until very lately. He does not consider Shaftesbury free from confusion on this subject. (1) In 1897, L.A. Selby-Bigge

1) Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, Sec. I, vide the section on Hume, infra.
published his valuable work *British Moralists*, making the distinction between those who emphasized reason and those who stressed sentiment, the basis of arrangement. Thus he places the works of 'the intellectualists' in one volume and those of 'the sentimentalists' in the other. Though the moralists of that period differ about the nature of the moral faculty itself, Selby-Bigge writes, "they have one common object - to show that virtue is real and is worth pursuing in itself; that virtue and the motive to it are irreducible to a merely animal experience of pleasure and pain". (1) He further notes that the confusion in their speculations results from the difficulty in drawing inferences from the ethical faculty to the subject matter, motive, and the obligation of morality. (2)

The list of intellectualists includes Hobbes, the Cambridge Platonists, the Latitudinarians and Locke. Locke's great influence on the eighteenth century makes his ethical views worthy of notice. His empirical method made inevitable a closer scrutiny of the motives of virtue. After rejecting the theory of innate ideas, he had to demonstrate how moral ideas reach the mind. To him,

2) Ibid.
man is aware of the difference between good and evil through pleasure and pain. (1) Locke, however, raises the issue above the level of merely animalistic reactions to pleasure and pain; for he emphasizes that man should seek the utmost pleasure he is capable of by using his reason, which should be after the higher and not the lesser good. At some point in the process of education, reason takes over the task of distinguishing good from evil. (2) The good man is he who 'hunger's and 'thirsts' for virtue, and whose conduct conforms to the three sorts of moral rules: the divine law, the civil law, and the law of opinion or reputation. (3) It is reason that is necessary to effect such conformity.

Locke's insistence on the authority of reason is reflected in his attitude to religious 'enthusiasm'. This arises, he says, "from the conceits of a warmed and overweening brain", and weakens religion by substituting in its room "the ungrounded fancies of a man's own brain" which is a false foundation of conduct. (4) To him, Faith

2) Ibid., xxvii, 52-53; 348-49.
3) Ibid., xxviii, 5-15; 474 ff. Here, it is interesting to note Locke's view of duelling. Like many 18th century writers he considers it 'a capital crime', that deserves the name of sin. Ibid., Sec. 15; I, 481.
4) Ibid., Bk IV, ch. xix, Sec. 3; II, 430.
"cannot be afforded to anything but upon good reason; and so cannot be opposite to it". (1) He regards the service of God, Basil Willey aptly remarks, as perfect freedom; for

erroneous or capricious choices produce, not moral emancipation, but enslavement to the passions - a far more unbearable kind of determinism. God himself owes his 'freedom' to his being always determined by what is best, And the liberty of intellectual beings rests upon this, that in their constant search for true happiness they can suspend their desires until they have examined whether their satisfaction is or is not conducive to the enjoyment of the greatest good. (2)

Samuel Clarke realizes the implications of Locke's rationalism, and, in his own way, represents a rather extreme form of Latitudinarian intellectualism. Moral truth, he affirms, is apprehended by reason, in the same manner as mathematical truth. It is by reason that the individual discovers about natural and moral law, and convinces himself of following the right path. Thus reason to Clarke is the instrument of distinguishing between right and wrong, and the sole guide to virtuous action. He argues that man's original state of nature was ideal, that both right reason and virtuous affections were then the sound guides to goodness. In such an "original, uncorrupted State of Humane Nature", he maintains, "right Reason may justly be supposed to have

1) Ibid., IV, xvi, 24, II, 413.
been a sufficient Guide, and a Principle powerful
enough to preserve Men in the constant Practice of their
Duty." (1) After the Fall, men became corrupt, their
minds were marred by vicious inclinations, bad habits
and customs. These, together with ignorance, faulty
education, and early prejudices made them rationally
incapable of discerning eternal moral truths themselves,
and hence the great importance of Christian Revelation. (2)
This Christian rational attitude was an important factor
in the controversies involving Clarke and the deists.

Clarke conceives of benevolence as an essentially
intellectual virtue. Human reason, he holds, "is the
proper nature of man", and is capable, with the help
of Revelation, to discover the laws of nature and
morality; and benevolence is one of the basic natural
laws. Refuting Hobbes's doctrine of 'the state of nature',
Clarke writes:

That State, which Mr. Hobbes calls the
State of Nature, is not in any Sense a
Natural State, but a State of the greatest,
most unnatural, and most intolerable
Corruption, that can be imagined. For
Reason, which is the proper Nature of Man,
can never (as has been before shown) lead
Men to any thing else than universal
love and Benevolence... (3)

1) A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations
of Natural Religion and the Truth and Certainty of
the Christian Revelation (London, 1706), 239.
2) Ibid., 239, 240, 241 ff.
3) Ibid., 133-34.
His sermons are replete with references to benevolence and charity as the distinguishing qualities of the good Christian. In effect, he identifies the one virtue with the other, for charity is not mere almsgiving, it is the "Christian Temper and Disposition, that Love and Good-Will towards Mankind, which is the Great Foundation of All virtues ...." (1) It springs from the right principle of reason and thus is opposed to the violent passions of the heart: "the strength of Passions and Appetites, makes so great Opposition to the Motions of Reason; that commonly they yield and submit to practice those things, which at the same time the Reason of their own mind condemns..."(2) The ideal example of Christian benevolence is Abraham who was father to his people, and whose shining virtues were 'believing the True God' as well as 'doing Righteousness'. (3)

Clarke's system of morality, however, suffers from inconsistency. At the outset, he declares that knowledge of right is a sufficient motive to pursue it; but later, in trying to prove the necessity of benevolence, he becomes rather perplexed by the competing claims of self-love and his knowledge of human frailty and error.

In order to emphasize the religious sanctions of reward


2) A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations ... op. cit., 199.

and punishment he finds it necessary to prove that man is weak, and to show that his rational moral system is sound, he must demonstrate that sanctions are needless, that all man requires as a motive is knowledge and right. (1)

Clarke is distinguished for the part he played in refuting Deism. It may not be amiss at this point to state briefly the relation of the Latitudinarians to the deists of the early eighteenth century, for both groups have certain similar ideas despite their basic disagreements, and both were influential in diffusing the concept and practice of benevolence in the eighteenth century.

The teaching of Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648) - who is generally regarded as the forerunner of the English deistic movement - emphasized the existence of God, the obligation to worship Him by practising virtue, the repentance of sins, and rewards and punishments after death. These principles were the essential constituents of the 'religion of nature', the belief that human reason, unaided by revelation, can attain the basic truths of religion. Though deism exalted the rational at the expense of the spiritual, it was indirectly aided by the insistent emphasis on reason by the Cambridge Platonists and Latitudinarians. The deists quoted at length from

1) Vide Henry Sidgwick's analysis, which has been helpful here, in his Outlines of the History of Ethics (London, 1931, sixth edition, enlarged); 179-83.
the works of Burnet, More, Barrow, Tillotson, Locke, and Clarke in support of their contention that the religion of nature is antecedent to revelation. In his *Christianity as Old as the Creation: or the Gospel, a Republication of the Religion of Nature* (1730), Matthew Tindal calls them "the great and good men", to suggest that his deistic position is essentially similar to that of the leaders of the established church.

Like the rational theologians, the deists stress the importance of reason, and hail it as the supreme rule of conduct; Tindal agrees with Clarke on its function as "the Rule by which Men should govern all their actions", (1) and repeatedly insists that it is the natural ability which distinguishes good from evil. (2) He quotes from Locke to demonstrate that it must be the guiding light of nature which points out the duty of man, (3) and that without its dictates human beings are victims to superstition, fanaticism, and all kinds of mischief. (4) The deists hold that man should regard anything that is alien to reason as unworthy of attention. They concede the reasonableness of Christianity, but in doing so they subject it to a cool, calculating logic. Thus, they go so far as to say, "whosoever live by Reason are

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2) Ibid., 66, et passim.
3) Cf. 294, 343, and 391.
4) Ibid., 85 ff.
Christians" (1), and "what proceeds from common reason we know to be true, but what proceeds from faith we only believe". (2) Though Tindal professes that the ends of natural and revealed religion are the same, his book is a deliberate attempt to undermine revelation and banish the element of mystery from Christianity. (3)

The deists reject the doctrine of faith as preached by 'fanatics', and equate religion with right conduct. Man's paramount concern, they insist, is the good life; and the essence of religion "consists in believing and practising such Things, as have a real Worth and Excellency in them, tending to the Honour of God, and the Good of Man".(4) As for Faith by itself, the devils believe and tremble without avail.(5) Christianity, in its original state, was pure ethics, and men were then following their inner 'natural light'. At that time, all was perfect and society was living in a Golden Age. But men later became corrupt due to their rejection of the light of nature, and this resulted in bad customs, habits, and behaviour. The deists underline the decadence of their contemporary society and find it incumbent upon them to advocate moral and social reform, and a return

2) Charles Blount, Philostratus (London, 1680), Bk I, ch.v, illus.6, quoted by Cragg, Reason and Authority, op.cit., 78.
3) Tindal, op.cit., 69-84; cf. his attack on priests for what he terms 'monopolizing' Religion, 121.
4) Ibid., 136. Also, "Faith is only to be esteemed by the Works it produces", 52.
5) Ibid.
to the purity and simplicity of nature. (1) This can be realized if men follow their inner natural light. It has been remarked that the 'inner light' of the deists is more or less the same as the 'moral sense' of the sentimentalists, and that:

The early deists held that the inner sense presupposed an innate idea, but after Locke had made his powerful influence on the movement felt, all the deists save Shaftesbury called it a true sense based on instinct. (2)

Like the Latitudinarians, the deists believe that man's rational and passional endowments entitle him to the greatest happiness. The passions are virtuous so long as they are used aright. Reason directs and regulates actions while pity, benevolence, fidelity, magnanimity, and sympathy enable man to lead a happy social life, where the public good is superior to the private. Thus, reason and passion constitute a harmonious whole, for both function in unison to achieve universal benevolence. Tindal clearly exemplifies the deistic attitude when he writes, "Man, as our Divines maintain against Hobbes, is a social creature who naturally loves his own species, and is full of Pity, Tenderness, and Benevolence" - and reason is essential

2) Ibid., 9. Vide the section on Shaftesbury, infra, 31 ff.
3) Tindal, op. cit., 56. Vide also, ibid., 18, et passim.
unanimously uphold benevolence as the fundamental constituent of the good life; they claim that "there's nothing can atone for want of strictest sincerity, impartial justice, and universal benevolence; and that they are obliged to govern their activity by that eternal law by which God governs his own actions". (1)

The moral ideas of the deists, then, are quite similar to those of the Latitudinarians. Both groups speak of imitating a God of love and benevolence, and insist on right reason, the perfectability of man, the social animal, and on the beauties of the virtuous life. The deists, however, tone down the spiritual aspect of Christianity, and leave out of their systems the heavy stress on Christian providence, of rewards and punishments, which the divines repeatedly emphasize. The deists hold strictly to the idea that virtue and vice are rewarded and punished intrinsically; and thus do not conceive of evil in the same way as the Latitudinarians, for the latters' conception of man's nature concedes a degree of corruption. By differing about rewards and punishments, the deists take away what to the divines is the ultimate guarantee of the reality of virtue, and the value of its pursuit. The divines advocate a fuller and more realistic conception of man, and call persistently for a life of

1) Tindal, Christianity as Old, 51-52. This is a different edition from the one used hitherto, also published in London, 1730.
benevolence whose rewards are often reaped in this world, and invariably realized in the next.

On the whole, the arguments of the divines were much stronger than those of the deists. The latter's lack of spiritual concern was a grave weakness in their systems. Moreover, the divines, much more than the deists, emphasized the necessity of practical charity. Deism led often to the hollow arguments and verbal emptiness about 'fitness', 'relation', and the 'rule of Right' which Fielding so often ridicules. (1) To the Latitudinarians of the time, the deists seemed to substitute the contemplation of virtue for its practice; and they warned their followers against such a negative attitude. Thus Henry More points out that:

it is erroneous to think the Fruit of Virtue should consist in such imaginary knowledge as is gotten by bare Definitions of Virtue: for this amounts to no more, than if a man would pretend to know the Nature of Fire from the bare Picture of Fire, which can afford no Heat ... (2)

The deists, however, were influential in spreading the call for benevolence and good-nature, thus reinforcing the views of the divines, and reflecting the tendency of the age to emphasize man's goodness and tender feelings.

In his perceptive and painstaking study of Religious Trends

1) Vide, infra, Ch. III, i/ii, 240-68.
in English Poetry, H.N. Fairchild points out that
Christianity and deism were so close in the Age of
Johnson that it was very difficult to distinguish between
them. (1) The emphasis on benevolence and good-nature
was deriving increasing vigour by drawing on both
religious and secular thought.

The work of Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough,
accentuates both secular and religious arguments for man's
natural benevolence. In his De Legibus Naturae Disquisitio
Philosophica (1672) (2) Cumberland was among the first to
proclaim, in opposition to Hobbes, that man is naturally
social, that the very nature of his abilities and
faculties necessitate a social environment in which he
is impelled to promote benevolence. (3) The
limitation of human abilities urges men to society,
and disposes them to friendship and close cooperation. As
their aim is the greatest attainable happiness, Cumberland
holds, they must exercise the utmost love they are
capable of towards the greatest possible number, for
"the law of Universal Benevolence, obliges, with
respect to all persons, and at all times the weak as
well as the Strong; in private as well as in publick." (4)

1) H.N. Fairchild, Religious Trends in English Poetry,
(5 vols., New York, 1939, 1942, 1949, 1957, 1962), I, 484, 541,
et passim.
2) Translated by John Maxwell in 1722. It was abridged in
1692 by Sir James Tyrrell, close friend of Locke, and author
of a series of tracts against Filmer's theory of absolute
sovereignty.
1727), 125.
4) Ibid., 237.
Thus, for Cumberland the law of nature is universal benevolence, i.e. the common good of all rational beings. This law is attained by reason through experience, and sanctioned by the will of God. (1) Cumberland, unlike the Cambridge Platonists, holds that there are no inscribed principles of knowledge in the mind, and that reason cannot itself constitute the law of nature. Like Locke, he stresses the role of experience as a means of knowledge. Reason, he maintains, cannot determine "what is the fittest and best Thing, or Action, any Person can perform in a Case proposed" except by experience. (2) Nevertheless, reason is the essential basis of benevolent actions. It is congruent with the social affections, and both elements are effective in producing "that inward Pleasure and Satisfaction, which all Rational and Good-natured Persons must necessarily take in the due exercise of these sweeter Passions of Love, Joy, and Desire". (3)

Cumberland's paramount concern was the refutation of Hobbes's selfish theory of human nature, and to prove

2) Ibid.
3) Ibid., 129.
that self-love is compatible with benevolence. His optimistic view of human nature was in line with that of the Platonists, the Latitudinarians, and the deists. Such a view was bound to be opposed by the supporters of Hobbes among whom Bernard Mandeville was a prominent figure.

Mandeville's writings restate some of Hobbes's ethical views on human nature. His fully developed ideas appear in The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Publick Benefits, (1) in which he includes a dissertation entitled "An Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue". (2) The Enquiry opens with an assumption of Hobbes's theory regarding the warfare in the state of nature and the selfish character of man. (3) He then discusses another Hobbesian idea with regard to moral relativism. He finds that the politicians, supported by the moralists and philosophers, have agreed "to call every thing, which, without Regard to the Publick, a Man should commit to gratify any of his Appetites, VICE;" if this action is harmful to society, "and to give the Name of VIRTUE to every Performance, by which Man, contrary to the impulse of Nature, should endeavour the benefit of others."(4)

1) First published in 1714.
2) This is the second edition of the Fable which appeared in 1723.
4) Ibid., I, 48.
He attempts to show that religion has not produced a distinction between virtue and vice, (1) and describes the manner in which social order is established out of the confusion and anarchy of the state of nature. Here Mandeville's view differs from that of Hobbes. To the latter, it is human reason that should be exercised to suppress the selfish desires, in order to form a social contract conducive to the establishment of the conditions favourable to man's life. Mandeville maintains that man's prosperity and civilization are based on human pride, not reason. The politicians, realizing this, have utilized the master passion of pride in manipulating men and inducing their consent, not only to civil laws, but also to artificially created laws of morality. He concludes:

It is visible then, that it was not any Heathen religion or other Idolatrous Superstition, that first put Man upon crossing his Appetites and subduing his dearest Inclinations, but the skilful Management of wary Politicians; and the nearer we search into human Nature, the more we shall be convinced, that the Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon pride. (2)

It is the selfish passions, then, which constitute the basis of Mandeville's view of human nature. His harsh and cynical views of man were anathema to Latitudinarians

1) Ibid., I, 56-57.
2) Ibid., I, 51.
and deists alike, and brought upon him accusations of atheism, scepticism, and moral corruption. He was arraigned as an enemy of civil society, devoid of any humane feelings. Among those outraged by his views were William Law(1), Francis Hutcheson,(2) Bishop Butler (3), and Bishop Berkeley. (4) In his thorough study of Mandeville, F.B. Kaye concludes that:

Mandeville is lacking in any religious feeling or idealism. His rejection of all absolute laws and knowledge, his insistence on the animal facts of life - these are not the result of any rigorous distrust of nature as it is, but of such complete faith in that he feels no need for any beliefs by which to attempt to lift himself above it. (5)

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1) Vide his Remarks upon a late book, entitled The Fable of the Bees (London, 1723).
2) Vide section on Hutcheson, infra, 145-64.
3) Fifteen Sermons (London, 1726).
5) F.B. Kaye, op. cit., Introd., I, liv-lv.
iii. Three Portraits of Goodness

1. Steele's Christian Hero.

The importance of the early eighteenth century moral essay as a leading force behind the rise of the English novel cannot be over-estimated. Whether as a manual of behaviour urged on a certain group, an extended tract on general conduct and exemplary manners, or a literary periodical, it provided topical and formal elements that contributed to the shaping of the novel. It has been rightly claimed that

the rise of the great schools of English novelists with Richardson and Fielding at their head was rendered possible ... by the essayists and party writers of the reign of Anne, by Addison and Steele, by Swift and Defoe. (1)

The influence of the essayists was not limited to stylistic development, it also extended to subject-matter, intention, attitude, and method of treatment. Both media professed the same purpose, both were complementary in reflecting and directing the emerging social and cultural forces of the time. The periodical essay in particular provided the novel with a vast wealth of material which was most congenial to its moral intentions. "The leaflets

composing the Tatler and the Spectator are written from the standpoint of a great novelist, and abound in material which might as well have been wrought into a great novel."(1) Such also are the leaflets publicizing Steele's portrait of goodness, greatness, and heroism, written in his other capacities of Christian censor, Guardian, Lover, and zealous Englishman.

The Christian Hero (1701) is one of Steele's early investigations of the constituents of goodness. It is a better example of the numerous moral and religious essays published in the early eighteenth century, and reflects the emphasis on benevolence as a primarily Christian virtue. It also illustrates the Latitudinarian convictions of a writer who had a marked influence on his contemporaries. In addition to its vogue in the first half of the eighteenth century (2) it was a nucleus around which Steele himself and other writers would later create a world teeming with characters and events. The conception of the good man urgently emphasized here is the same to be later propagated in his periodical essays, tracts, plays, and correspondence.

1) Ibid., 124.
2) It ran into fourteen London editions between 1701 and 1755, and into twenty two editions up to 1820. Cf. Richard Steele, The Christian Hero edited by Rae Blanchard (London, 1932); 89-97. Ensuing references to this book are made to this edition.
To Steele, the good man is essentially a Christian, i.e. a believer in revelation, dedicated to the imitation of Christ, and the saints of His primitive Church. Moral philosophy and practice cannot have value in themselves without being firmly based on Christian principles. For, "whatever Law we may make to ourselves, from the Greatness of Nature or the Principles of Philosophy for the Conduct and Regulation of Life is it self but an Artificial Passion, by which we vainly hope to subdue those that are Natural ..." (1) Steele is particularly vehement in denouncing Stoic philosophy for its emphasis on pride and self-isolation. He is grieved to note that "the Heathen struts and the Christian sneaks" in the imagination of his contemporaries. (2) The Stoic insistence on reason and the extirpation of the passions, he holds, results in insensible vanity and ill-nature. These usually end with ruin as in the case of Cassius whose courage is "the worst only Good Quality a Man can have". (3) Again, Brutus's good-nature and benevolence, because not Christian, end in violent disaster. Thus, "Ill men where they cannot meet a convenient vice can make use of a virtue to a base purpose". (4) Steele contrasts the

1) Ibid., 34.
2) Ibid., 15.
3) Ibid., 22.
4) Ibid., 24.
excellent virtues of the early saints to the misused virtues of the heathens, and finds that the latter were motivated by egoistic passions, "for sure they have a futile Pretense to a good publick Spirit, who have an ill, private one". (1) The violent deaths of Caesar, Brutus, and Cassius testify to the justice of Providence in effecting their ruin.

Steele conceives of Christianity as an essentially social experience to be shared in a practical way. It is "a vigorous motion of action" (2), whose call is supreme because of its very practicality. It recognizes the basic complexity of the individual's mental, and emotional make-up, and accepts it as raw material, chaotic in its 'natural' state, and moulds it to the best advantage of humanity. Steele recognizes that "we are as well akin to worms as to angels" (3), but that

We may rest assured that it is a stable, sober and practical, as well as generous, exalted and heroic position, that true greatness of mind is to be maintained only by Christian principles. (4)

The supreme virtue of the Christian hero is charity, a universal passion which is innate in all human beings,

1) Ibid., 30.
2) Ibid., 83.
3) Ibid., 52.
4) Ibid., 70.
and manifested in acts of benevolence. All men, he holds, are "fram'd for mutual kindness; good will and service". (1) They are impelled to virtue by this 'enlarg'd love to serve the world'. (2) Such love epitomizes all God's Law, and embodies all social virtues.

To Steele, as to the Latitudinarians, benevolence was not a mere social platitude; it had genuine and vital implications. The term had not then been watered down to mean merely 'complaisance', 'amiability', and kindness in a vague, general way. Like the divines, Steele emphasized this virtue in the strongest, and most glowing, vigorous terms. He frequently waxes eloquent when he discusses the numerous forms taken by this "noble spark of celestial fire". (3) Its components are love, generosity, magnanimity, cheerfulness, friendship, true honour, liberty, and all other heroic qualities. Primarily, it is a passionate love for the public good consonant with 'noble' self-love and alien to harmful egoism. Such egoism is the source of all evils; it is at the root of hypocrisy, false honour, bigotry, 'fashionable' vices, particularly

1) Ibid., 78.
2) Ibid., 82.
3) Ibid., 78.
the sin of duelling. He vehemently denounces this evil in all his writings (1), and finds it a flagrant breach of Christian charity and compassion.

The benevolent passions of the heart stand in direct opposition to obdurate reason and self-love at the expense of humane inclinations. Steele's conception of benevolence as the outcome of the balance between head and heart, effected by the guidance of Christianity, is representative of the Latitudinarian position. Thus his recognition of the natural, good affections is balanced with his sustained faith in Christian reason. The role of reason, he holds, is essential in directing and rectifying human passions. True, reason cannot extirpate evil and 'artificial' feelings as the Stoics maintain, but its part in sublimating them, in being responsible for conscience, and "the knowledge and judgement of what we are doing" (2), is all important. As long as reason has shed its pagan trappings, Steele has faith in it. Saint Paul "urges virtue with all the Reason, Energy and Force that either good Sense or Piety can inspire", (3) and Jesus and Saint Paul are supreme examples of Christian

1) Vide, infra, 79, 81.
2) The Christian Hero, 72-73.
3) Ibid., 62.
heroism because they "strike all along the reason".

In his attempt to urge a practical Christian morality Steele is a follower in the wake of Jean F. Senault, Timothy Nourse, George Stanhope and the numerous host of anti-Stoical campaigners. What these writers aim at really is not so much the rooting out of all Stoic principles as the defence of Christian charity. They frequently admit the excellence of Stoic virtues and often fail to stifle their admiration for them. (1) Stanhope commends "the brave attempts they made towards the reducing Nature to its primitive purity and perfection", and attacks only "their way of treating the passions". (2) Like Stanhope, Steele exalts the passions, and affirms that they are "the secret springs that move and actuate us". (3) In shifting the basis of moral philosophy from reason to the passions, or in subjugating the former to the latter, or both to divine Grace, these religious writers, whether Latitudinarian (like Stanhope and Samuel Parker),

1) E.g. "We must not presently pass a rash and rigorous sentence of utter excision upon them, but try some gentler and more prudent method, because the same things are equally capable of producing a great deal of good." George Stanhope, Epictetus His Morals with Simplicius His Comment (London, 1694, also editions in 1700, 1721, 1741, 1750, etc.), Preface.

2) Ibid., Preface.

3) Ibid., Preface.
Catholic (like Senault), or other were collaborating
to defend Christianity against the waves of deism
and atheism. "Morality ... if it will be profitable,
must be Christian" (1) was their message. Like Senault,
Steele sets out to demonstrate the naturalness of the
passions, their tractability, and the necessity of
employing them wisely. He echoes Senault's statement,
"that there is no passion in our soul, which may not
profitably be husbanded by Reason and by Grace." (2)

Steele's Christian hero, then, is a pious,
charitable believer, actuated by his natural generous
affections to do good, and directed by a rational
faculty that provides sound Christian guidance.
His benevolence should be manifested in actions aiming
at the good of the whole, and opposed to harmful egoism.
His greatness does not derive from material riches or
worldly rank; true heroism is within grasp of the
poorest Christian, provided he has a wealth of good-
nature. Steele's attitude here is interesting. Throughout
his writings he seems to derogate riches and the rich, (3)

1) J.F. Senault, The Use of the Passions, translated by
Henry Earl of Monmouth, 1671, Preface.
2) Ibid., 518. For Steele's position regarding the Stoic -
anti-Stoic discussions vide Blanchard's excellent
Intrades to the Christian Hero, XIII ff.
3) "Riches is a much more dangerous dispensation than
that of poverty", The Christian Hero, 76; also,
"the poor hero is as certainly ragged as the poor
villain hang'd", Ibid., 50.
owing to his awareness that vice waits upon material wealth. His position here, like that of Fielding (1), is that of the traditional idealist who considers luxury worthless without virtuous actions.

To perfect his virtue, the good man must be primarily a seeker, a traveller on the "road of life", whose arduous journey needs careful preparation against temptation. There are frequent references to life as a voyage, as a hard and weary march. (2) Like the sermons of the period, *The Christian Hero* utilizes the traditional symbol of the journey in stressing the struggle to attain virtue. He is primarily a pilgrim whose progress, like that of Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones, and William Booth, leads to wisdom and happiness. (3)

Steele's first essay foreshadows his later achievements in the periodical essays and the drama. These have the same corrective purpose, the same social and religious preoccupation with benevolence, though not the pietistic temper, or the earnest ascetic tone of *The Christian Hero*. In his later works he adds entertainment to instruction, and evolves an even and urbane style more suitable to the taste of the Town. But his principal theme remains the same, with the emphasis shifting from the dedicated, ascetic

Christian to the accomplished gentleman.

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1) Vide, infra, Ch. III, i, 214-214.

2) *The Christian Hero*, 14, 73, and 16, respectively.

3) Vide, infra,
The principal virtues of the gentleman are good-nature and benevolence. These are primarily social virtues that sum up religion and morality. In the Tatler No. 219, Steele emphasizes good-nature as the opposite of all malice and mischief, zeal and wrath. It is the equivalent of true gallantry, and the quintessence of polite 'conversation'. Its components are moderation, "forbearance of calumny or bitterness" (1), and good-will to all mankind. Benevolence is an innate quality which cannot be acquired. It is the supreme accomplishment of the gentleman and should be the dominant virtue in conversation:

Hence it is, I take it for a rule, that the natural and not the acquired man, is the companion. Learning, wit, gallantry and good breeding, are all but subordinate qualities in society, and are of no value, but as they are subservient to benevolence, and tend to a certain manner of being or appearing equal to the rest of the company; for conversation is composed of an assembly of men, as they are men, and not as they are distinguished by fortune. (2)

Thus Steele, consistently upholding the Christian ideal of benevolence, popularizes it the more by satisfying the hankering of his readers after polish, urbanity and correct manners. This is one of his successful means to make Christianity fashionable. (3)

1) The Tatler No. 45.
2) Ibid.
3) Cf. e.g. The Guardian Nos. 79, 166 and The Spectator Nos. 346, 350, and 248.
In his emphasis on benevolence as sociability, Steele follows in the wake of the Latitudinarians and other writers, utilizing the popular Terentian maxim: *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto.* (1) He finds that the order of the universe makes it essential for men to be drawn together in communities, clubs, and various social units, and that the strongest attraction is to the nearest relations. (2) Benevolence, he insists, should be extended to embrace the whole of humanity. This can only be achieved by overcoming the private passions that "often obstruct the operation of that benevolent, uniting instinct implanted in human nature", for "the selfish man who is untouched with it [the sense of humanity]... is indeed a sort of monster". Thus humanity and fellow-feeling are the initial virtues of the gentleman, and it is Christianity, not freethinking, that promotes them through the injunction "love thy neighbour." (3)

The next essential quality is good breeding, which, to the gentleman, is more important than learning. It

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1) Terence, *Heaut.* Act i, Sec. 1. Steele uses this maxim as the motto of *Guardian* No. 126, August 5, 1713. Cf. the same maxim, utilized in the same way by Thomas Sherlock in his sermon: *The Nature and Extent of Charity*... (London, 1735), 2. This saying recurs in the writings of several authors of the period, and was favoured by Fielding. Vide, infra, Ch. III, i, 209.

2) *Guardian,* No. 126.

3) This, together with the previous two quotations, is from the same *Guardian.*
embraces all that is graceful and ornamental to human
nature, and is inseparable from a sense of honour. Steele
denounces the 'fashionable' concept of honour that
courages the vain and selfish to commit crimes of
revenge and duelling. Like the divines, Richardson, and
Fielding, he satirizes those who are "more careful to
guard their reputation by their courage, than by their
virtue". (1) To him, duelling is "a diabolic madness", a
crime against both religion and the laws of the nation. (2)
It is incompatible with courage, for it is only a coward
that never forgives. It is inconsistent with the amiable,
generous, and heroic Christian temper which upholds true
meekness and humility. (3) Such a "chimerical, groundless
humour" can only be the outcome of a false view of
reputation. The "modern men of honour" who practise this
vice are deluded by vanity, bad education, and an
essential lack of fellow-feeling that deprives them of
their humanity. (4) The height of good breeding is shown
rather in never giving offence, than in being obliging. (5)

The distinguishing marks of a true fine gentleman,
Steele states in the Guardian (6), are those that qualify
man "as well for the service and good, as for the ornament
and delight of society". He should have a dignified, elevated
mind, "a clear understanding, a reason free from prejudice,

1) Guardian, No.161. 2) Ibid., No.20, "On Duelling".
3) Ibid. 4) Tatler, No.25. Cf. Tatler Nos. 29, 31.
5) Ibid., No. 21. 6) Guardian, No. 34.
it is firm and intrepid, void of all inordinate passions, and full of tenderness, compassion and benevolence. When I view the fine gentleman with regard to his manners, methinks I see him modest without bashfulness, frank and affable without impertinence, obliging and complaisant without servility, cheerful and in good-humour without noise. These amiable qualities are not easily obtained; neither are there many men, that have a genius to excel this way. A finished gentleman is perhaps the most uncommon of all the great characters in life. Beside the natural endowments with which this distinguished man is to be born, he must run through a long series of education... religion... all moral virtues... (1)

These qualifications reflect Steele's conscious idealizing of the concept of the gentleman, which both epitomizes Christian goodness, and adds worldly refinement, ornament and polite conversation. It is evident that it is a wholly selective order that only few can aspire to join. Nevertheless, it is a requisite in a civilized society, where good breeding, higher education, and true 'fashion' should prevail together with Christian goodness.

Of his later works The Conscious Lovers (1722) exemplifies Steele's continued emphasis on the constituents of goodness. It was a great success at the time, and seems to have been dear to Fielding's heart. (2)

1) *Guardian*, No. 34.
2) Vide, infra, Ch. IV, ii, 360.
The hero of *The Conscious Lovers*, Bevil Junior, is the personification of sound reason and noble passions. He "takes more delight in reflexions than in sensations;" (1) he is not only wise but teaches others that "there's nothing manly, but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice." (2) His charity and benevolence are "the effect of an humane disposition", whose main purpose is "to ease an aching heart, to see a humane countenance lighted up into smiles of joy ..." (3) His ruling passion is doing good, a Christian practice motivated by a generous love of others, and not hampered by self-interest or mercenary prudence. The generosity of his heart is contrasted with the passion of avarice that dominates Cimberton. Bevil Junior's charity and wisdom make him reject the prevalent un-Christian notions of false honour and heroism, such as hypocrisy, duelling, and all other fashionable evils. He personifies a concept of goodness Steele has always emphasized, and is finally rewarded by both wealth and the hand of his beloved. Steele here follows the requirements of the middle class traditional morality of the day. He does not ignore the material

1) *The Conscious Lovers* (1767 ed.) 32.
2) Ibid., 53.
3) Ibid., 33.
part of the reward. He resorts to the age-old 'deus ex machina' technique to stress that virtue is compensated in this world as well. By a wondrous turn of Providence Indiana proves to be the wealthy Sealand's long-lost daughter from his first wife. Steele's basic views of benevolence tempered with reason and working in unison with God's Providence, are stressed throughout. The exemplar of good-nature, Bevil Junior, embodies all the constituents of Christian virtue so earnestly expressed in The Christian Hero, and subsequent writings.
2. The Good Man of The Spectator.

The Latitudinarian conception of the good-natured, benevolent Christian permeates the essays of the Spectator. It underlies the portrait of goodness which is both directly and indirectly emphasized in the array of various characters depicted by the essayists. Such a portrait is necessarily idealistic, and its detail is gradually communicated to the reader in no systematic order, since the essays were written by several hands and on different occasions. Good-nature and benevolence are emphasized either directly and positively in characters like Sir Roger de Coverley, or by negatively describing various evils and evil-doers. The presentation of defects serves the cause of virtue by suggesting their opposites. This method is at times marked in one and the same character: Sir Roger's demerits are foibles that project his goodness, and make him more acceptable as an individualized character. They also offer scope for the artistic potentials required by the corrective media of humour, satire, and ridicule, all of which are utilized to serve the foremost purpose of the Spectator: the upholding of
virtue and the condemning of vice.

Sir Roger de Coverley's principal virtue is natural, unaffected benevolence. He is portrayed as an innocent, amiable knight who radiates warmth and readiness "to please and oblige all who know him". His heroism lies in his crusading against vice and the vicious, and in his pronounced charitable disposition. He is frequently referred to as "the good old Knight", "the good old Man", and "a great Lover of Mankind". (1)

Sir Roger's benevolence is an amalgam of many virtues: he is a cheerful Christian, a zealous patriot, a just magistrate, and his charity extends even to animals. His "benevolence flows out toward everyone" (2), and all around him, especially his servants, are deeply touched by his "Honour and Generosity". (3) Even his hunting dogs are not willing to kill a hare. His benevolence reaches a climax toward the end of his life: his death is reported after seeing "Justice done to a poor Widow Woman and her Fatherless Children that had been wronged by a Neighbouring Gentleman". His bounty reaches every member of the wide circle of his servants, his family, his friends, his clergymen, and all the inhabitants of his parish. (4)

2) Ibid., Nos. 112, 329, 269, 106.
3) Ibid., No. 107.
4) Ibid., No. 517.
Throughout the papers that recount his deeds, Sir Roger's benevolence is underlined by little blemishes on his character such as his Toryism. These are intended to put his exemplary good-nature in a better light. Corbyn Morris, in 1744, observed that "His [Sir Roger's] foibles are all derived from some amiable cause", and that the reasons for our love and esteem for his character are "his Honour, Hospitality and universal Benevolence", just as in real life our love and esteem would go to any man with these qualities. (1) Morris stresses the amiable, cheerful benevolence of Sir Roger, and finds it emanating from a good heart. His theory of humour applies to Sir Roger since he

frequently exhibits very generous Benevolent, sentiments of Heart; And these, tho' exerted in a particularly odd Manner, justly command our Fondness and Love. (2)

The Latitudinarians' conception of the cheerful and amiable calling of a Christian influenced a host of writers led by Addison and Steele. Addison often turns to the Latitudinarian divines in his articles in the


2) Ibid., 24.
Tatler, the Spectator, and the Free-Holder. One of his well-known papers in the Spectator deals exclusively with cheerfulness. (1) Here he prefers cheerfulness to mirth, because cheerfulness is more "fix'd and permanent", more clarifying to the mind, "and is very conspicuous in the Characters of those ... who have been deservedly esteemed as Saints and holy Men among Christians". He praises cheerfulness in its threefold capacity: "with regard to our selves, to those we converse with, and to the great Author of our Being". It helps the individual to master all his powers and faculties, and gives him an even, amiable temper that makes him relish the pleasures of life. In his relations with other men, it makes him sociable, lovable, and endearing because "A cheerful Mind is not only disposed to be affable and obliging, but raises the same good Humour in those who come within its Influence." Thus "the Heart rejoices of its own Accord, and naturally flows out into Friendship and Benevolence towards the Person who has so kindly an Effect upon it". Addison considers cheerfulness a distinctive quality of the good man, inseparable from benevolence to which "the vicious Man and Atheist have therefore no Pretence,... and would act very unreasonably, should they endeavour

1) The Spectator, No. 381.
after it". In relation to God, cheerfulness is a recognition of His blessing, a rejoicing in His existence, and a happiness projected by a virtuous and acquiescing mind, because

A Man who uses his best Endeavours to live according to the Dictates of Virtue and right Reason, has two perpetual Sources of Cheerfulness; in the Consideration of his own Nature, and of that Being on whom he has a Dependance. (1)

Thus cheerfulness is both the cause and effect of "virtue and right reason", and an important constituent of a good-natured, benevolent temper.

A manifestation of the optimism current at the time, cheerfulness was not simply a reaction against Calvinistic morbidity and moroseness. It was a general symptom of the widespreaing rationalism, the advancing pace of progress in the various spheres of human endeavour. It both expressed and accentuated the increasing importance of man as a social and moral agent, trekking away from the medieval idea that man is the unworthy, necessarily sinful, weakling, whose sole preoccupation should be the perpetual adoration of the Almighty. Nevertheless, cheerfulness in the Spectator is an integral part of benevolence and good-nature, and as such has a deeply religious character.

1) Ibid., No. 381.
The Spectator's portrait of goodness stresses the harmonious integration of human faculties. Each faculty should function in its proper order, and balance should be maintained between all, otherwise excess and jeopardy will ensue. Thus reason must regulate passion, and both are indispensable in motivating moral action. Reason alone is not enough, because "a wise Man is not always a good Man". (1) The principles of reason, morality and religion should be in due proportion, so must be their resultant virtues: wisdom, good manners (2), honour, modesty, generosity, cheerfulness, tolerance, good-nature and the other good qualities. The residue of such harmony is the emergence of the good man as a whole-sided entity in whom each faculty is consonant with the rest, and whose homogeneous actions combine to contribute to the public good: "I lay it down therefore for a rule", Steele writes,

that the whole Man is to move together; that every Action of any Importance is to have a Prospect of publick Good; and that the general Tendency of our indifferent Actions ought to be agreeable to the Dictates of Reason, of Religion, of good Breeding; without this, a Man, as I before have hinted, is hopping instead of walking, he is not in his intire and proper Motion. (3)

1) Ibid., No. 6.
2) Cf. "To polish our Understanding and neglect our Manners is of all things the most inexcusable". Ibid., No. 6.
3) Ibid., No. 6.
The Spectator essays deplore one-sidedness in all its forms whether as harmful zeal (1), vanity and affectation (2), pedantry (3) or any of the other evils caused by one or more unbridled passion.

Of all the virtues extolled in the Spectator good-nature is singled out as supreme. In his two papers which deal exclusively with good-nature (4) Addison defines it as an inherent "Disposition of Mind", diametrically opposed to "Envy, Malice, Treachery, or Injustice". It is basically a social virtue whose purpose is the common good, and whose essential constituents are "mutual Offices of Compassion, Benevolence and Humanity". Good-nature is "generally" an innate, improvable quality, which cannot be acquired by education. (5) Addison considers it the result of physical, rational, and emotional aspects. (6) It is the effect of a happy constitution, and health and prosperity thrive on its existence. He identifies it with benevolence or the "Overflowing Humanity", and the "exuberant Love to Mankind" which Xenophon's philanthropic hero displays. (7)

1) Ibid., Nos. 185, 93, 201, 459, et passim.
2) Ibid., Nos. 38, 16, 66, et passim.
3) Ibid., No. 105.
4) Ibid., Nos. 169, 177.
5) Ibid., No. 169.
6) Ibid., No. 177.
7) Ibid., 169.
Addison prefers good-nature to mere justice, extols its mercy, emphasizes throughout its genuineness as opposed to artificial good-breeding, and upholds its results: real "Affability, Complaisance and Easiness of Temper". He defends the good-natured man against the accusation of being deprived of wit. The virtue of humanity, he maintains, goes hand in hand with wit. What happens really is that

The Ill-natured Man, though but of equal Parts, gives himself a larger Field to expatiate in, he exposes those Failings in Human Nature which the other would cast a Veil over ... (1)

In his broad and rather loose definition of good-nature Addison considers it the sum of all virtues. The good-natured man to him is a shining example of sheer good. Such a view of human nature is necessarily optimistic and ambitious. And yet Addison concedes man's inborn evil, and is aware of "every Man's natural Weight of Affliction", and of the "Storm beat[ing] upon the whole Species". (2) The function of good-nature is to act as a balsamum, a cure of the inherent canker. In its genuine, preferably secret charity, and its ornamental apparent agreeableness it is the medium to extinguish "half the Misery of Human Life", "the general Curse they [men] lie

1) Ibid., No. 169.
2) Ibid., No. 169.
under", and "shows Virtue in the fairest Light, takes
off in some measure from the Deformity of Vice, and
makes even Folly and Impertinence supportable". (1)

After considering the physiognomical characteristic
of good-nature, Addison proceeds to examine it as a
moral virtue. His criteria are its stability and consist-
tence, its consonance with reason and duty, the readiness
to sacrifice "Fortune ... Reputation ... Health or Ease,
for the Benefit of Mankind". (2) It is characterized by
Christian charity in its widest sense: to alleviate the
hardships of the poor and needy, the ignorant and the
afflicted, contributing to their physical, intellectual,
and spiritual well-being. His emphasis on charity is not,
however, mainly of the pietistic type. Prudential elements
creep in, and he advises that

we should manage our Charity with
such Prudence and Caution, that we
may not hurt our own Friends or
Relations, whilst we are doing good
to those who are Strangers to us. 3)

In effect he advises generosity without "impoverishing
oneself". Charity becomes,

sometimes sacrificing a Diversion
or Convenience to the Poor, and turn-
ing the usual Course of our Expences
into a better Channel. 4)

Its reward is "that secret Satisfaction and Contentment

1) Ibid., No. 169. These quotations stress the seriously
Christian - moral meanings of charity, benevolence, and
good-nature. Addison does not consider these virtues
mere social palliatives, they are a cure for 'the
general curse'. This strong language reflects his deep
and genuine concern.
2) Ibid. No. 177 3) Ibid. 4) Ibid
of Mind", and also to "make our selves not only their Patrons [the poor's], but their Fellow-Sufferers". Like the Latitudinarians and other popularizers of the doctrine of benevolence, he quotes from the book of Job, pointing out the emphasis of Scripture on the clothing of the naked, the feeding of the hungry and the visiting of the imprisoned. (1)

The good-natured man of the Spectator is essentially a man of this world, living in a certain ethos, with a galaxy of religious, intellectual, emotional, and social factors that make it incumbent on him to be benevolent. The Spectator portrait of benevolence at times soars to devotional heights (2), but it is not, generally speaking, exclusively religious, at least it is not of the predominately devotional type William Law emphasizes. In effect, it smacks too much of earthliness and practicality, and, even more than that of the Latitudinarians, tones down the evangelical aspect of religion, and draws largely from an extensive worldly informed frame of reference.

The essayists of the Spectator generally regard the Christian experience as indispensable to the good life. They stress the importance of divine justice, God's rewards and punishments, as the prime motives of moral action.

1) Ibid., No. 177.
2) Cf. Ibid., No. 356.
Addison, however, and only in *Spectator* No. 459, goes further. He distinguishes between religion as sheer faith in revelation and religion as a concrete practical set of duties dictated by reason and natural religion. He is aware of the widening gap between those who uphold faith only and those who stress practical morality. Despite the emphasis he lays on the interdependence of faith and practice, Addison subordinates the former to the latter for six reasons. Among these are the "fixed nature" of morality in comparison with faith, the utility of benevolence, being "more beneficial to the World", and because

> Morality gives a greater Perfection to the human Nature, by quieting the Mind, moderating the Passions, and advancing the Happiness of every Man in his private Capacity. (1)

Faith to him here is important only in its function as a support to morality, and no faith is worth the name "which does not contribute to the Confirmation or the Improvement of Morality". (2) Here Addison's attitude to practical religion approximates that of the liberal divines. To him religion is a concrete, efficacious factor in everyday life.

As popularizers of the ascending cult of benevolence the position of the *Spectator* essayists is basically Latitudinarian. Benevolence is mainly rational and

1) Ibid., No. 459.
2) Ibid.
practical, and yet it leans heavily on sentiment and passions. It is a moral trait to be fortified with the other virtues prescribed by the moral law, and consonant with the law of nature. They reiterated its dependence on the heart, and urged the extirpation of the evil passions by reason. If that was not possible, the mind should regulate or refine them. (1) Their staunch defence of benevolence and its constituent virtues was both influenced and substantiated by their readings of the classical writers, and of the contemporary psychology of the passions, the current modified Pelagian attitude to religion, and by an acute awareness of the practical, social, and ethical issues of their period. While at times they profess Christianity's superiority to philosophy on the grounds that the latter is not practicable (2), they, and particularly Addison, often recur to classical philosophy in order to illustrate their moral views. Addison frequently quotes from "the moral Heathens" such as Seneca, Socrates, Horace and Epictetus. (3) One of his reasons for this is that many readers "among us are unreasonably disposed to give a more fair hearing to a pagan philosopher than to a Christian writer". (4)

1) Ibid., No. 71.
2) Ibid., No. 634.
3) Vide NOS. 93, 68, et passim; and the Free-Holder, No. 45 (1716)
On the whole, the essayists are not prejudiced against other religions, and their outspoken preference of morality to mechanical religion makes the reader occasionally suspect that their main emphasis lies more on benevolence, and that Christianity is only an ornamental, additional framework. (1)

In his two papers on benevolence contributed to the Spectator, Henry Grove, a dissenting preacher and tutor of Taunton, attempts to define this quality, its relationship to the reason and the passions, and the best means to make it function freely. His position is interesting in that it both reinforces and qualifies that of Addison and Steele, and clearly expresses the utilitarian strain in a conception of benevolence wholly based on the passions.

In Spectator No. 588 Grove vindicates human nature from the blemishes such philosophers as Epictetus and Hobbes cast upon it. He denounces them as egoists who abuse benevolence by considering it a human weakness. Identifying benevolence with good nature, he claims that it is a social virtue existent in all men. It is an "innate Propension", an "Original Growth of the Heart of Man", which;

1) Ibid., Nos. 79,459.
however checked and overtopped by counter Inclinations that have since sprung up within us, have still some Force in the worst of Tempers, and a considerable Influence on the best.

This is a qualification of the recurring view that it is a blessing confined to the fortunate few. Grove considers it a general reflection of God's beneficence and plenitude in human beings without exception, and as such should motivate the welfare and satisfaction of society. He points out that it is the outcome of complete harmony and proportion between head and heart, and their corresponding principles of self-interest and social love. Grove here is conscious of the implications of the head-heart dichotomy and his paper is an attempt to reconcile them. He commends the inter-action of heart and mind to produce a harmonious, rational, and benevolent set of moral actions. In his view man has the double capacity of being both rational and social, both self-loving and benevolent. The good passions underlying benevolence "anticipate our Reason, and, like a Bias, draw the Mind strongly towards it". Though he admits the prime importance of self-love, and upholds it as a completely rational and worthy motive, he stresses its due subordination to the tender passions of the heart. The utilitarian strain in Grove's papers is
more marked than that of Addison and Steele. True, Grove advises the disinterestedness of benevolence, but he also emphasizes its service even when disinterested. "Benevolence", he argues, "though a distinct Principle [from self-love], is extremely serviceable to Self-Love, and then doth most Service when 'tis least designed".

In Spectator No. 601 Grove discusses the causes of ill-nature, and the means of restoring benevolence to those who suffer from a "frozen" good-nature or restrained benevolence. In his view the causes that suppress benevolence are physical, material and mental. The unhappy constitution of the body results in an "illiberal Cast of Mind" since "the Capacities and the Dispositions of the Soul depend, to a great Degree, on the bodily Temper". Illiberality of mind, though inborn, could be cured by following "a Course of Beneficence", by "establishing a moral Habit, which shall be somewhat of a Counterpoise to the Force of Mechanism". Distinguishing between mental and bodily habits, he points out that in order to improve the former the mind has to be continually strengthened against greed and vice. The second cause of ill-nature is the love of the world. Again unbalanced self-love, greed, and envy are attacked, though Grove's utilitarianism is again pronounced in holding that self-interest is a
natural disposition. To cure the ill-natured from too much love of material gain, he attempts to convince his readers that "the greatest Pleasure [of wealth]... is that of doing good". The third enemy of benevolence is "Uneasiness [of the mind] of any Kind". He considers those with a guilty or discontented mind as most miserable, and advises love and friendship to overcome envy and hatred. The cure for all these causes is to "Place the Mind in its right Posture, it will immediately discover its innate Propension to beneficence".

As the most exquisite expression of good-nature, benevolence is identified and interrelated with greatness and heroism. One of the recurring themes in the Spectator is the true greatness of the benevolent man, his heroism in a superficial world faultily impressed by appearances, titles, and hearsay. "True Greatness doth not consist in that Pomp and Noise wherein the Generality of Mankind are apt to place it". (1) It lies in a socially active benevolence whose medium is self-denial. Steele considers such benevolence "the great Foundation of civil Virtue". He identifies greatness and heroism with self-denial and finds them within reach of all those who are "above mere Poverty". The distinction of the

1) Ibid., No.622.
great man is his benevolence, not his rank,

and the Man who does all he can in
a low Station, is more an Hero than
he who omits any worthy Action he is
able to accomplish in a great one. (1)

But the great man should not advertise his charity,

Virtue in Obscurity often appears
more illustrious in the Eye of
superior Beings, than all that
passes for Grandeur and Magnificence
among Men. (2)

Self-denial should be complete in a truly disinterested
act of benevolence, and hence the heroism and greatness
of those public-spirited people who often exist, not at
the head of armies or in courts, but "out in Shades and
Solitudes, in the private Walks and By-paths of Life". (3)

The theme of the great, benevolent man is here linked to
that of retirement. But it is not the retirement of the
Neo-Stoics; proud, isolated and self-centred. The Spectator emphasizes a moral greatness which is active in
both rural and urban 'milieux'. M. Røstvig writes,

Addison's ideal is practical and social
in its implications; his retired rural
dwellers form the pattern for a new style
of living which combines dignity, urbanity,
and good sense with active benevolence

1) Ibid., No.248.
2) Ibid., No. 622.
3) Ibid., No. 610.
towards others. There is not a trace left of that self-centred love of ease which characterised the 'beatus vir' of the preceding generation. Here everything is focussed on man's moral duties. (1)

Throughout the Spectator Addison and Steele dwell upon the joys and happiness of the good man, whether in town or country, whether of high or low station. True, there is a pronounced emphasis on rural retirement (2), and on the country as a field where benevolence can thrive. (3) Mr. Spectator himself is reserved and retired in the sense that he lives in the world "rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species". But his love of mankind is manifest throughout, and his very impracticality is turned to practical good purposes: "the Diversion or Improvement of the country" (4), and, to make "proselytes to the interests, if not to the practise of wisdom and virtue among such multitudes of readers" (5); thus he has not "Lived in vain". (6) Sir Roger is a fine country "Gentleman of Worcestershire" whose benevolence in the county is widespread (7); and Sir Andrew Freeport, after having made his fortune from trade decides to leave

2) Spectator, Nos. 610, 477,
3) Cf. for instance Ibid., No. 248.
4) Ibid., No. 1.
5) The Free-Holder No. 45 (in discussing the purpose of the Spectator and the Tatler.
7) Ibid., No. 2.
the town for the country. (1) Addison observes that "true Happiness is of a retired Nature, and an Enemy to Pomp and Noise, and "false Happiness loves to be in a Crowd, and to draw the Eyes of the World upon her". (2) But together with emphasis on the advantages and beauty of the country and the frequent depiction of a happy benevolent retired life, the essayists take every opportunity to suggest, both directly and indirectly, the prominent evils of the rural communities: their hypocrisy, slander, affected charity, corrupt politics, party-zeal, and suspiciousness. All this is forcibly marked through various episodes in which Sir Roger, Sir Andrew Freeport, and Will Wimble take part. (3) The essayists' purpose and method are concrete and practical: the impression of a cheerful, active goodness in its various forms, and the denunciation of

Vice and Folly ... where-ever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous Stations of Life. (4)

The benevolence of the good man results in a sense of pleasure and satisfaction, and contributes to his

1) Cf. Røstvig, Op.cit., 19."Sir Andrew's retirement is neither solitary nor self-centred; rather it turns him into something of a public benefactor by virtue of the care which he takes to improve his land along with his mind".
2) The Spectator, op.cit., No. 15.
3) Ibid., Nos. 108, 114, 117, 125, 126, 131.
4) Ibid., No. 34.
cheerful, optimistic and religious frame of mind. (1) Human benevolence is both a reflection and an imitation of divine benevolence, God's beneficence and mercy have placed man in the best possible of worlds, and the good man's inward cheerfulness and acquiescence to divine will "is an implicit Praise and Thanksgiving to Providence under all its Dispensations". (2) Addison remarks that God has designed the world according to His will, and that there is nothing fortuitous on earth; even the anatomy of creatures is a sign of His wisdom. (3) Benevolence is inseparable from an overwhelming faith in Providence, from "Trust and Confidence in the great Disposer of all Things". It means the good man's realization of his natural imperfections and helplessness. Such a faith is its own reward. (4) The belief in Christian Providence is accentuated throughout, together with the recurring emphasis on the inherent limitations of human nature:

The most perfect Man has Vices enough to draw down Punishment upon his Head, and to justify Providence in regard to any Miseries that may befall him. (5)

1) Ibid., No. 381.
2) Ibid., No. 381.
3) Ibid., No. 543.
4) Ibid., No. 441.
5) Ibid., No. 548.
Addison holds that the good man's sufferings, decreed by a Wise, Beneficent and Omniscient Being, are purifying and instructive. He points out that it is more ethically edifying to represent the virtuous man in distress than to show him "happy and triumphant".

Such an Example corrects the Insolence of Human Nature, softens the Mind of the Beholder with Sentiments of pity and compassion, comforts him under his own private Affliction and teaches him not to judge of Men's Virtues by their Successes. (1)

To sum up the conception of the good-natured man in the Spectator: he is a Christian hero in his own right, fully interacting with the world he lives in, his amiable and benevolent disposition being the outcome of all his faculties working in unison. He achieves a balance of head and heart by regulating his unbridled passions. He has good sense, good manners, generous passions, and a charitable temper. His benevolence coincides with a robust, happy constitution, and is motivated by the rules of religion and morality. A friend of mankind, he identifies his happiness with that of his fellow-men. Preoccupied with the public good, his predominant good passions impel him to alleviate the hardships of the poor, the ignorant, and the afflicted; and

1) Ibid., No. 548.
to do his best in contributing to their physical, mental and spiritual happiness. His benevolence outweighs any natural imperfections he may have, and consolidates all his virtues. He crowns all his actions with a deep belief in divine Providence. (1)

Sharply contrasted to the portrait of the good-natured man is that of the ill-natured whose glaring evils set off and project the constituents of benevolence. The prominent vices of the ill-natured are self-love, vanity, and affectation, false honour, slander and backbiting, avarice and luxury, party-zeal, physical distortion and bad looks, raillery, bigotry, and envy, "the Tyrant Custom" of duelling (2), subjugation of reason to corrupt passions, and irreligion in any form.

1) Ibid., Nos. 75, 121.
2) Ibid., No. 84.
William Law's Serious Call.

The tradition of the Christian hero has a long history in English religious literature. William Law's masterpiece, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728) is another conspicuous example of the treatment of the 'good Christian' theme. This book, which superseded his practical treatise on *Christian Perfection* (1726), reflects in many ways the widespread views of Christian goodness and benevolence, the attitudes to rationalism, emotionalism, practicality, and the perfectibility of man. Despite the distinct devotional and mystical aspects of the portrait Law depicts, this High Church divine and Non-juror has much in common with the thought of his contemporaries. (1) He was deeply involved in the theological, social and ethical questions of his time, and his writings, especially the earlier ones, re-

1) Leslie Stephen rightly observes that Law's portraits "remind us that he was in fact a contemporary of Addison, Steele and Swift. Miranda and Flavia and Lucius and Mundanus might, with a little expansion, have made admirable papers in the Spectator." He further notes that coincidences in language suggest that Pope borrowed from Law. *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1876), II, 399.
fect a constant engagement in these issues. (1)

The good Christian, according to Law, is a rational creature who "has received reason and knowledge from [God]" and who is thus able to follow "the strict rules of piety". (2) Like the Latitudinarians, Law insists that revealed religion is confirmed and strengthened by reason, and that it provides the good man with the only guidance to attain happiness and perfection. These goals form the predominant themes of A Serious Call, and though Law is fully aware of the inherent blemishes of human reason and passions, he holds that both happiness and perfection are attainable through a rational life of devotion and piety. Such a life is not necessarily ascetic, nor are its constituents contradictory. For piety requires us to renounce no ways of life, where we can act reasonably, and offer what we do to the glory of God. All ways of life, all satisfactions and enjoyments, that are within these bounds, are no way denied us ... all that you can perform conformably

1) Law's writings include works denouncing Bishop Hoadly's famous sermon "On the Nature of the Kingdom or Church of Christ", Dr. Joseph Trapp's Four Sermons on the Folly, Sin, and Danger of Being Righteous Overmuch, Mandeville's The Fable of the Bees, and Matthew Tindal's Christianity as Old as the Creation. He also wrote a treatise on the Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage-entertainment.

2) A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, edited by Norman Sykes, Everyman's edn. (London, 1955), 123. All ensuing references to A Serious Call are to this edition.
to a rational nature, and the will of God ... is allowed by the laws of piety. (1)

It is for this insistence on the essential harmony between faith and good works that Edward Gibbon commends Law for disclaiming "the strange contradiction between faith and practice in the Christian world". (2)

The goodness Law advocates is a compound of fervent faith and good works, motivated by sound reason and the benevolent passions. *A Serious Call* emphasizes the idea of personal holiness in both its devotional and practical aspects. Devotion according to Law is a life of constant prayer, and this is indistinguishable from action:

... we can no more be said to live unto God, unless we live unto Him in all the ordinary actions of our life, unless He be the rule and measure in all our ways ... (3)

Like Steele and the Latitudinarians, he identifies belief with ethical conduct, and upholds the example of the early Christians whose spirit and lives were those of the Scriptures, where "All is reality, life and action". (4) But Law's portrait of the good Christian is easily distinguished by its pietistic and devotional fervour, and

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1) Ibid., loc.cit.
4) Ibid., 167.
at times he seems intent "on a state of separation from the world". (1) His appeal to the customary prudential motives of goodness is not pronounced, though his description of the joys and happiness of the good Christian verges on what may be rightly termed "hedonistic spirituality".

The good life Law preaches is the result of an active harmony between 'the head' and 'the heart'. Though he sometimes identifies the intellectual motives of devotion with the good passions, he is usually aware of the dichotomy. Reason is essential in regulating the motions of the heart, and, coupled with action, it results in piety. (2) But the head by itself is not sufficient; without the support of the heart and its good passions, reason and judgement suffer. Law satirizes Classicus and Flavia, two of his negative characters, for following the dictates of their minds only. The folly of Classicus was that "it never entered his head to think of devotion as a state of the heart, as an improvable talent of the mind". (3)

Law's attitude to the passions is a mixed one. He often advocates the complete rooting out of the violent passions, such as envy, pride, ambition, and evil-speaking, because of their rebelling against God, nature, and reason, and for their being the cause of all disquiets and vexations

1) Ibid., 225.
2) Ibid., 122,123.
3) Ibid., 183-84.
of human life. (1) Such passions constitute ill-nature, and result in utter misery for those who, like Flatus, are carried away by them. The character sketch describing Flatus exemplifies the contemporary view of the evil passions, and may have inspired several similar episodes of profligate men, who were "left to the follies, anxieties, delusions, and restless desires...". (2) While Law accepts no moderation of the evil passions, often advising their complete extirpation, he at times stresses the necessity of regulating them by reason. His position regarding the benevolent passions is different. He insists on their supremacy even over reason, for religion to him is justly placed in the heart, and because of their fundamental role in achieving goodness through guiding reason and conscience.

The most important passion is love:

There is no principle of the heart that is more acceptable to God, than an universal fervent love to all mankind, wishing and praying for their happiness; because there is no principle of the heart that makes us more like God, who is love and goodness itself, and created all beings for their enjoyment and happiness. (3)

By this universal passion Law does not mean "any natural tenderness which is more or less in people, according to  

1) Ibid., 116,117.

2) Ibid., 136-7Gibbon acknowledges Law's skill in painting the portrait of his (Gibbon's) father, represented here as Flatus. The Autobiographies, op.cit., 381-83. Cf. Fielding's accounts of profligate men, especially those of "Mr. Wilson" and "The Man of the Hill".

3) A Serious Call, 278.
their constitutions"; but "a larger principle of the soul founded in reason and piety, which makes us tender, kind and benevolent to all our fellow creatures..." (1) As the very essence of benevolence it must be realized in external actions as well as in inner faith and goodwill.

Law upholds active benevolence as the indispensable duty of the good man. In addition to refraining from all evil, it consists of helping and educating the poor, curing the sick, relieving the afflicted, and being charitable in giving indiscriminately to beggars and abandoned sinners. All this is exemplified in the character of Miranda whose compassionate mind and charitable temper are the foremost traits of her character. (2) In real life, such active charity is exemplified by Law's own benevolent deeds. During his spiritual guidance of Miss Gibbon he founded a school for girls, and his native village of King's Cliffe was the scene of many an example of his practical goodness. (3) Law considers benevolence a disinterested consuming passion of the heart that does not stop short of any work of love and goodness. Its practical expression is in giving generously. "If there be nothing so glorious as doing good", he remarks,

1) Ibid., 283.
2) Ibid., 79-84.
and fathers, and benefactors, to all our fellow-creatures, imitating the Divine love, and turning all our power into acts of generosity, care and kindness to such as are in need of it. (1)

In addition to being a perfect example of charity, meekness, humility, and love for mankind, Law's Christian hero must have a deep and overwhelming faith in God's providence. This is an essential trait of the good, rational Christian because it proves his admiration and glorification of God's acts. (2) Law emphasizes this quality incessantly, urging Christian resignation to the Divine will. The example of Abraham, "called from comfort to be a pilgrim in a strange land", is dwelt upon in detail, and held high as "the true pattern of a Christian"(3), because of his belief in Providence as the power "presiding over the whole world", ordering man's life, nature and state. The good man believes that

God's Providence over states and kingdoms, times and seasons is all for the best: that the revolutions of states, and changes of empire, the rise and fall of monarchies, persecutions, wars, famines and plagues, are all permitted, and conducted by God's providence, to the general good of man in this state of trial. (4)

The result of this belief is cheerful resignation to God's will, and a deep conviction that this world, in spite of its numerous evils, is the best possible of

2) A Serious Call, 317.
3) Ibid., 318.
4) Ibid., 314.
orders. Thus the good-natured, benevolent Christian is resigned and happy because he knows that all is for the best.

The theme of providence is a recurring commonplace of eighteenth century writings, and its treatment varies according to the religious and intellectual leanings of the various writers. Law's conception is like that of the Latitudinarians and Steele, especially in their opposition to the insensible, proud resignation of the "heathen" moralists to the assaults of fortune. (1)

Law's Christian hero is easily distinguished by his soaring spiritual idealism and evangelical ardour. Nevertheless, he remains basically the Christian hero of Steele and the Latitudinarians. His heroism is the outcome of a good-natured, cheerful, practical benevolence, actuated by an effective harmony of passions and reason, and by a deep belief in the human capacity to attain perfection through a faith that finds expression in doing good. So far as his conception of benevolence is concerned, Law is an eclectic, and his eclecticism is similar to that of the majority of his fellow thinkers and theologians. To think of him solely as "an incarnation of the counteracting forces which were gradually stirring beneath the surface"

of contemporary society "(1) is to belittle the many similarities of his thought to that of his contemporaries. His religious and moral views reflect a mingling of various strains of thought common in his day. His position of the primitive Christian, his rationalism (though of a particular, elevated nature), his insistence on practical charity, his view of the passions, and his cheerful, benevolent religion - all this emphasizes that he is a product of his age. The numerous editions of his religious and moral works attest to the great popularity he gained among his contemporaries. (2)

1) L. Stephen, History of English Thought, op. cit., II, 390. Cf., also, ibid., 403. Stephen considers Law's conception of Faith "opposed to the whole rationalist theory, whether of the deist or the orthodox variety; it was so opposed that it could find scarcely any sympathy at the time, and for that reason it indicates one characteristic of the contemporary thought". English Literature and English Society in the Eighteenth Century, (London, 1904), 106.

2) A Serious Call, for instance, ran into at least ten editions before 1772, and 20 editions before 1816.
II. The Wisdom of the Heart.

The ancient conflict about the roles of reason and passion in deciding human conduct goes back at least to the Stoics and the Epicureans. The typical Stoic position regarding this conflict was predominant, with various modifications, throughout the early Christian period. (1) It was basic to the upsurge of an insatiable interest in human conduct, a feature most characteristic of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In this period, it is almost impossible to assess with any precision the contribution of Stoic philosophy to moral thought. To isolate the numerous strands of this thought, and trace the impact of each complex of Stoic idea, its mutations, metamorphoses, and relations in the flux of other ideas is necessarily a thankless task which is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the widely diffused influence of Stoicism in Fielding's Neo-Stoical age (2), and his direct and indirect access to the philosophy of the old masters,

1) Vide, infra, 118-20.

2) Vide Rae Blanchard's Introduction to The Christian Hero, op.cit., Jonathan Swift's depiction of the Hynhnhnms in the fourth voyage of Gulliver's Travels exemplifies his preoccupation with the ideals of the uncorrupted reason and the 'perfection of nature', two Stoic concepts widely publicized in the Augustan age.
make it necessary to note some typical aspects of their attitude to human reason and passion.

To the Stoics (as, indeed, to philosophers and moralists in general) the chief components of man are his body and his soul. The most important of the soul's faculties is reason, a faculty that differentiates the human being from the brutes, and enables him to act freely and in harmony with the universal laws of nature. Being a part of the great 'macrocosm' of the Universe, he should take his place in that great rational order by striving to act naturally, that is, in conformity with reason, the 'logos'. This involves an ordering of the soul that entails the strict dominance of his reason over his will and passions. The Stoics, almost unanimously, conceived of the passions as unnatural tensions and disagreements in the soul, which should be suppressed by the wise man. As stormy states of the soul, they were the impediments to wisdom and happiness. For,

whereas Zenon regarded them as merely an exaggerated or perverted movement of the motive impulse, what Chrysippes chiefly condemned in them was an error in judgement, which he put down to the too weak tension of the 'negimonicon', of a reasoning being. All the 'passions' then, 'are equally wrong'. (1)

They were generally condemned as diseases of the mind, the evil enslavers of men, since "the very word 'passion' suggests that [a man] is an object, not a subject, a sufferer, not an agent" (1) and since Plato suggests that the term 'eros' is derived from 'eishein' (to flow in), "because passion enters a man from without" (2). Thus, the good man is he who subjects his passions to the supreme authority of reason. This firm, unyielding power is capable of exterminating the passions and of effecting a calm moral autonomy. Each man, they maintained, can rule himself by his own reason, independent of divine aid. The happiness and perfection of the individual can only be secured by his impassivity. "Remember", Marcus Aurelius has advised, "that ... the mind free from passions is a citadel: man has no stronger fortress to which he can fly for refuge and remain impregnable." (3)

In general, the Stoics divided the passions into four principal classes: pleasure, pain, desire, and fear. Under

2) Ibid. The Platonists, on the whole, tended to view the passions as effective aids in the moral struggle, while, in general, the Aristotelians considered the passions as benevolent only when moderated by reason. To Seneca the passions are "as bad subordinates as they are leaders", and as to moderation, he retorts "moderate passion is nothing more than moderate evil", Seneca's *De Ira*, I.ix,4, and I, x, 4; Seneca, *Moral Essays*, English trans. by John W. Basore, 3 vols. (Loeb Lib. edn., London, 1928), I, 131, 133 respectively.
these, they recognized about seventy passions. (1) Some of these were considered rational and good while the others were rejected as disastrous. Diogenes Laertius, after defining the Stoics' primary passions and some of their sub-divisions, writes:

1) Robin, op. cit., 354.
passions. (1) In effect, the pervasive influence of Stoic philosophy on Western culture through successive ages is largely due to its relations with Christian teachings. (2)

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries abound with editions of Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. These appeared in rapid succession from the hands of translators, editors, and commentators, (3) divines and laymen alike. Despite this marked interest, there was a general onslaught on what was held to be the Stoics' godless arrogance, and sullen self-sufficiency. Such attacks permeate the religious and moral thought of the period. They recur in the sermons, poetry, and periodical essays, with the frequency and insistence of an established convention. The Cambridge Platonists, the Latitudinarians, Addison, Steele, and Pope, to mention only a few, were unanimous in condemning the Stoics' unholy pride, in-

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1) Cf. "The similarity in tone and content between parts of the Pauline epistles, the writings of Seneca and the records of the teaching of Epictetus, has long been familiar to students of Christian theology; the simple explanation is that Paul was brought up in Tarsus in a society permeated with Stoic thought". Ibid., 864.

2) "No system of philosophy, at any rate in the Western world, has borne fruit in practice to an extent comparable with that of Stoicism ..." Ibid., 863.

3) E.g. Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704), the prominent journalist and popularizer whose Seneca's Morals by Way of Abstract (1678) ran into at least 17 editions before the end of 1756. It is interesting to note this statement of purpose in his preface "To the Reader": "In this State of Corruption who so fit as a good honest Christian Pagan, for a Moderator among Pagan-Christians?"
sensitivity and cheerlessness. (1) To the defenders of Christianity throughout the ages, the good passions had a special importance. Christians, it was thought, had to emphasize the hope of reward and the fear of punishment in the face of an increasingly disturbing rationalism. In the Augustan period, the theory of the passions was convenient in stressing the cheerful and joyful Christianity preached against the sullen 'enthusiasm' of religious 'fanaticks'.

Curiously enough, however, the same Christian apologists who attacked the Stoics' harsh treatment of the passions did not desist from paying them the highest tribute when it suited their purpose. These refuters of Stoic philosophy, most of whom were classical scholars of a high order, frequently quoted from the works of the established masters - Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius - to substantiate their own arguments concerning the supremacy of reason, the advantages of extirpating

1) Cf., for instance; "For by what we find in Seneca and others, it appears, that the Stoicks seeking an Autarchy within themselves, and being loth to be beholden to God for their Happiness, but that each of them might be as God, self-sufficient and happy in the enjoyment of himself, endeavoured by their sour doctrine and a rigid discipline over their Souls, their severities against Passions and all those restless motions in the Soul after some Higher Good, to attain ... full contentment within themselves." John Smith, _Select Discourses_ (London,1660), 419.
the evil passions, the vital importance of such practical social virtues as "philanthropia" and friendship, and the just ways of Providence. (1)

It was not only the Stoics, however, who seemed to Christian apologists to disparage the spiritual dignity and the social benevolence of man. The main target of the Christian apologists' attacks was Hobbes, a staunch adherent of the theory of the passions. The keynote of his materialistic philosophy is the conception that men are mechanisms driven by their passions, that they are motivated by either appetite or aversion. Thus appetite and its corollary, aversion, are the internal springs of all human action. Hobbes opposes Aristotle's conception of man as a naturally social animal, and maintains that human nature is originally ferocious. In the state of

1) For the meaning of the term "philanthropia" (the genuine love of mankind) and its recurrence as a 'leading motive' in Greek thought and in the writings of the early Christian Fathers cf. John Ferguson, op.cit., lll ff. Stoicism was primarily a practical system of life which takes into consideration the human need for amelioration within the framework of society. Cf. "The Stoic is, before all things, a man who lives in society, marries, and participates in the politics of his city; cloistered virtue 'vivere in umbra', is a form of cowardice", E.V. Arnold in his article on the Stoics, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, op.cit., vol. XI,863. This aspect of Stoicism was congenial to the religious thinkers of the Augustan period. For favourable views of various aspects of Stoic thought cf. references made above bearing on this topic. Such views also recur in the periodical essays and the speculative thought of the period. Vide, supra,
nature, human behaviour is the result of self-interest, and since each man's interest clashes with the interests of others, all being endowed with equal talents and abilities, the state of nature can only be a state of war. "In such a state of war nothing can be unjust; the notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have no place there. Where there is common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice." (1) Hence the vital necessity for a commonwealth united in the sovereign, and the vital importance of civil law. Hobbes seems to consider the test of morality to be simply a matter of obedience, and the source of the virtuous impulse to be the fear man must feel before the power of the magistrate.

This oversimplified and brief sketch indicates the direction he took in utilizing the theory of the passions. His view of human nature is fundamentally pessimistic and deterministic. Added to his moral relativism and thinly disguised scepticism, this view of man was bound to provoke numerous attacks from most quarters. For almost a century after his death, Hobbes was regarded as the devil's advocate.

Yet the theory of the ruling passion, of which much is heard in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,

is not altogether unlike the psychological determinism of Hobbes. The origins of the idea of the master passion are rather elusive. Plato had discussed this concept in relation to the tyrannical ruler (1), and the idea of a dominant humour was prevalent in the medieval and renaissance periods. Commenting on this idea in connection with Pope's Essay on Man, Maynard Mack writes:

There is nothing original about the conception, which was of course implied in humoural psychology and medicine, in the dominant humour of dramatic theory, in the Theophrastian character, and elsewhere, though Pope's treatment is considerably the most complete. If Pope has a particular indebtedness on this matter, it is possibly to Bacon and Montaigne, both of whom seem to have seen in the ruling passion a kind of 'forme maistresse', around which the other elements of personality must be organized and without which no lasting consistency of character can be attained. (2)

It has been suggested that Locke, by admitting the existence of innate inclinations, contributed to the evolution of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries' doctrines of the ruling passion. (3) But

the doctrine probably goes back further than Locke's Essay. Whatever its origins might be, it is a leading psychological idea of the Augustan Age, an idea that contributed in some degree to the eventual dethronement of reason. "The frequency with which eighteenth century writers place man and his reason at the mercy of his ruling passion", Kenneth Maclean writes, "suggests that the age of reason might with more justice be called the age of passion". (1) This statement, however, needs some qualification. The doctrine of the ruling passion reaches an extreme degree only when it becomes wholly deterministic, and the appellation "the age of passion" might be just only when the ruling passion is unanimously held responsible for all human action. But there was a wide variety of opinion in the eighteenth century with regard to the roles of reason and passion in moral conduct, and the general emphasis on reason was gradually shifting in the direction of feeling:

The materialistic psychology of Hobbes, the rational cogitative psychology of Locke, and that 'faction and mistaken zeal' which Whichcote condemned, yielded before expansive accounts of human behaviour as arising from man's sentiments

1) Maclean, 48.
and affections. The universality of human reason was mellowed and (though still esteemed) was relegated to a subordinate role. (1)

Among Fielding's contemporaries, Pope was one of the leading exponents of the theory of the passions. His Essay on Man in particular played an important part in popularizing this ancient doctrine. While his exposition of the theory is generally considered mainly traditional, Pope himself thought he was the originator of a "New Hypothesis" (2). In Epistle II, he defines the passions as "Modes of self-love" that deserve the care of reason. (3)

This definition distinguishes them "as the ways in which the springs of self work at an unreflective level". (4) Like the natural elements in the universe they are "born to fight" (5), and out of their conflict:


2) "'New Hypothesis' was the term he used when he outlined the theory to Spence in May, 1730." Epistles to Several Persons, Introd. to Moral Essays, ed. F.W. Bateson, Twickenham edn., (London, 1951), Vol. III, ii, 28.

Cf. Maynard Mack's comment quoted supra; and Laird's remark: "Pope may have been rather more original in his doctrine of a 'ruling passion' in every man". John Laird, Philosophical Incursions into English Literature, Cambridge, 1946, 43.


4) Laird, op. cit., 43.

... one master Passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest. (1)

This ruling passion is the main disease of the mind. (2)
It derives its strength from "each vital humour" which
swerves from "feeding the whole", and rushes into the main
stream of the master passion. (3) It is inherent in man
and grows with his growth, just as "the lurking principle
of death "received at the moment of birth" (4). Reason can
only take the position of a guard:

'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe.(5)

It is "a sharp accuser, but a helpless friend." (6)

The predominant passion in man is self-love, "the
spring of motion", which "acts the soul" and must be
balanced by reason in order to have a uniformity and harmony
within. (7) Self-love can only be true when it is
identified with social love. For in the good man reason and

1) Ibid., II,131-32.
2) Ibid., 138.
3) Ibid., 139-40.
4) Ibid.,133-36.
5) Ibid., 163-64.
6) Ibid., 154.
7) Ibid., 59-60. In Moral Essays, however, Pope is not
so sure about the nature of the ruling passion. After
referring to the power of anger over Reason he writes:
The Ruling Passion, be it what it will,
The Ruling Passion conquers Reason still.
(Epistle III,155-56)

At other times Pope seems to consider pride the
passion complement each other, and "Answer one great aim."(1)

To know the character of men, Pope advises we should search their ruling passions:

Search then the Ruling Passion: There, alone,
The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known.(2)

Thus to him, the ruling passion is an important criterion of moral judgement.

Pope seems to be inconsistent when he discusses the role of reason in human conduct. While at times he relegates it to the second place, at others he shares his age's conviction of its supremacy and ability to restrain and order the passions. Thus, in one place he maintains that reason is "the card, but Passion is the Gale"(3), and in another he holds that the function of reason is to overcome the indestructible warring passions, temper and employ them:

Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road, Subject, compound them, follow her and God. Love, Hope, and Joy, fair pleasure's smiling train, Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of pain; There mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd, Make and maintain the balance of the mind. (4)

The former quotation is really anti-Stoic, whereas the latter is rather in keeping with the typical Stoic position.

1) Ibid., IV, 395 ff.
4) Ibid., II, 115-120.
Since "what Reason weaves, by Passion is undone"(1), it is important that order and balance between both should be maintained. Men must strive to attain a sort of equilibrium between the two principles of human nature: the various passions dominated by the master passion, self-love, on one hand, and reason on the other:

Two Principles in human nature reign;  
Self-love, to urge, Reason, to restrain. (2)

On the whole, he believes that, as nature has fixed the passions into our beings, it is impossible, and indeed undesirable, to subdue them completely, that we are bound to act, in some degree, according to their compulsion. Heaven has granted us these passions to direct us, and it behooves us to sublimate and turn them to good use. Thus the passions:

...mixed with art, and to due bounds confin'd,  
Make and maintain the balance of the mind:  
The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife,  
Gives all the strength and colour of our life. (3)

He steers a middle way between the extreme rationalism of the Stoics and the Epicurean adherence to the passions. Like the Christian apologists, his attitude to the Stoics is mixed. His anti-Stoicism is vehemently expressed in Epistle II of the Essay on Man, where he attacks the

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1) Ibid., II, 42.  
2) Ibid., II, 53-54.  
3) Ibid., II, 119-22.
arrogant, chill, and insensitive reason they were famous for. Such 'frozen' reason, unmellowed by humane generous passions, can only be apathetic and inactive. Virtue, he claims, should be outgoing, active, and social:

In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast
Their Virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost,
Contracted all, retiring to the breast;
But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest. (1)

He concedes with the Stoics that the passions may be the stormy states of the soul. But human feelings are also the activators of the soul, and they are capable of motivating for benevolent as well as evil actions. In addition, they are responsible for the preservation of the whole individual and the whole society, and their partial evil is far less than their greater good:

The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole. (2)

Those passions that lead to evil actions are themselves potentially good. Their course can be diverted to motivate benign and useful actions. Even the ruling passion, Pope points out, can be changed; thus,

Lust thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind. (3)

In his attempts to emphasize the roles of both reason

1) Ibid., II, 101-4.
2) Ibid., II, 104-5.
3) Ibid., II, 189-90.
and the passions, and to steer a middle course between
the contradictory doctrines of his time (1), Pope was
bound to appear inconsistent. In this respect it is
reasonable to accept the view that,

Like many others Pope held that the two
[reason and self-love] were not opposed in
principle. Reason took long views and
passion short views. On the other hand,
Reason had only a regulative, not an
originating potency. Still it might be
enough to regulate very well. (2)

Pope was fully aware of the complex psychological
problems involved in his moral study of man. He was
conscious from the very start of the mazes and
illogicalities of human nature, its faltering reason
and violent passions. Man in reality is a

1) Cf. "When Pope stated in his 'Design' (Essay II,
255-56) that he had steered between the extremes
of doctrines seemingly opposite, he may have meant
the Stoic and the Epicurean, with their respective
positions on the dignity and (in the popular view
of Epicureanism) the ingloriousness of man, and
on apathy and activity as the supreme ethical goods.
Or he may have meant the egoistic theory of Hobbes
and Mandeville on the one hand, and the benevolistic
theory of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson on the other,
from both of which he can be said to have in-
corporated attitudes without accepting either wholly."
Maynard Mack, op.cit., Introd., XL.

2) Laird, op.cit., 44.
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd or disabus'd;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world! (1)

The vastness and intricacy of his subject, and his self-imposed eclecticism, contributed to the richness of his Essay in moral content. His conception of man, given expression at that moment of history, is significant for its pronounced emphasis on the importance of the passions as a means to achieve benevolence and felicity. True, this emphasis did not reach the extreme of David Hume's assertion that "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them." (2) Nevertheless, it constitutes a solid contribution to the forces that eventually brought about the triumph of 'the heart'.


The ideas Pope expressed in his Essay on Man have been considered, in the main, those of the third Earl of Shaftesbury filtered through Bolingbroke (1), and some attention to the balance of passion and reason in Shaftesbury's ethics is called for. There is a consensus of critical opinion concerning the great popularity and extensively diffused influence of his thought among his contemporaries and immediate successors. (2) His whole moral system is based on the passions and affections he deems fundamental to the very existence, progress, and happiness of society. Like the Cambridge Platonists and other writers, he attacks Hobbes's theories of human nature, and in this process his works take a psychological direction which has changed the course of British ethics. (3) Sentimentalism receives from him a decisive emphasis, and

1) Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc., ed. John M. Robertson (London, 1900), Introduction, xxv-xxvi. Maynard Mack, however, tones down the influence of Bolingbroke, and argues that Pope had used the ideas of Shaftesbury and others without wholly accepting them. Introduction to the Essay on Man, op. cit., XL. All ensuing references to the Characteristics are made to the Robertson edition.

2) Vide, i.e., Henry Sidgwick, Outlines of the History of Ethics, (London, 1931, sixth edition), 190, and Bonamy Dobrée who asserts that "the main notions of the Characteristics became widely diffused; they are to be found in Addison, Steele, and in all those who aimed at the reformation of manners." English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century 1700-1740 (Oxford, 1959), 265; Vide, also, Basil Willey, The English Moralists (London, 1964), 220-21.

3) Sidgwick, op. cit., 184 ff.
the problem of motive, which has been worrying the
intellectualists, is met by his insistence that self-
love and social love are identical. He is at one with
the 'intellectualists' view that virtue depends on the
use of reason; but he also emphasizes the existence of
a "moral sense", a faculty that instinctively distinguishes
between good and evil, and is inextricable from the affec-
tions of the heart. (1) The working of the moral sense is
similar to those judgements made by our taste when we are
confronted by a beautiful or an ugly object. Thus,

... as in the sensible kind of objects the
species or images of bodies, colours, and
sounds are perpetually moving before our
eyes, and acting on our senses even when we
sleep; so in the moral and intellectual kind
the forms and images of things are no less
active and incumbent on the mind, at all
seasons, and even when the real objects
themselves are absent.

1) "Shaftesbury does not dissolve morality entirely into
sentiment: Reason also has its function, which is to
'secure a right application of the Affections'. But we
are not truly virtuous unless feeling coincides with
reason; reluctant or merely dutiful well-doing is not
genuine virtue. He defines the Moral Sense as 'a real
Affection or Love towards Equity and Right, for its
own sake, and on the account of its own natural Beauty
and Worth", Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Back-

For a discussion of Shaftesbury's position with regard
to the place of reason and passion in his work vide
Lois Whitney, Primitivism and the Idea of Progress in
English Literature of the Eighteenth Century, (Baltimore,
1934), 30-33. She detects a progression in Shaftesbury's
thought, from an equal emphasis on reason and passion
in his early writings to an "anti-intellectual temper" in his late works.
In these vagrant characters or pictures of manners, which the mind of necessity figures to itself and carries still about with it, the heart cannot possibly remain neutral; but constantly takes part one way or other ... and accordingly in all disinterested cases, must approve in some measure of what is natural and honest, and disapprove what is dishonest and corrupt. (1)

The moral sense, he maintains, is the principle that distinguishes between goodness and virtue, which involves will and choice. Goodness is a quality which all sensible creatures are capable of attaining when their affections are suited to the good of the species; but only man can be virtuous, because he alone has the faculty (the moral sense) to approve, in reflective knowledge and consciousness, of actions and affections as well as objects. (2) With regard to the motive for virtuous actions, he insists that these must arise from the individual's having a "notion of public interest", and being capable of making "that notice or conception of worth and honesty to be an object of his affection". (3) The incentive to virtue is plain, because virtue and interest are in harmony, and the good of the individual is encompassed by the good of society. (4) Shaftesbury's sentimentalism appears particularly in his conception of the moral sense, by which virtue becomes

1) "Inquiry", Characteristics; Vol. I, 252.
2) Ibid., 251 ff.
3) Ibid., 252-253.
4) Ibid., 243-247.
a kind of aesthetic enjoyment, a pleasurable satisfaction of the affections.

Like other moralists, he holds that the main difference between man and beast is the human conscience. His distinction rests largely on his theory of the moral sense which emphasizes the existence of a natural, instinctive standard of moral evaluation in every man. The "sense of right and wrong", he writes, "is as natural to us as natural affection itself", and "a first principle in our constitution and make"; thus,

there is no speculative opinion, persuasion, or belief, which is capable immediately or directly to exclude or destroy it. That which is original and pure nature, nothing beside contrary habit and custom (a second nature) is able to displace. (1)

It is clear that he opposes Locke's rejection of innate ideas, and tends to assert that the "moral sense" or "conscience" partakes more of the affections than of reason. At one time he goes to the extreme of maintaining that wisdom and goodness are matters of the heart. "Be persuaded", he wrote to Michael Ainsworth, "that wisdom is more from the heart than from the head. Feel goodness, and you will see all things fair and good." (2)

Shaftesbury's writings display an awareness of the

1) Ibid., 260.
richness and complexity of human nature. To him, man is an intricate mechanism that cannot be reduced to a simple rational or emotional formula. Human conduct is the result of the complex that includes the working and interaction of passion, motive, reason, and conscience; and cannot be subjected to hard and fast rules. One of the principal reasons for his rejecting Hobbes's egoistic doctrine is its one-sidedness and over-simplification. Man, Shaftesbury asserts, is

of too complex a kind to fall under one simple view, or be explained thus briefly in a word or two. The studiers of this mechanism must have a partial eye to overlook all other motions, besides those of the lowest and narrowest compass. 'Tis hard that in the plan or description of this clock-work no wheel or balance should be allowed on the side of the better and more enlarged affections; that nothing should be understood to be done in kindness or generosity, nothing in pure good-nature or friendship, or through any social or natural affection of any kind; when, perhaps, the main springs of this machine will be found to be either these very natural affections themselves, or a compound kind derived from them, and retaining more than one half of their nature. (1)

He himself does not presume to provide the reader with a formal scheme of the passions or to give a methodical discussion of their origin, relation, interaction, and

influence. (1) His is a broad, optimistic view of human nature, based on a firm belief in the goodness of human passions and affections.

Though Shaftesbury seems to have different connotations for the term 'affection', he uses it generally to signify an inclination or disposition of the mind towards something (2), or a moral virtue such as man's "love to his kind, courage, gratitude, or pity". (3) He would agree with Tillotson's definition of passion as an instinct proceeding from "a natural propension and inclination, like those instincts which are in brute creatures of natural affection and care toward their young ones", and precedent to all reason. (4) It is generally instinctive emotion, as differentiated from mental processes, and the only basis of action, for "no animal can be said properly to act otherwise than through affections or passions". (5)

He divides the affections and passions which must influence and govern the individual into three main categories: 1) natural affections that lead to the good of

1) Ibid., I, 78.
2) Ibid., I, 280.
3) Ibid., I, 266.
good of the individual, and, 3) affections "not leading either to any good of the public or private, but contrary-wise; and which may therefore be styled unnatural". (1) The issue involved here, an issue Shaftesbury repeatedly emphasizes, is the unity of the two good passions: benevolence and sound self-love. For, "to be well affected towards the public interest and one's own is not only consistent but inseparable." (2) Another distinction he notes between the passions is that some are 'sensible' and the others 'rational'. The sensible passions include the appetites and aversions shared by both man and beast, while the rational are confined to man who directs them to the objects chosen by reason. The rational passions are the highest in the scale, because they are the foundation of moral virtue which distinguishes man from the brutes. (3) Originally, human nature abounds in good and virtuous social affections, and in no way conflicts with nature or religion. This view is consonant with his doctrine of universal harmony, for all is best in this best possible of worlds, where "everything is governed, ordered, or regulated for the best, by a designing principle or mind, necessarily good and permanent", (4) and "Whatever the

1) Ibid., I,286.
2) Ibid., I,282.
3) Ibid., I,251-56.
4) Ibid., I,240.
order of the world produces is in the main both just and good." (1) Man is a superb piece of architecture, worthy of the beauty, regularity, and vast splendour of the world around him, and both man and the universe he is part of are worthy of their just and benevolent Creator.

Shaftesbury's moral optimism is insistent and emphatic. It is the degree of his emphasis on the intrinsic goodness of man that largely distinguishes his ethical message from that of the Cambridge Platonists and early Latitudinarians. These, despite their generally optimistic view of human nature, still retained the Christian doctrine of the Fall. He rejects this view, deprecating such attitudes as belittle man by threatening the vengeance of a wrathful God, and by sacrificing virtue to maintain Revelation. He finds it unaccountable that Men who profess a Religion where Love is chiefly enjoyn'd; where the Heart is expressly call'd for, and the outward Action without that, is disregarded; where Charity (or Kindness) is made all in all; that Men of this Perswasion should combine to degrade the Principle of Good-nature. (2)

This argument is consistent with his attack on Hobbes's pessimistic view of human passions. (3) Having rejected Hobbes's detraction of human nature, together with the "rod and sweatmeat" virtue of the divines, Shaftesbury

1) Ibid., I, 278.
2) Shaftesbury's Preface to Benjamin Whichcote's Select Sermons (London, 1698).
3) "Inquiry", Characteristics, I, 259-60.
preaches the inherent goodness of human affections.

Benevolence is the principal moral virtue in his ethical teaching. It is a "superior natural affection" whose function is to fulfill "the obligation to the interest and good of the whole" (1), for,

To love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine. (2)

At the same time it is the true form of self-love, since it satisfies the affections and conforms to the moral law inherent in man. (3) Such a disposition is most conducive to the happiness of the individual, leading to the happiness of his family, his nation, and, ultimately, the whole of humanity. (4) The good man is he whose affections are suited to the good of the species, the vicious, he whose motives are selfish, no matter how advantageous his acts may be to society:

Whatsoever therefore is done which happens to be advantageous to the species, through an affection merely towards self-good, does not imply any more goodness in the creature

1) Shaftesbury's Letters..., op.cit., 4.
3) "Virtue, or the right and true manner of self-love, is conformity, not to divine or rational law, but to the law of the affections." Michael Macklem in his discussion of Shaftesbury's views, The Anatomy of the World (Minneapolis, 1958), 85.
than as the affection itself is good. Let him, in any particular, act ever so well; if at the bottom it be that selfish affection alone which moves him, he is in himself still vicious. Nor can any creature be considered otherwise, when the passion towards self-good, though ever so moderate, is his real motive in doing that to which a natural affection for his kind ought by right to have inclined him. (1)

Thus, motive plays the fundamental part in moral judgement, and just benevolence (2) becomes the criterion of goodness. But Shaftesbury insists on the benevolent affections being real, well known, and resolved in action. Being natural and original, benevolence does not demand from men "any trouble or violence upon themselves". (3) This conception of natural virtue drew the following comment from Mandeville:

The Generality of Moralists and Philosophers have hitherto agreed that there could be no Virtue without self-denial; but a late Author, who is now much read by Men of Sense, is of contrary Opinion, and imagines that Men without any Trouble or Violence upon themselves may be naturally virtuous. He seems to require and expects Goodness in his Species, as we do a sweet Taste in Grapes and China Oranges, of which, if any of them is sour, we boldly pronounce that they are not come to that Perfection their Nature is capable of. (4)

1) Vide "Inquiry", Characteristics, I, 249.
2) Cf., also, Ibid., I, 298, 335, 336, 337 et passim.
3) These words are Mandeville's, The Fable of the Bees, ed. F.B. Kaye (Oxford, 1924, 2 vols.), I, 323.
4) Ibid., Loc. cit.
Shaftesbury, of course, does not deny the existence of evil any more than Fielding does; he admits the existence of such corrupt passions as hatred, pride, ambition, envy, violence, and superstition. (1) These he considers unnatural passions, a jarring disproportion, and a diversion of the good affections. Yet for him the natural state, the intended constitution of things, is good, as most people would hold the natural, intended state of the body to be one of health. Like Whichcote, he conceives of virtue as order and harmony in the soul. He likens the passions to the "strings of a musical instrument", which should be so ordered as to produce harmony, and "preserve right balance within". (2) The differences among men are due to the allays and mixtures of the passions (3), and the good man is he who applies his affections aright, and keeps always in tune. Virtue can be maintained only by effecting this harmony and balance. "The balance of Europe, of trade, of power, is strictly sought after", Shaftesbury remarks, "while few have heard of the balance of their passions, or thought of holding these scales even". (4) Even the good passions should not be strained beyond their natural proportion. He frequently stresses this point,

1) "Inquiry", Characteristics, I, 332 f. et passim.
2) Ibid., 290, 291.
3) Ibid., 291.
particularly with regard to benevolence and love. Thus he writes,

kindness and love of the most natural sort (such as that of any creature for its offspring) if it be immoderate and beyond a certain degree it is undoubtedly vicious. For thus over-great tenderness destroys the effect of love, and excessive pity renders us incapable of giving succour. (1)

This balance of the passions requires cultivation so that the good man may attain that moral order and harmony which is equal to the natural order of the world. "By this the beauty of virtue would appear, and hence... the supreme and sovereign beauty, the original of all which is good or amiable." (2) Thus to Shaftesbury, as Thomas Fowler rightly remarks, "Morals, no less than Art, is a matter of Taste or Relish", (3) for the former finds that "The Taste of Beauty and the Relish of what is decent, just, and amiable, perfects the character of the Gentleman and the Philosopher." (4) Shaftesbury's good man, then, is a 'virtuoso' who excels in the knowledge of the art of living; his actions are the outcome of his will and generous impulses. His good life, as his good artistic taste, can be cultivated and perfected, but it is primarily the result of the natural affections which lead him into benevolent and sociable relations with mankind.

1) "Inquiry", I, 250.
3) Shaftesbury and Hutcheson (London, 1881), 70.
4) "Miscellaneous Reflections" Misc. 3, Ch. i; quoted by Fowler, 70.
The influence of Shaftesbury's moral thought on literature was very great. Cecil A. Moore has traced it in the poetry of the first six decades of the eighteenth century, and has found it the leading factor in diffusing the interest in sentiment, good-nature, and benevolence. He holds that Shaftesbury was the best known philosopher in the mid-century with the possible exception of John Locke (1), and argues that James Thomson's The Seasons was especially indebted to Shaftesbury, and responsible for propagating Shaftesbury's conception of benevolence and good-nature. (2) The numerous poems he lists dealing with this subject indicate that Fielding's emphasis on benevolence follows in the wake of a general popular trend. (3) Moore's argument, however, is not in full accord with that of other scholars who tend to emphasize Shaftesbury's indebtedness to other writers, and minimize his influence. R.S. Crane, for instance, suggests that the Latitudinarians had much greater opportunities for influencing ordinary Englishmen than Shaftesbury. He writes:

The key to the popular triumph of "sentimentalism" toward 1750 is to be sought, not so much in the teaching of individual lay moralists after 1700, as in the combined influence of numerous

1) "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England", in Backgrounds of English Literature, 1700-1760, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1953,13.
2) Ibid., 23.
3) Ibid., 42-45.
Anglican divines of the Latitudinarian tradition who from the Restoration onward into the eighteenth century had preached to their congregations and, through their books, to the larger public essentially the same ethics of benevolence, "good-nature", and "tender sentimental feeling"... (1)

Crane maintains that the Latitudinarian divines were preaching by 1700 a theory which appears prominently in the ethical thought of Pope, Hume, and Fielding, namely, that passion is more important to morality than is reason, because passions supply the motive power of action, whereas reason only guides. (2) He quotes at length from the sermons of Robert South and Isaac Barrow, two divines often cited by Fielding, in order to prove their contribution to the rise of the ethics of sentiment. This may well be the case, but it should not obviate the fact that Shaftesbury's contribution is substantial. There is God's plenty in the sermons of the Latitudinarians, and much evidence could be adduced to substantiate the assertion that they stressed both reason and the good social passions. Their conceptions of the beauty and worth of virtue, and the profitableness of benevolence, were affirmed in a specific religious context, to serve, mainly, specific religious

2) Ibid., 214-216.
ends. These ideas were stated and restated over a period of time, until they acquired, with Shaftesbury, a new emphasis that characterizes Shaftesbury's ethical writing. Though his thought is not original, he must be credited with channeling, developing, and systematizing an ethics based in great part on the passions and affections. His works provided a fuller, and, as it were, more conscious exposition of the 'sentimentalist' attitude, thus introducing, at a most opportune moment (when there were strong indications of an immanent craving for sentiment), a cogent and coherent synthesis that consolidated the impulse for the heart. By his deeper realization of the nature and function of the passions, his explanation of the intricate relations between motive, will, and conscience, and his emphasis on a virtue based on the affections "he brought it about that English ethics largely abandoned argument from abstract rational principles, in favour of the introspective study of the mind, and that benevolence based itself on the heart rather than on the head". (1)

Shaftesbury's ardent admirer and supporter, Francis Hutcheson, published his Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue in 1725, and in the following year his Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and

Affections. The purpose of the Inquiry was, in part, to
defend Shaftesbury against Mandeville's attack in the
Fable of the Bees, and, in part, to introduce mathematical
calculation in subjects of morality. (1) Hutcheson's
writings reflect a substantial debt to Shaftesbury,
particularly with regard to the emphasis on the passions
and affections, the doctrines of the 'moral sense' and
benevolence, and the close alliance between ethics and
aesthetics.

More than Shaftesbury, however, Hutcheson's stress
on the-passional basis of action is markedly pronounced. (2)

1) Hutcheson's Inquiry ..., (London, 1725), title page.
Ensuing references to the Inquiry are to the revised
and corrected edition of 1738, except where otherwise
stated.

2) This is evident particularly in the early works.
W.R. Scott divides Hutcheson's writings into phases,
and points out that the moralist made many changes in
the later editions of the Inquiry, a fact that led to
contradictions in the modified editions. (Francis
Hutcheson, His Life, Teaching and Position in the
History of Philosophy, Cambridge, 1900, 184). He also
notes that Hutcheson, to meet criticism, later developed
an ethical system which accords the greatest im­
portance neither altogether to feeling nor to sense into
a moral faculty (Ibid. 213-14). Commenting on this
change of attitude Lois Whitney aptly observes that
"it was his first recognition of the affections and
passions as the exciting force which was of importance
in leading the way from the rationalistic pre­
suppositions of the seventeenth century towards the
ethos of feeling in Hume. " (Primitivism and the Idea
of Progress, 35.)
In his early writings, at least, he considers feeling the sole motivating force, and relegates reason to the second place. Reason, he maintains, is essentially weak, and can only judge about the means or the subordinate ends. The affections, instinctively, propose the ends, and the function of the mental process is to discern the means to attain them. (1) Thus:

He acts reasonably, who considers the various Actions in his Power, and forms true Opinions of their tendencies and then chuses to do that which will obtain the highest Degree of that, to which the Instincts of his Nature incline him, with the smallest Degree of those things to which the Affections in his nature make him averse. (2)

Hutcheson is fully aware of the intellectualist position, and is determined to oppose it. Against Clarke and his followers, he claims that human reason is, by necessity, too limited to be the source of virtuous action. God has equipped man with strong affections "almost as quick and powerful" as instincts, to be the springs of virtuous conduct. (3) Refuting the view that moral law is derived from absolute fitness or relation, he says that reason is in-

capable of apprehending the intrinsic fitness of an act, but can only determine the fitness of a given means to a given end, for "the fitness of means or subordinate ends does not prove them to be good, unless the ultimate end be good." (1)

According to Hutcheson, there is a difference between passion and affection; the former is a violent, confused sensation related to the motions of the body, the latter a sensation resulting from some Reflection upon, or Opinion of our Possession of any Advantage, or from a certain Prospect of future pleasant Sensations on the one hand, or from a like Reflection or Prospect of evil or painful Sensations on the other, either to ourselves or to others. (2)

Both passions and affections arise from the moral sense, an instinct antecedent to reason (3), whose function it is to direct all actions, approving those which are virtuous and condemning those which are vicious. It is uniform throughout the whole of mankind, motivating both the individual and the group to virtuous action. It stands out among other perceptions as a 'superior sense' whose office is to evaluate, and impel to virtue, without its being

1) A System of Moral Philosophy, I,57.
2) Essay on the Passions, I,60.
founded on, or occasioned by, religion, custom, education, example, or study. (1)

The moral sense receives ideas directly and intuitively from the presence of objects, and reveals their virtuous or vicious character to the agent. It also serves as a guide, through recognizing and passing judgement on actions, and moving the agent to act for the good of the whole. If the judgements of individuals vary, it is not owing to any irregularity of our moral sense but a wrong judgement or opinion. "Designed for regulating and controlling all our powers", (2) the moral sense governs all actions, real or imaginary. Hence the great importance and need of educating this supreme regulator itself. Hutcheson points out that

In governing our moral Sense, and Desires of Virtue, nothing is more necessary than to study the Nature and Tendency of human Actions; and to extend our views to the whole Species, or to all sensitive Natures, as far as they can be affected by our Conduct. Our moral Sense thus regulated, and constantly followed in our Actions, may be the most constant Source of the most stable Pleasure.(3)


2) A System, I, 61. Thomas Fowler notes that these and the following words (in A System) are almost the exact terms employed by Butler, when describing conscience in his Preface to the Sermons, and in Sermons II, and III. (Fowler, op.cit., 185.)

His doctrine of the moral sense differs from that of Shaftesbury in that it is a clearly realized and elaborate doctrine which lies at the centre of a system based primarily on feeling. His insistence on the paramount importance of the role of passions and affections in human conduct exceeds that of his master; it recurs with an emphasis and a consistence completely his own. Indeed, he more than once criticizes Shaftesbury's view that a virtuous action should have a rational element:

I know not for what Reason some will not allow that to be Virtue, which flows from Instincts or Passions; but how do they help themselves? They say, 'Virtue arises from Reason'... (1)

Thus Hutcheson's ethical position is, more nearly than Shaftesbury's, in strict opposition to the intellectualist viewpoint.

Hutcheson's conception of benevolence constitutes the most distinctive doctrine of his ethical system. He agrees with Bishop Cumberland that it is the "internal spring of virtue" (2) and goes further than either Cumberland or Shaftesbury in emphasizing that it is the only direct source of all good actions. He extends the connotation of the term to include the whole of virtue, for "the Perfection of Virtue consists in having the

2) Inquiry, 177. Vide, also, 166.
Universal, Calm Benevolence, the prevalent Affection of the Mind ..." (1)

Like the moral sense, benevolence is a universal internal perception or instinct, originally implanted in all human beings. Against Hobbes, Mandeville, and their followers, he claims that all men are uniform in having this practical disposition to virtue. (2) The only difference among men in this respect is in the kind and degree of their benevolent affections. These are usually stronger when the objects stand in some nearer relation to the individual moral agent. (3) It is the foundation of the moral sense and the basic criterion of moral conduct. Its ultimate goal is social happiness, and to achieve this end the individual must satisfy his natural public affections, preferring these to the satisfaction of his own desires. The highest form of benevolent action is that which "procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers", and the worst action is that which "in like manner occasions misery". (4) Hutcheson's recurring references to pleasure and happiness as both the cause and effect of benevolence indicate the hedonistic and utilitarian character of his ethics. Though

2) Ibid., 218.
3) Ibid., Loc.cit.
4) Inquiry, 181.
he at times maintains that morality is distinct from self-interest (1), his emphasis lies on communal pleasure and happiness as the end of all moral conduct.

Hutcheson recognizes three kinds of benevolence: 1) A calm extensive benevolence that encompasses all human beings, 2) a calm affection directed towards a limited number of individuals, such as patriotism, friendship, and parental affection, 3) "The several kind particular passions of love, pity, sympathy, congratulation". (2) These kinds differ both in nature and degree. The first Hutcheson considers "the sole moral perfection of some superior natures". (3) It is the highest order of benevolence, and the fixed, dominant disposition of the perfectly good man. The second is limited in scope, and less amiable than the first; and the third is more limited and less amiable than the second, being the last in the order of moral dignity. Still, it is beautiful as long as it remains consonant with the good of the whole. (4)

Contrasted to this division of the benevolent affections is Hutcheson's recognition of three categories of self-love. The first is self-love in its purely egoistic form. This kind is the ordinary cause of vice, mistaken, narrow, isolating and detrimental to the harmony of the universal system. Such a violent passion arises

1) Ibid., 193.  
2) Ibid., 177.  
3) Loc.cit.  
4) Ibid., 177-78.
from "false, and rashly form'd opinions of mankind", and from a natural weakness of the benevolent affections. (1) Malice towards others is one of its forms, for malice can only be the product of a clash about advantage between self-regarding competitors. (2) The second sort of self-love is consonant with benevolence, since it aims at the good of both the individual and his community. The want of such right self-love is harmful, whether it arises from too much or too little benevolence, and results from a faulty relationship to the public good. Such want denotes mistaken reason, for the function of right reason is to discover the bounds within which we may act from the self-love consistent with the good of the whole. (3) If the agent disregards his own sound interest for that of others, then his action, despite his good intention, "may be morally evil, and argues a want of benevolence". (4) Like Shaftesbury, Hutcheson condemns actions actuated by either weak or excessive benevolence. The third kind of self-love is morally indifferent, being neither good nor evil in its effects on the agent or others. The actions resulting from such a passion are neither virtuous nor vicious, and neither raise the love or the hatred of the observer. (5) On the

1) Ibid. 175 f.
2) Ibid.
3) Ibid., 176.
4) Ibid.
5) Ibid., 176-77.
whole, Hutcheson does not favour the principle of self-love as a motive to action or a cause of happiness. Indeed, his moral thought is characterized by a marked dichotomy between benevolence and self-love. Though he distinguishes between the roles of right and mistaken self-love, and concedes the importance of the former as a concomitant of benevolence, he tends to consider the two domains of public and private affections to be inherently incompatible and contrasted. While the public affections are the source of all good, self-love can be the source of all evil. (1) Benevolent actions are the product of an exact balance of the private and public affections. This balance is to be attained and kept through the work of reason:

With this Ballance of public Passions against the private ... we find that human Nature may be as really amiable in its low Sphere ... provided we vigorously exercise the powers we have, in keeping this Ballance of Affections, and checking any Passion that grows so violent, as to be inconsistent with the public Good. (2)

W.R. Scott notes that Hutcheson here is following Butler, and that he "has contradicted his previous expressions, since if there is to be a 'balance', it would follow that self-love should have equal rights with benevolence, in case of any conflict arising." (3)

1) Cf. Ibid., 193,175.
2) Essay on the Passions..., I, 54.
3) Scott op.cit., 199.
In order to emphasize the superiority of benevolence over self-interest, Hutcheson introduces a number of internal senses that support and distinguish the altruistic side of this balance of the affections. These new senses include a sense of beauty, a public sense, a sense of gratitude and a sense of honour. All are indispensable to benevolence and are necessarily concomitants of virtuous actions. They are closely inter-related and should be unified to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number. The sense of honour, for example, is the perception of "the Opinion of others concerning our morally good Actions, or Abilitys presum'd to be apply'd that way." (1) It makes the approbation or gratitude of others for any good action, the necessary occasion of pleasure. Thus it is dependent on the moral sense; for by definition it is the agent's recognition of the action resulting from the moral sense of those benefited by him. (2) It is also inextricable from the senses of benevolence and gratitude, the latter being a basically disinterested perception which enhances the benevolent act. For the good man "is more encourag'd in his Beneficence, and better secur'd of an Increase of Happiness by grateful Returns, than if his Virtue were only to be honoured by the colder general Sentiments of Persons unconcern'd ... " (3)

1) Inquiry, 225.
2) Vide, Scott, op.cit., 201.
3) Inquiry, 221.
Hutcheson contrasts honour and ambition in the same way as he does with benevolence and self-love. Honour, he asserts, is a determination founded on the public affections. Ambition, on the other hand, is founded on self-love and can only result in evil and malice towards others. Thus honour is not the ambitious, violent passion for power and material advantage that can only be satisfied through immoral means. It is a noble sense of moral virtue "both in the persons who confer the honour and in him who pursues it." (1) Its function is a necessary occasion for public pleasure. Hutcheson insists on the necessity of the love of honour as a potent influence to goodness, and regards it as a determination that presupposes moral virtue and excites to benevolent action. To him, the honourable man is necessarily benevolent, since his self-affections concur with his benevolence. (2)

The role of reason constitutes an indispensable part of Hutcheson's system of benevolence. Though his principal emphasis falls on instinct, he constantly refers to the necessity of mental operations to check and regulate the self-regarding passions, and to select and encourage the benevolent inclinations. The main function of reason is to cultivate benevolence by guarding the natural virtuous instincts, maintaining the balance of the affections and

1) Ibid., 176.
2) Ibid.
developing the good senses:

Surely, the Supposition of a benevolent universal Instinct would recommend human Nature, and its AUTHOR, more to the Love of a good Man, and leave Room enough for the Exercise of our Reason, in contriving and settling Rights, Laws, Constitutions; in inventing Arts, and practising them so as to gratify, in the most effectual manner, that generous Inclination. And if we must bring in Self-love to make Virtue rational, a little Reflection will discover ... that this Benevolence is our greatest Happiness; and thence we may resolve as much as possible to cultivate this sweet Disposition, and to despise every opposite Interest. (1)

He finds it incumbent on men to educate their moral sense and conduct their benevolent actions with reason and prudence. Without the means of a sound rational process men cannot realize their benevolent ends. To Hutcheson, the term 'reasonable' applies only to virtuous actions. (2)

Hutcheson's conception of the good man, then, is based primarily on sentiment. In his moral teaching, the good man has a moral sense that approves of every kind affection, both in himself and in others, and is impelled by a fixed benevolent disposition to actions aiming at the greatest happiness of the greatest possible number. Being actively disposed to the happiness of others, his benevolence is constantly realized in action. Hutcheson insists on the practical character of benevolence and his emphasis throughout falls not so much on the knowledge of good as on the importance of achieving it.

1) Ibid., 196-97.
The good man's excellence rests on maintaining a perfect balance of his private and public affections. Innocence, gratitude, and a sense of honour are indispensable correlatives of his benevolence. The happiness of the whole of which he is part depends on guarding his benevolence, and cultivating it by acting reasonably and prudently, till it attains that superior degree of "calm extensive affection".

According to his view of the kind and degree of benevolence there are three kinds of good men: the perfectly good man who is actuated by universal calm benevolence, whose altruistic actions tend to procure "the greatest Moment of Good in the Power of the Agent toward the most extensive System to which it can reach" (1), the good man whose benevolent affections are limited to smaller systems or individuals, and he whose kind affections are even more contracted. The perfection of benevolence exists only in "some superior natures", and the duty of those who have inferior goodness is to cultivate and regulate their affections to attain this moral excellence. This can be achieved by using reason and prudence. To Hutcheson, the term prudence does not merely signify worldly wisdom, it is the course of conduct that will achieve the most good(2), and a requisite in electing the proper means for promoting both

1) Ibid., Preface, xvi-xvii.
2) Scott, op.cit., 44.
private and public good. (1) Both reason and prudence contribute to the justness of the good man's actions, and prevent his benevolence from being either faint or harmfully excessive.

Like the Latitudinarians, Steele, and numerous other moral writers of the first half of the eighteenth century, Hutcheson stresses the role of the good man as hero. To him, worldly greatness is far inferior to genuine moral heroism. The outward splendour of princes, statesmen, and generals which dazzles the 'world' does not denote heroic virtue. A character must be judged really amiable and heroic only when he renders good offices to others. Thus, the right criterion of heroism is benevolence, and accordingly we should consider/among the great heroes in virtue.

Thus, not only the Prince, the Statesman, the General, are capable of true Heroism, tho' these are the chief Characters, where Fame is diffus'd thro' various Nations and Ages; but when we find the honest Trader, the kind Friend, the faithful, prudent Adviser, the charitable and hospitable Neighbour, the tender Husband, and affectionate Parent, the sedate yet cheerful Companion, the generous Assistant of Merit, the cautious Allayer of Contention and Debate, the Promoter of Love and good Understanding among Aquaintances. (2)

To Hutcheson, the good hero is a beneficent exemplar, both in actual life and in projects of the imagination.

1) Inquiry, 196.
2) Ibid., 198.
Man's moral sense, he claims, approves the idea or conception of virtue whether the virtuous action is real or only imaginary, and does so despite its realization that pain and misery may be incurred when virtuous actions are achieved. The good man always conducts himself according to the dictates of his benevolent affections; and the more obstacles and misery he faces, the more hope he has of virtuously overcoming them, and of attaining his wished elevation. A man who imagines, hears, or reads about benevolent actions experiences a feeling of approbation for them, and is stirred with a desire of emulating them, regardless of any difficulties in his way to attain virtue. For "labour, hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, danger, have nothing so detestable in them, that our self-love cannot allow us to be often expos'd to them." (1)

Throughout his work Hutcheson is conscious of the ethical value of literature and often refers to the sublimating moral effect of virtuous fictional actions and characters. Thus, in his Essay on the Passions he writes:

When we form the Idea of a morally good Action, or see it represented in the Drama, or read it in Epicks or Romance, we feel a Desire arising of doing the like. This leads most Tempers to an imagined Series of Adventures, in which they are still acting the generous and virtuous Part, like to the Idea they have received. If we have executed any good Design we feel inward Triumph of Joy: if we are disappointed thro' our own Negligence, or have been diverted from it by some Selfish View, we shall feel a Sorrow called Remorse. (2)

1) Ibid., 247.
2) I, 69.
He frequently applies his ethics of benevolence to fictitious literary works. The romance, and epic, he insists, must deal with virtue, and their heroes cannot achieve their utmost happiness without being exposed to hardship and misery. These not only set off virtue, but enrich through making additional virtues possible:

Where there is no Virtue, there is nothing worth Desire or Contemplation; the Romance or Epos must end. Nay the Difficulty, or natural Evil, does so much increase the Virtue of the good Action which it accompanies, that we cannot easily sustain these Works after the Distress is over; and if we continue the Work, it must be by presenting a new Scene of Benevolence in a prosperous Fortune. (1)

He carefully analyzes the psychological processes involved in contributing to the reader's pleasure, edification, and desire for emulation. Explicit in this analysis are his views concerning the portraiture of the good man as hero, plot construction, and characterization. (2) He stresses the role of the good man as example of universal love, that only virtuous events can hold the reader's interest, and that the happiness accruing from benevolence is the most enjoyable, even at the expense of the utmost suffering:

A Scene of external Prosperity of natural Good, without any thing moral or virtuous, cannot entertain a Person of the dullest Imagination, had he ever so much

2) Vide, i.e. his advice that evil characters should not be shown to succeed or to obtain good as this would be "unfit Representation in Tragedy", and raise aversion in the observer. Essay on the Passions, I, 76.
interested himself in the Fortunes of his Hero; for where Virtue ceases, there remains nothing worth wishing to our Favourite, or which we can be delighted to view his Possession of, when we are most studious of his Happiness. (1)

He then proceeds to illustrate his view from Cicero's history of "Regulus and others", pointing out that "we never imagine he acted foolishly in securing his virtue, his honour, at the expense of his ease, his pleasure, his life..."

Like several students of the passions in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Hutcheson adheres to the ancient belief that physiognomical traits reflect the fixed dominant dispositions of human nature. He asserts that "almost all habitual Dispositions of Mind form the Countenance in such a manner, as to give some Indications of them to the Spectator". (2) Thus the powerful charm and beauty of the good man's face indicate concomitant moral beauty, while the vicious man's face reflects his violent passions. True, the latter may be able to conceal them through art, but an accurate eye can always discern them. (3) He then goes on to instruct his reader about reading the characters of men in their faces. He points out that Homer, in depicting Helen, magnified to the utmost her external beauty "yet it

1) Ibid., 248. Vide, also, 249 ff.
2) Ibid., 252.
3) Loc. cit. Cf. Fielding's attitude toward physiognomy, infra Ch. III, i.
would have been ridiculous to have engag'd his countrymen in a War for such a HELEN as VIRGIL has drawn her. He therefore still retains something morally amiable amidst all her Weakness..." (1)

The sweet "airs and proportions" of the good man's countenance attract the love of others. They publicize his good-nature, agreeableness, and boldness, qualities which accompany the undesigining heart, and his benevolence is returned by a grateful society. The evil man, on the contrary, shocks others by his air and motion, and his appearance reflects roughness, ill-nature, and a shame-facedness that denotes his inexperience in society and in benevolent offices. (2) With regard to love between the sexes, the good man's inclination to his beloved is one of virtuous love and esteem. It is a kind of "limited benevolence", founded on chastity and moral pleasure, not on sensual "hunger and thirst". Being necessarily mutual, it should be conducted with prudence, for "where Prudence and Good-nature influence both Sides, this society may answer all their Expectations." (3) Such a love is crowned with marriage, and domestic affection ranks highest in the life of the good man.

1) Ibid., 253-254.
2) Ibid., 255-56.
3) Ibid., 257. Vide, also, 256-58.
Hutcheson's earnest moral teachings deserve the popularity they achieved. This is attested by the fact that five editions of the *Inquiry* were issued between 1725 and 1753. These came out in 1725, 1726, 1729, 1738, and 1753. Perhaps the marked Christian character of his ethics, together with his extreme sentimentalist position — both of which distinguish it from Shaftesbury's — contributed to this success. However, his attempts to compute benevolence by applying mathematical equations (1), and to establish the benevolent impulses as the main criterion of morality, were criticized by the followers of Clarke such as John Balguy, and by Bishop Butler. It has been noted that Hutcheson's attitude to morality might have elicited this comment by Butler:

... Some of great and distinguished merit have, I think, expressed themselves in a manner, which may occasion some danger, to careless readers, of imagining the whole of virtue to consist in singly aiming, according to the best of their judgement, at promoting the happiness of mankind in the present state. (2)

1) As, for instance, "When in comparing the Virtue of two Actions, the Abilitys of the Agents are equal, the Benevolence is as the Moment of public Good, produc'd by them in like Circumstances: or B=Mx I" *Inquiry*, 1725, 168-69 ff.

Bishop Butler, like Shaftesbury, believes in the existence of a special moral faculty, and holds that man is instinctively guided towards virtue. Instead of Shaftesbury's moral sense, he emphasizes the existence of conscience, an inherent power in man that governs, directs, and regulates all his motives to action, or at any rate should do so. It seems that his conception of this faculty involves an authority not included in either Shaftesbury's conception of the moral sense or Hutcheson's:

... You cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgement, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself: and, to preside and govern from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it had right: had it power, as it had manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world. (1)

This passage indicates that Butler's conscience involves other human powers besides feeling. To him, both reason and sentiment are essential to support its authoritative function. But he is cautious, and constantly avoids dogmatism, always ready to acknowledge such truth as he can discern in any argument. Thus, in 1736, ten years

1) The Works of Joseph Butler edited by Samuel Halifax (two volumes in one) (London, 1841), Sermon II, Vol.II, 45. This edition is used for all ensuing references to Butler's work.
after he wrote the above-quoted passage, he does not insist on any particular view of the moral faculty:

It is manifest that a great part of common language, and of common behaviour over the world, is formed upon supposition of such a moral faculty; whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both. (1)

Here, Butler clearly commits himself to the view that the moral faculty involves a partnership between reason and sentiment. In effect, he conceives of it as a comprehensive power which dictates universally recognized standards for the judgement of the individual's own actions and those of others. It also places man under a direct obligation to obey its own instructions, which are the dictates of the Creator.

Like many others, he holds that human nature is essentially and originally good and that "nothing can possibly be more contrary to nature than vice". (2) He insists that men seek their own happiness (thus accepting the hedonist premiss), but he emphasizes that it is impossible to pursue happiness effectively without regard for the happiness of others or reverence for our Maker.

1) Dissertation II, appended to The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature in Works, I, 304.

2) Preface to Sermons, Works, II, ix.
We are "made for society and to do good to our fellow creatures". (1) The individual finds happiness in human society through the exercise of the two superior principles of his nature: conscience and "reasonable self-love". These, "if we understood our true happiness, always lead us the same way". (2) He thoroughly investigates the relation between self-love and benevolence in Sermon XI. Here, he claims that happiness has no immediate connection with self-love. Our self-interest may show us the way to gratify "certain affections, appetites, passions, with objects which are by nature adapted to them". But our happiness consists in the gratification of certain affections such as love of our neighbours, not in the exercise of self-love. (3) Benevolence, on the other hand, cannot be naturally in conflict with self-love, as many have thought. It is like any other particular affection or appetite, for we gain pleasure for the self by satisfying it.

But whatever occasion the mistake, I hope it has been fully proved to be one; as it has been proved, that there is no peculiar rivalship or competition between self-love and benevolence; that as there may be a competition between these two, so there may also between any particular affection whatever and self-love; that every particular affection, benevolence among the rest, is subservient to self-love, by being the instrument of private enjoyment; and that in one respect benevolence contributes

1) Sermon I, Works II, 27.
2) Sermon III, Works II, 53.
3) Works II, 135.
more to private interest, i.e.
   enjoyment or satisfaction, than
any other of the particular common
affections, as it is in a degree
its own gratification. (1)

With regard to man's obligations to society, Butler is not completely consistent. Nevertheless, he does not attempt to oversimplify or to evade problems. At times he appears to hold that all virtues are included in benevolence. For instance, in Sermon XII, he strives to prove that the precept "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" comprises all virtues. (2) At other times, he asserts that self-interest must be the motive to which everything is ultimately reduced. (3) Later, when he published his *Analogy of Religion* and the appended dissertations, he returned to the subject of benevolence. In Dissertation II, "Of the Nature of Virtue", he declares "that benevolence, and the want of it, simply considered, are in no sort the whole of virtue and vice." If benevolence were all,

in the review of one's own character,
or that of others, our moral understanding and moral sense would be indifferent to every thing, but the degrees in which benevolence prevailed, and the degrees in which it is wanting. (4)

It appears that Butler had had time, between 1726 and 1736,

2) Sermon XII "Upon the Love of our Neighbour",*Works* II, 140-153.
3) Vide Sermon XI, Ibid., 138.
to ponder about the intricacies of human nature. He

disagrees with Hutcheson's view that benevolence only is
the criterion of morality, and with the impious views of
those moralists who aggrandize man's capabilities, setting
him up as a God-like judge of men and events. He writes,

The happiness of the world is the
concern of him who is the lord and
proprietor of it: nor do we know
what we are about, when we endeavour
to promote the good of mankind in
any ways, but those which he has
directed; that is indeed in all ways
not contrary to veracity and justice. (1)

According to Butler, therefore, the good man is
primarily a devout Christian who abides by the dictates
of the divine authority within him. His Maker has designed
him as a rational being whose impulses, supported by
reflection, justice, and veracity, unite in helping him
seek his own happiness and the happiness of his society.
His reasonable self-interest is in perfect accord with his
benevolence. He prefers the pleasures of good will, friend­
ship and mutual esteem to the external glitter of wealth
and material goods. If misery and misfortune befall him in
this world, these are only temporary; the just and ever
right Providence will relieve him of such suffering, if
not in this world, then in the life to come. For Providence
is just, and will set right the worldly miseries of the good,

1) Ibid., 311-12.
and the temporary prosperity of the vicious. Truthfulness and justice are principles man should follow, together with fidelity and honour, in the course of fulfilling his duty. This is enjoined by his conscience, the moral authority directing the use of his reason, his passions and moral instincts. He must act according to his first intuitions, for they best indicate his duty. Butler, points out that benevolence is based on the respect of intuition:

In all common ordinary cases we see intuitively at first view what is our duty, what is the honest part. This is the ground of the observation, that the first thought is often the best. In these cases doubt and deliberation is itself dishonesty....That which is called considering what is our duty in a particular case, is very often nothing but endeavouring to explain it away. (i)

Yet, the good man must use prudence and care to achieve his virtuous ends. This can only be achieved by governing the rash passions. He must exercise his benevolence to help those in distress in a practical way:

Perception of distress in others is a natural excitement, passively to pity, and actively to relieve it: but let a man set himself to attend to, inquire out, and relieve distressed persons, and he cannot but grow less and less sensibly affected with the various miseries of life with which he must become acquainted; when yet, at the same time, benevolence,

considered not as passion, but as a practical principle of action, will strengthen: and whilst he passively compassionates the distressed less, he will acquire a greater aptitude actively to assist and befriend them. (1)

Butler's most significant contribution to the ethics of benevolence is his emphasis, with a distinct Christian fervour, that self-love is consonant with benevolence. His recognition of the importance of self-love, and his vigorous attempts at reconciling it to benevolence, are perhaps more successful than his striving to avoid a clash between reason and passion. Nevertheless, his Analogy of Religion, which ran into three editions in the same year (1736), constituted a serious challenge to the views about human nature perpetrated by Hobbes, Mandeville, and their followers.

The works of David Hume are an extended restatement of the sentimentalist position. In his Treatise of Human Nature (1739-1740) and other essays, he re-examines the relationship between reason and passion, placing the full weight of his lucid and highly ordered argument on the side of passion. Irked by the excess of disputes about the roles of the two principal faculties, he sets out to define each faculty's sphere of action, to clarify the confusion enveloping such terms as reason and nature, and to demonstrate that reason alone cannot be the motive to

any action, that "it can never oppose passion in the
direction of the will". (1)

In his attempt to refute the intellectualist
proposition that morality is rational and self-evident,
Hume distinguishes between the province of reason and that
of morality. Reason, he maintains, is the discoverer of
truth or falsehood, its function being the discerning of
matters of fact and the relations of ideas. It is not it­
self a motive or impulse to action, and comes under the
speculative division of philosophy. Morality, on the other
hand, is an active principle that influences all passions
and actions. Being essentially practical, it goes "beyond
and/ the calm,/indolent judgements of the understanding." (2)
Hume asserts, as does Hutcheson, that reason is concerned
only with the means that suit the ends proposed by the
passions. He writes,

Where a passion is neither founded on
false suppositions, nor chuses means
insufficient for the end, the understan­
ding can neither justify nor condemn it.
'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the
destruction of the whole world to the
scratching of my finger.(3)

The sole function of reason, he finds, is to serve and
obey the passions. Being "wholly inactive", it cannot be
the source of conscience or the moral sense. (4) Reason,

1) Treatise ed. by L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, 1888), II,
   iii, 3, 413.
2) Ibid., 457. For the preceding argument, vide III, i,
   1, 457-58.
3) Ibid., II, iii, 3, 416.
4) Ibid., III, i 1, 457 ff.
however, can assist morality by indicating the existence of something which is the proper object of a passion, or by discovering the relation between cause and effect, in order to provide the means of exciting any passion. (1) Hume concludes that the moral sense is the source of moral distinctions, these being immediate perceptions or impressions that work upon the individual through pleasure and pain. (2)

With regard to the frequently reiterated view that virtue is natural and vice unnatural, he attempts to clarify the confusion attached to the term "nature", and to point out the mistake inherent in this view. The word "nature", he says, is used to signify one of three possible meanings: nature as opposed to miracles, as opposed to the rare and unusual, or as opposed to artifice. He finds it wrong to apply the terms "natural" and "unnatural", in any of these senses, to mark the boundaries of virtue and vice:

For in the first sense of the word, nature, as oppos'd to miracles, both vice and virtue are equally natural; and in the second sense, as oppos'd to what is unusual, perhaps virtue will be found to be the most unnatural. At least it must be own'd, that heroic virtue, being as unusual, is as little natural as the most brutal barbarity. As to the third sense of the word, 'tis

1) Ibid., III,i,1,459, ff.
2) Ibid., III,i,2, 470-71.
certain, that both vice and virtue are equally artificial, and out of nature ... (1)

Hume challenges the intellectualist doctrine that virtue is nothing but conformity to reason, and that there are eternal fitnesses and unfitnesses of things which impose an obligation on all rational beings. (2) He questions the nature of "the relations of fitness and fitness," and argues that such a doctrine is vague and philosophically unsound. (3) As for moral obligation, it is that which impels a man to perform such actions as satisfy his affections. Reason cannot be the primary source of moral obligation; what makes man approve and further beneficent action is the agreeable sensation which virtue arouses. Hume insists that:

The approbation of moral qualities most certainly is not deriv'd from reason, or any comparison of ideas; but proceeds entirely from a moral taste, and from certain sentiments of pleasure and disgust, which arise from the contemplation and view of particular qualities or characters. (4)

According to him, moral approbation is the experience of satisfaction in actions conducive to the happiness of others. He recognizes that such a conception of virtue (i.e. moral approbation) cannot be dissociated from interest.

1) Ibid., 475.
2) Hume describes this doctrine in almost the exact phrases of Cudworth, Clarke and Wollaston... Ibid., III, i-vii, 456-57.
3) For the argument against "relations" vide Ibid., 463-69.
4) Ibid., III, iii, 1, 581.
Like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, however, he distinguishes between the satisfaction derived from a concern for others and that derived from private pleasure. (1) He agrees with the view that the love of mankind, without regard to self-interest, is a unique and superior passion. He also recognizes that men are usually governed by self-love. (2) But he rejects the extreme selfish theory of Hobbes and Mandeville, and claims that there is a strong feeling of sympathy in man. This force he describes as follows:

The minds of all men are similar in their feelings and operations nor can any one be actuated by any affection, of which all others are not, in some degree, susceptible. As in strings equally wound up, the motion of one communicates itself to the rest; so all the affections readily pass from one person to another, and beget correspondent movements in every human creature. (3)

Only through this force of sympathy can men agree about morals and form ethical principles of universal application.

In the "conclusion" of the third book of his Treatise he considers sympathy the chief source of moral distinctions, and the principal cause of moral approbation. (4)

Throughout his works, Hume emphasizes the importance of the qualities of humanity, generosity and benevolence.

In the Treatise, the Enquiries, and the Essays, he gives considerable attention to benevolence and the virtues

2) Treatise, III, ii, 7, 534.
3) Ibid., III, iii, 1, 575-76.
4) Ibid., III, iii, 6, 618-19.
allied to it. To him, benevolence is an active desire to benefit others and achieve their happiness. He does not make such claims for benevolence as Hutcheson does. The springs of action are still pleasure and pain, and men are ethically related to each other through the strong passion of sympathy. He does not seem to insist on the necessity of a universal application of benevolence. The sympathy he advocates does not seem to reflect on any general scheme or system of humanity. It is more or less subject to varying strength according to the individual ties of affection and kinship. (1)

Hume's conception of the good man resembles, in great measure, that of Hutcheson. The good man is he who is virtuously actuated by warm and tender affections to the love and service of mankind. His character is formed of "generosity, humanity, compassion, gratitude, friendship, fidelity, zeal, disinterestedness, liberality", and all other good qualities. (2) His benevolent affections dominate all other passions, and render him agreeable and useful to his fellowmen. On his strong and immediate sympathy depend his own happiness and the happiness of society. To Hume, the criterion of goodness is satisfactory relations with others.

1) Ibid., III,iii,1,580-81; III,iii,3,602.
2) Ibid., III,iii,3,603.
Thus, the degree of moral perfection depends on the degree of pleasure man accords himself and others in his social relations. Hume points out that,

when we enumerate the good qualities of any person, we always mention those parts of his character, which render him a safe companion, an easy friend, a gentle master, an agreeable husband, or an indulgent father. We consider him with all his relations in society; and love or hate him, according as he affects those, who have any immediate intercourse with him. (1)

In addition to generous and just social passions and an active moral sense, the good man must be possessed of sound reason and proper judgement. Hume recognizes the importance of the role of reason in ethical conduct. For an act to be virtuous, the way of moral sentiment should be paved by reason and reflection. For,

it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained. (2)

Reason also helps in governing and correcting the passions and in effecting that proportion and harmony which, in addition to art and industry, lead to perfection. (3) It is the solid support of the good man as a philosopher fixing the rules of conduct, as a sage reducing them to practice, or as a student of the "art of life", developing himself in his "vigorous

1) Ibid., III, iii, 3, 606.
2) Enquiries, op. cit., II, 173. Vide, also, Ibid., 117, 185.
3) Essays Moral and Political, (London, 1742), "The Stoic".
pursuit of virtue". (1)

Moral excellence rests on wide and varied social experience. Hume constantly stresses the role of experience in the development of the good man. It is through social intercourse that one learns to judge the characters of men, to realize the limitations of human nature, and form sound general moral standards:

The intercourse of sentiments, therefore, in society and conversation, makes us form some general inalterable standard, by which we may approve or disapprove of characters and manners. (2)

Indeed, Hume's moral writings stand out for their emphasis on social experience and the interaction with environment, and for their experimental approach to human conduct. (3)

"All beings in the universe", he remarks, "consider'd in themselves, appear entirely loose and independent of each other. 'Tis only by experience we learn their influence and connexion; and this influence we ought never to extend beyond experience."(4) This empirical approach accounts for his secular tone, and for his departure from the speculative and theological ethical tradition of his time. His investigation of human nature dispenses with theological presuppositions as well as 'a priori' methods. He admits that he would

1) Ibid.
2) Treatise, op.cit., III,iii,3,603.
4) Treatise, III,i,1,466.
rather take his catalogue of virtues from Cicero's De Officiis than from the Whole Duty of Man. (1) Unlike Bishop Butler and other Christian moralists Hume maintains that good actions do not result merely from religious sanctions or a sense of duty. To him, the virtuous man has the essential 'good' motives, i.e. motives that excite pleasurable approbation. (2) Noting this aspect of Hume's moral thought, Basil Willey remarks:

What he Hume does not seem to take sufficiently into account is an element which many have felt to be central in our ethical judgements: the notions of 'Ought', 'Duty', or 'Obligation', ... He presents morality to us as attractive rather than imperative, and attractive because it promises us the greatest happiness as the world understands happiness. (3)

According to Hume's elegant and urbane Essays (4), the good-natured man is distinguished by disinterested civility and politeness to others, delicacy of taste, and a deep sense of gallantry and true honour. Like Steele,


3) Ibid., 259. This criticism is curiously similar to that directed against Fielding's conception of 'good-nature'. Vide, infra. Ch. II, ii.

4) These were popular in his day. The first volume appeared in 1741, followed by a second edition as well as by a second volume in the following year.
Hume campaigns for real refinement of manners and polish in the relations between the sexes. To him, gallantry and honour are not the "foppish and ridiculous" products of 'modern' courts, but natural and genuine affections of complacency', 'benevolence' and 'sympathy'. (1) Gallantry is a mixture of respect to the weaker sex, civility, and 'complaisance'. It is consistent with wisdom and prudence, and alien to affectation and vice. (2) Like the moralists of his time, Hume is preoccupied with the definition of the term 'honour'. To him, real honour is not that "fantastic and modern honour" which involves duels, indecency, and hypocrisy. He vehemently denounces the duellers, the debauchees and the dishonest who are received as gentlemen under the name of honour. He notes that the sense of the term is inextricable from that of virtue, its main characteristics being "fidelity, the observing of promises, and telling the truth". (3) In this respect, he finds Addison guilty of separating it from virtue in the lines:

Honour's a sacred Tye, the Law of Kings,
The noble Mind's distinguishing Perfection,
That aid's and strengthens Virtue, when it meets her,
And imitates her Actions, where she is not,
It ought not to be sported with. (4)

1) Essays Moral and Political, "The Rise of Arts and Sciences".
2) Ibid.
3) Ibid.
Among the good qualities Hume especially emphasizes in his essays are diligence and industry, cheerfulness, modesty, friendship, the belief in the goodness of man, and the aversion from superstition and enthusiasm, "two species of false religion". (1) These qualities are not laudable simply because they are advantageous to their owners and to others, but because they are intrinsically good in themselves. (2) The good man pursues virtuous qualities through vigorous industry and discipline of his immoderate passions. He is always a seeker of virtue, and a cheerful, refined gentleman, ever curbing his dissident affections, and ever in an equable passional state. (3) Hume himself was an excellent example of goodness. He will always be remembered as a benevolent sage, a cheerful, irresistible conversationist and an eloquent master of the social graces. (4) It may well be that his description

1) Essays, "On Superstition and Enthusiasm".

2) In his Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Hume gives a list of virtuous qualities. These fall into three groups. The first includes virtues approved because of their utility either to oneself or to society, i.e. benevolence, justice, and friendship. The second includes virtues approved by reason of their immediate agreeableness to ourselves, because they are pleasing in themselves, and thus desirable for their own sake, such as cheerfulness and benevolence. The third group includes qualities approved for their agreeableness to others, such as the arts of pleasing: good manners, politeness, wit, and eloquence. Enquiries, III, vi, vii, viii, 233 ff., 250 ff., 261 ff., 277 ff.

3) Essays, "The Stoic".

of himself in the autobiographical account he wrote in 1776, approximates his own conception of the good man. "I was", he writes,

a man of mild dispositions, of command of temper, of an open social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible to enmity, of great moderation in all my passions .... (1)

Hume's account of moral activity was an affirmation of the value of social feelings. It had the full force of the clear philosophic exposition and the imaginative literary achievement. His outstanding contribution to the ethical thought of his day reinforced the increasing emphasis on benevolence and the supremacy of the 'heart'. His approach to the problems of human nature and human experience was instrumental in effecting the reaction against rationalism. Basil Willey rightly observes that, "by using reason to destroy reason - by showing how, when given fullest play, it stultifies itself in scepticism - Hume achieved a reductio ad absurdum of rationalism, and demonstrated, better than any (eighteenth century) bishop could have done, that man cannot (or does not) live by 'reason' alone." (3)


Hume regarded himself as both philosopher and writer. His ruling passion was, according to "My Own Life", "Love of literary Fame". His admirers in the eighteenth century, including Boswell rightly considered him a great writer and philosopher. James Boswell, Private Papers, ed. Geoffrey Scott and Frederick A. Pottle, (New York, 1928), I, 159.

2) The English Moralists, 248.
III. FIELDING'S MORAL OUTLOOK

i. Human Nature and Benevolence

The works of Henry Fielding reveal an earnest preoccupation with moral and social issues. (1) In an atmosphere rich with religious and ethical argument, his achievement stands out as a permanent example of moral commitment and artistic expression. His primary concern was the investigation of man's nature, his place in the universe, and his obligations toward God, self, and society. Throughout the twenty two years of his writing career, he was deeply involved in the exploration of human motive and conduct, persistently expounding his conception of human nature, and emphasizing his firm belief in good-nature and benevolence. It is this conception and this belief that constitute the basis of his moral thought and literary achievement.

Like many of his distinguished contemporaries, Fielding considers human nature a compound of physical, intellectual, passional, and psychic elements. The interaction of these results in an infinite variety of human actions, each of which is determined by the quality and the supremacy of

1) All ensuing references to Fielding's works are made to The Complete Works of Henry Fielding, Esq. (16 vols.), edited by W.E. Henley, (New York, 1902), except where otherwise indicated.
one or more of these elements over the others. Fielding's minute observation of human experience convinced him of the complexity of human conduct. His vision of reality reflects an attitude to human nature which is neither superficial nor one-sided. He was fully aware of the vast intricacy and diversity of the factors underlying human behaviour. He always wondered at that strange creature, man, whose limited reason and conflicting passions partake of a nature in which there is "such prodigious variety". (1) Tom Jones is his author's mouthpiece when he declares, addressing the Man of the Hill,

I have always imagined that there is in this very work you mention [man] as great variety as in all the rest; for besides the difference of inclination, customs and climates have, I am told, introduced the utmost diversity into human nature. (2)

To Fielding, the direction of human faculties is the outcome of both inherent and acquired traits. His understanding of character, motive, and action, as will appear, is based on a belief in man's varying share of fundamental goodness, and the efficacy of such institutions as religion, education, custom, and habit. It is also based on an acute awareness of a necessarily varied, complex,

1) Tom Jones, I,i; Henley ed., III, 18.
and inconsistent human conduct. Perhaps it is this very awareness that accounts for Fielding's own inconsistent generalizations regarding the problem of man's inherent goodness or essential depravity.

Fielding's works are replete with contradictory statements concerning man's original inclinations. At times he exhibits a marked gloomy cynicism, at others he marvels at the innate goodness of human nature. His sweeping condemnation of mankind as inherently vicious and self-centred is given utterance by such characters as the Man of the Hill in Tom Jones (1), and Dr. Harrison in Amelia. The latter, evidently the mouthpiece of the author, frequently attacks "the malicious disposition of mankind" and "the cruel pleasure which they take in destroying the reputation of others". (2) The earlier writings are interspersed with statements that reflect a consciousness of an evil walking the world at large, nourished by the malice embedded in human nature. Men are commonly "blinded by vanity and self-love" (3), and prone to what Fielding terms the "Art of thriving", a pernicious quality which derives support from faulty systems of education and

1) Tom Jones, VIII,xv; Henley ed., IV,148.
Towards the end of his life, and after the sailors of the ship that carried him to Lisbon had ruthlessly railed at his appearance, he wrote:

No man who knew me will think I conceived any personal resentment at this behaviour; but it was a lively picture of that cruelty and inhumanity, in the nature of men, which I have often contemplated with concern; and which leads the mind into a train of very uncomfortable and melancholy thoughts.

Occasionally, Fielding's pessimistic moods verge on misanthropy. When he reflects on the evils of his time, or considers the age-old flagrant breaches of 'humanity', 'virtue', and 'religion', his tone takes a sinister, sombre turn which dampens his distinctively ebullient spirits, and darkens considerably his usually brightly lit array of characters. It has often been remarked that Fielding's disillusion and pessimism have increased after his experience as justice of the peace, that the later Fielding of Amelia exhibits an intense awareness of evil which is not displayed in his earlier works. This may be so; but even the early writings are not devoid of condemning the majority of mankind. Fielding would certainly have

1) Ibid., 282, et passim.
agreed with Parson Oliver's judgement that "the Wise and the Good ... never were or will be the Generality of Mankind." (1)

The relatively few good-natured characters in the novels are caught in a mesh of evils perpetrated by the ill-natured 'world'. To Fielding the 'world' is the larger part of the public who gloat on the misery and suffering of others. It is the superficial, hypocritical, gossiping slander-mongers who follow their own bad hearts and the wicked dictates of fashion, and busy themselves in spreading rumour and calumny. Fielding's references to this set of people are invariably derogatory. Sometimes he calls them the mob, a term he carefully defines in this way:

Whenever this word occurs in our writings it intends persons without virtue or sense, in all stations; and many of the highest rank are often meant by it. (2)

In Tom Jones, for example, these people form a kind of malevolent chorus whose distorted opinion, fickle nature, and faulty judgement are frequently emphasized. The reader is conscious of their being made a background to the interaction of the main characters, a kind of

2) Tom Jones, I,ix; Henley ed., III,46, note.
pervasive and misguided comment on events. This is obvious in the case of Jenny Jones: at first she is accused of, and condemned for having a bastard; but when she is tried and set free by Allworthy, "every person made some malicious comment or other on the occasion, and reflected on the partiality of the justice." (1) It is this same 'world' that accused Allworthy of being Tom's father, of favouring him too much, and later, of being so cruel as to send him away naked and penniless. Fielding's good-natured men are often shown to be the prey of the numerous monstrosities of a malicious public.

Before their ultimate victory and redemption, Fielding's good-natured heroes invariably sink dangerously under the weight of their own follies and the iniquity of society. Heartfree, Joseph Andrews, Parson Adams, Tom Jones, and Booth totter almost at the brink of a deep precipice before Providence miraculously saves them. Moreover, Fielding sometimes dwells with a certain touch of melancholy on the dark side of human nature. His sombre brooding is both explicit and implicit in the episodes of Mr. Wilson, The Man of the Hill, and of Booth's experience as a farmer. It is also reflected in Fielding's deliberate toying with the theme of incest.

1) Ibid., 45.
in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*. Again, Fielding's embittered view of a vicious, ungrateful society drives him to formulate such cynical precepts as:

For the acts your enemies
hath been thought the highest maxim of morality: Fear the professions of your friends is, perhaps, the wisest. (1)

But Fielding's attitude to human nature is not predominantly pessimistic. Considered as a whole, his writings reflect a prevailing optimism and a confidence in human potentialities. Human nature, he holds, is susceptible of attaining the greatest good provided its fundamental benevolence is nourished by religion, sound education, and good example. He frequently denounces those who believe in the utter malignity of man. (2) Martin O. Battestin has admirably demonstrated Fielding's overall agreement with the Latitudinarians, and his recurring attacks against the schools of Hobbes and Mandeville for their belief in fundamental depravity. (3) In *Amelia*, Dr. Harrison expresses this agreement with Shaftesbury and the Latitudinarians when he remarks:

1) "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men", Henley ed., XIV, 293. Cf., also, "it is a secret well known to great men, that by conferring an obligation they do not always procure a friend, but are certain of creating many enemies"; *Tom Jones*, I, ix, Henley ed., III, 45 - and, "NEVER TRUST THE MAN WHO HATH REASON TO SUSPECT THAT YOU KNOW HE HATH INJURED YOU"; *Jonathan Wild*, III, iv, Henley ed., II, 108.


The nature of man is far from being in itself evil; it abounds with benevolence, charity, and pity, coveting praise and honor, and shunning shame and disgrace. Bad education, bad habits and bad customs debauch our nature, and drive it headlong as it were into vice! The governors of the world, and I am afraid the priesthood, are answerable for the badness of it. Instead of discouraging wickedness to the utmost of their power, both are too apt to connive at it. (1)

Even Jonathan Wild, a most corrupt villain, has a conscience which tortures him to the extent "that even the injured Heartfree, ... would have pitied him". (2)

Although Fielding occasionally emphasizes the existence of "some unacquired, original distinction, in the nature or soul of one man, from that of another"(3) he tends on the whole to agree with Hume about the existence of the virtue of sympathy in mankind. Fielding insists that "want of compassion is not to be numbered among our general faults" (4), and that "there are scarce any natures so entirely diabolical as to be capable of doing injuries without paying themselves some pangs for the ruin which they bring on their fellow-creatures."(5)

Fielding, perhaps, has qualified Hume's theory by pointing out that the sympathy which many people feel is not strong

1) Amelia, IX,v; Henley ed. VII,145.
2) Jonathan Wild, IV, iv; Henley ed., II, 158.
5) Ibid., XIV,vii, Henley ed., V, 121.
enough to result in benevolent action. In *Tom Jones*, we see Partridge in danger of starving "with the universal compassion of all his neighbours". (1) Fielding, nevertheless, claimed in 1743 that benevolence and philanthropy really exist in some natures. (2) Six years later he stated, hopefully, that "there is in some (I believe in many) human breasts a kind and benevolent disposition which is gratified by contributing to the happiness of others". (3) This opinion is illustrated in *Jonathan Wild* by Heartfree's experience with his friends. Although he suffered at first from their hypocrisy and self-love, he finally gained "compassion for his unmerited misfortunes [which] brought him many customers among those who had any regard to humanity". (4)

Fielding's optimistic view of human nature is reflected in numerous illustrations. In 1739 he warned his readers against those who preach the depravity of man, and accused them of propagating doctrines "that visibly tend to the entire extirpation of all society, all morality and religion". (5) Both Dr. Harrison and Squire Allworthy condemn such pessimism, and consider it "so much to the

1) Ibid., II, vi; Henley ed., III, 92.
dishonour of the great Creator", (1) and a conclusion leading "either into atheism or enthusiasm". (2) Fielding makes it clear that the cynics in his novels either read their own bad hearts into others, as in the case of the Man of the Hill in *Tom Jones*, or, like Miss Matthews who had read Mandeville, suffer from harmful teachings. (3)

Fielding's inconsistent attitude towards the fundamental nature of man results mainly from his knowledge of men, his primary concern with social amelioration, and the demands of his artistic intentions. A practical man of the world, he was also a dedicated crusader in the service of public interest. His basic criteria for the excellence or depravity of man, in the last analysis, hinge upon the antithesis of self-love and benevolence. Well instructed in the rich religious and ethical arguments about man's relation to God, self and society, he tends to judge men ultimately by the degree of their self-love or public interest. The good man's essential quality, he believes, is benevolence, while that of the bad man is harmful self-love. In each of his four novels Fielding's good men are distinguished by their good-nature, while the bad are condemned for their egoistic passions. This antithesis is most directly and loudly expressed in *Tom Jones*. Here

Tom's "generosity of spirit ... is the sure foundation of all that is great and noble in human nature" (1) and Blifil's diabolical evils are the manifestation of his egoism. The sum of Tom's virtues rests upon a certain relative quality, which is always busying itself without-doors, and seems as much interested in pursuing the good of others as its own. (2)

The main difference between Tom and Blifil as seen by the author, the reader, and the good characters of the novel is that between the personification of benevolence and self-love. (3) Here, as everywhere in the novels, the antithesis is basic to Fielding's imaginative creativity and medium of expression. At times, he seems to consider benevolence and self-love the basis of ethical distinction between what is good and what is evil. In effect, he frequently approaches the extreme of defining goodness almost exclusively as benevolence and good-nature, and evil as egoism and self-interest. This issue so much colours his vision that his whole theory of the novel, together with his practice of it, can only be understood in their relation to his conception of this issue.

It has been argued that:

1) *Tom Jones*, XII, x; Henley ed. IV, 343.
2) Ibid., XV, i; Henley ed., V, 141.
3) Cf. "To say the truth, Sophia, when very young, discerned that Tom, though an idle, thoughtless, rattling rascal, was nobody's enemy but his own; and that Master Blifil, though a prudent, discreet, sober, young gentleman was at the same time strongly attached to the interest only of one single person; and who that single person was the reader will be able to divine without any assistance of ours." (Ibid., IV, v; Henley ed., III, 156.)
To grasp the moral implications of satire, we must hold in mind two distinct thematic layers that function concomitantly: a thesis attacking vice and folly, and an antithesis comprising a positive ethical alternative, the standard against which the satirized are measured. (1)

According to this, Fielding's contradictory statements about human nature can be partly explained. A satirist and an avowed reformer, he finds it his responsibility to denounce the evil in men and sing the praises of their benevolence, while being, on the whole, conscious of man's dual nature. Whether appearing to subscribe to Shaftesbury's sentimental optimism or to the cynical schools of Hobbes and Mandeville, or to the position of the Latitudinarians, Butler and Hume, Fielding is convinced that human nature is neither wholly good nor wholly evil. This balanced attitude appears in Jonathan Wild where he writes:

we shall often find such a mixture of good and evil in the same character that it may require a very accurate judgement and a very elaborate inquiry to determine on which side the balance turns. (2)

Fielding's frequently professed adherence to verisimilitude makes him belittle those writers "who draw characters absolutely perfect". (3) Nature, he holds,

1) Battestin, 52.
2) I, i; Henley ed., II, 2.
3) Ibid., IV, iv; Henley ed., II, 159.
seldom creates any man so completely great, or completely low, but that some sparks of humanity glimmer in the former, and some sparks of what the vulgar call evil will dart forth in the latter. (1)

In *Tom Jones* he attacks the depiction of completely good or completely bad characters on both ethical, and artistic grounds. He explains the theory underlying his moral purpose, emphasizing the necessity of drawing characters whose nature should be a mixture of both good and evil:

> In the next place, we must admonish thee, my worthy friend [the reader]..., not to condemn a character as a bad one because it is not perfectly a good one. If thou dost delight in these models of perfection, there are books enow written to gratify thy taste; but as we have not, in the course of our conversation, ever happened to meet with any such person, we have not chosen to introduce any such here.... nor do I, indeed, conceive the good purposes served by inserting characters of such angelic perfection, or such diabolical depravity, in any work of invention; since, from contemplating either, the mind of man is more likely to be overwhelmed with sorrow and shame than to draw any good uses from such patterns; for in the former instance he may be both concerned and ashamed to see a pattern of excellence in his nature, which he may reasonably despair of ever arriving at; and in contemplating the latter, he may be no less affected with

1) *Tom Jones*, IV, iv; Henley ed., II, 159.
those uneasy sensations, at seeing the
nature of which he is a partaker degraded
into so odious and detestable a creature. (1)

Nevertheless, Fielding's artistic intentions differ from
his practice. In the novels, such characters as Squire
Allworthy, Dr. Harrison, Sophia, and Amelia are certainly
intended to be shining examples of the sublime in human
nature, while monsters like Wild and Blifil are meant to
be personifications of evil. It appears that the sharp
opposition in Fielding's mind, between good nature with
its attendant virtues and self-love with its dependent
evils, prevails over his conception of character. With
regard to characterization, his novels follow a distinct
pattern. Each character could easily fall into one of
four different categories: the perfectly good man who
could be justly termed the 'Mentor' type like Allworthy
and Dr. Harrison, the disciple type as in the case of
most of the heroes, the various or mixed type whose self-
interest is in constant conflict with his benevolent
passions, like Black George, and the completely evil
such as Wild, Blifil, and Amelia's sister. Generally
speaking therefore, the apparent dichotomy of self-
love and benevolence governs Fielding's practical
execution of his moral and artistic intentions. (2)

1) Tom Jones, X,i; Henley ed., IV, 194-95.
2) This point is developed infra., Ch. IV, i, ii.
The focal point of Fielding's moral teaching is his conception of good-nature and benevolence, a conception he attempts to disseminate with a zeal and a conviction that border on religious and poetic intensity. Indeed, his exquisite gift to the reader of his novels is an extensive imaginative understanding of what constitutes the good-natured and benevolent man. For, to Fielding, 'good-nature' is not simply a hackneyed diluted term, it is, more than to any of his fellow novelists, a real act of faith, a credo which he finds incumbent on him to propagate through forceful and artistic expression. His rich and varied achievement is a unique exposition of the theory and practice of good-nature.

His view of good-nature is far broader and more inclusive than that of many of his contemporaries. To him, this quality embraces much of the moral virtues of the ancients, and, more particularly, those Christian virtues embodied in the Latitudinarian conception of charity as active, universal love. To Fielding, as to Dr. Johnson, good-nature is synonymous with benevolence, kindness and softness. (1) He would also agree with Dryden's dictum that "Good sense and good-nature are

1) Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language (2 vols., 1755), I, under "Good", no. 25.
never separated though the ignorant world has thought otherwise", (1) and with Locke who considered it, together with love, "the true foundation of an honest man". (2) Again, Fielding would enthusiastically support Mrs. Piozzi's remark that good-nature "stands highest far in moral life", (3) but would accept neither her separation of good-nature from good temper, nor her confining its signification to relieving sorrow, charity to the needy, and, "the useful offices of friendship". (4) Rather, he would regard good temper as inseperable from good-nature(5) and extend the meaning of the latter term, making it embrace the love of God, self, and society.

In his several attempts to define this quality, he persistently emphasizes its social nature. It is a simple, overpowering, instinctive passion, a driving force within the individual, which constantly urges him to act for the benefit of the whole. Fielding often describes it in his most glowing terms. It is "the glorious lust of doing good" (6), "virtue's

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1) Loc. cit.
2) Loc. cit.
3) Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs. Piozzi), British Synonymy, or an Attempt to Regulate the Choice of Words in Familiar Conversation (2 vols., London, 1794), 263.
4) Loc. cit.
6) This, and the two following quotations are from Fielding's poem "Of Good-Nature", Henley ed., XII,258-59.
self", the "full composition of a virtuous soul", and "that amiable quality, which, like the sun, gilds over all our other virtues". (1) In his more explicit descriptions he underlines its basic characteristics. In one of the Champion essays he upholds it as a practical virtue that comprises both love and justice, "a delight in the happiness of mankind, and a concern at their misery, with a desire, as much as possible, to produce the former, and avert the latter; and this with a constant regard to desert". (2) Later he points out its emotional qualities, and the place it should occupy among human virtues:

It is certain that a tender hearted and compassionate disposition, which inclines men to pity and feel the misfortunes of others, and which is, even for its own sake, incapable of involving any man in ruin and misery, is of all tempers of mind the most amiable; and though it seldom receives much honour, is worthy of the highest. (3)

At the same time good-nature necessitates the existence of a rational disposition:

Good-nature is not that weakness which, without distinction, affects both the virtuous and the base, and equally laments the punishment of villainy, with the disappointment of merit; for as this admirable quality respects the whole, so it must give the particular, to the good of the

1) Henley ed., XV, 259.
2) Ibid., 258.
general,... Good-nature requires a distinguishing faculty, which is another word for judgement, and is perhaps the sole boundary between wisdom and folly; it is impossible for a fool, who hath no distinguishing faculty, to be good-natured. (1)

Thus the "Real greatness" of the good-natured man is but the "union of a good heart and a good head". (2)

In addition to its rational and emotional character, good-nature is distinguished by its marked physical features. Fielding's interest in physiognomy is emphasized throughout his works. In his "Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men", he refers to Juvenal's adage: *Fronti nulla fides*, pointing out that

the satirist surely never intended by these words, which have grown into a proverb, utterly to depreciate an art, on which so wise a man as Aristotle hath thought proper to compose a treatise." (3)

Further, Fielding maintains that "nature doth really imprint sufficient marks in the countenance to inform an accurate and discerning eye". (4) Later, in his last work, he reads the character of the hateful Mrs. Francis in her face, and observes,

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1) *The Champion*, (March 27, 1740).
   The rational and emotional bases of benevolence are discussed in detail in Ch.iii, infra.
3) Henley ed., XIV, 284.
4) Ibid., 288.
Indeed, we may remark, in favour of the physiognomist, though the law has made him a rogue and vagabond, that nature is seldom curious in her works within, without employing some little pains on the outside; and this more particularly in mischievous characters... A tyrant, a trickster, and a bully, generally wear the marks of their several dispositions in their countenances; so do the vixen, the shrew, the scold, and all other females of the like kind. (1)

Fielding is fairly consistent in applying his theory of physiognomy. The good-natured man, he claims, has

that sprightly penetrating look, which is almost a certain token of understanding; that cheerful composed serenity, which always indicates good-nature; and that fiery cast of the eyes, which is never unaccompanied with courage ... (2)

while the egoistic hypocrite has "a formal, stately, austere gravity, a glavering fawning smile, and a strong contraction of the muscles." (3) The physiognomical traits Fielding emphasizes in essay form find their way into his novels. The physical charm of his heroes (Joseph, Tom, and Booth) are the outside reflection of their inner benevolence. Thus to Fielding, the handsome face and pleasant demeanour of Joseph

3) Ibid.
are the concomitants of his positive good-nature, and not necessarily qualities added for good measure in conformity with those of his biblical namesake. Fielding's recurring reference to the attractive physical qualities of his good men and women is marked throughout his works. In *Tom Jones* he directly describes Tom's appearance in this manner:

> Indeed he was a charming figure; and if a very fine person, and a most comely set of features, adorned with youth, health, strength, freshness, spirit, and good nature, can make a man resemble an angel, he certainly had that resemblance. (1)

This admirable constitution is an important element that plays a considerable part in deciding the conduct of Fielding's good-natured heroes. It both attracts and is attracted by similar elements in others, hence its significant role in Fielding's conception of character and event, and more particularly, in his conception of the relationship between the sexes. (2) In direct contrast to the attractive appearance inseparable from good-nature, ill-nature is often portrayed as inextricable from peculiar physical ugliness or defect. The portraits of Mrs. Tow-wouse and Parson Trulliber in *Joseph Andrews* (3),

1) *Tom Jones*, IX, ii, Henley ed., IV, 162.
2) Vide, infra, 226 ff.
3) I, xiv; Henley ed., I, 74; II, xiv; 186-87.
of the vicious Blifil in *Tom Jones* (1), and of Amelia's sister, Betty (2), illustrate the forbidding appearance of the ill-natured characters. Fielding, however, warns against judging a person by his physical appearance. A man may have a handsome face, good humour, and good manners, but may prove to be, like colonel James, a wicked and dissolute character. Fielding tells the reader that

> Nature and Fortune had seemed to strive with a kind of rivalship which should bestow most on the colonel. The former had given him person, parts, and a constitution, in all which he was superior to every other man. (3)

And yet the colonel's inner nature is shown to be seething with lust and envy. His vice is the more deadly because difficult to discover. Fielding's most important advice to his readers is to be socially intelligent, to acquire, through social experience, the prudence and probity necessary for an accurate assessment of character. True, "Nature ... is ever endeavouring to peep forth and show herself", (4) but good men should learn to discern

4) "Essay on ... the Characters of Men"; Henley ed., *XIV*, 283.
the real, natural symptoms of a man's character and to
discover deception in all its forms. The idea that
motives and actions may belie the countenance, and that
the theory of physiognomy may be mistakenly applied by
the good-natured man is dramatized in Joseph Andrews.
Here Fielding depicts the portrait of a wicked squire
who delights in giving promises he never intends to
fulfil. Parson Adams and his friends suffer from such
deception, and when the kind host tells Adams the truth,
the innocent parson is surprised at the baseness of a
man who

"hath in his countenance sufficient
symptoms of that bona indoles, that
sweetness of disposition, which
furnishes out a good Christian." -
"Ah, master! master!" says the host,
"if you had travelled as I have, and
conversed with the many nations
where I have traded, you would not
give any credit to a man's countenance,
symptoms in his countenance, quotha! I
would look there, perhaps, to see
whether a man had the small-pox, but
for nothing else." (1)

On the whole, Fielding tends to believe that a good,
pleasant, amiable face is a concomitant of good nature,
but that a handsome face should not be regarded as the
sole criterion of goodness.

1) II, xvii; Henley ed., I, 208, vide. Adams' attempt
to defend his theory by citing Socrates' belief
in physiognomy, and the kind host's rejection of
theoretical learning, a view which Fielding
supports.
The essence of good-nature is sociability and working for the public good. Fielding's ardent response to his age's predilection for sociability cannot be overstressed. His idea of benevolence derives from the rich and varied religious and moral thought of his time. It has the support of both ancient and modern writers. Bishop Butler's statement that we "are made for society and to do good to our fellow creatures" expresses an age-old sentiment which Cicero has described as "the deepest feeling in our nature". (1) The latter records some of the ancient views on benevolence and comments:

But since, as Plato has admirably expressed it, we are not born for ourselves alone, but our country claims a share of our being, and our friends a share; and since, as the Stoics hold, everything that the earth produces is created for man's use; and as men, too, are born for the sake of men, that they may be able mutually to help one another; in this direction we ought to follow Nature as our guide, to contribute to the general good by an interchange of acts of kindness, by giving and receiving, and thus by our skill, our industry, and our talents to cement human society more closely together, man to man. (2)

Fielding appears to be well-instructed in all contemporary

2) Ibid., I, vii, 23-25.
discussions of man's social nature, and his attitude to this subject is amply expressed in his essay "On Conversation". Here, he emphasizes the social nature of man, and sides with the moralists who emphasize that man is inseparable from society. He condemns "those few who have denied man to be a social animal", for they have left us these two solutions of their conduct; either that there are men as bold in denial as can be found in assertion; and, as Cicero says, there is no absurdity which some philosopher or other hath not asserted; so we may say, there is no truth so glaring, that some have not denied it. Or else; that these rejectors of society borrow all their information from their own savage dispositions, and are, indeed, themselves, the only exceptions to the above general rule. (1)

In effect, the whole purpose of this essay is to emphasize the social happiness resulting from the art of conversation. By conversation he means all the activities of the individual in relation to God, to himself, and to his social environment, stressing that such art is the "grand business of our lives, the foundation of everything either useful or pleasant". (2) It is also the art of good breeding which aims at both pleasing and doing good. (3)

1) Henley ed., XIV, 245.
2) Ibid., 247.
3) Ibid., 248.
So deeply is Fielding committed to his faith in social benevolence that he seems to consider the opposite disposition a virtual sin. He disapproves of the well-known reserve of his countrymen and holds with Dr. Harrison that

the strange reserve which is usually practised in this nation between people who are in any degree strangers to each other to be very unbecoming the Christian character. (1)

With such strong emphasis on the importance of sociability Fielding is bound to condemn any deviation from affability and agreeableness. In the novels, therefore, he frequently depreciates those who impose unnatural seclusion and retirement on themselves. (2)

While artistically tending to oppose benevolence to self-love, Fielding at times resorts to the current practice of identifying good-nature with enlightened self-interest. Like many of his contemporaries, he agrees with Pope's famous lines:

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'r'al frame,  
And bad Self-love and Social be the same. (3)

Again, the same teaching must have been familiar to Fielding in Cicero's De Officiis, where the latter remarks:

1) Amelia, IX, ii; Henley ed., VII, 128.
2) Such as the Hermit in Jonathan Wild, IV, ix, xi; Henley ed., II, 177-81, 183-84; and the Man of the Hill, Tom Jones, VIII, xi-xv, and IV, ii; Henley ed., IV, 114-53, 163.
This, then, ought to be the chief end of all men, to make the interest of each individual and of the whole body politic, identical. For if the individual appropriates to selfish ends what should be devoted to the common good, all human fellowship will be destroyed. (1)

The divines and moralists, keen on refuting Hobbes's egotistic doctrine, have also been expounding a similar view. Bishop Butler has admitted that:

> every particular affection benevolence among the rest, is subservient to self-love, by being the instrument of private enjoyment; and that in one respect benevolence contributes more to private interest, i.e. enjoyment or satisfaction, than any other of the particular common affections, as it is in a degree its own gratification. (2)

Like these religious and moral writers, Fielding is practical in demonstrating that benevolence serves self-interest. In many places in his novels, he finds self-interest a practical incentive to benevolence. He points out in *Tom Jones* that we may love a person because of his goodness to us. (3) He always emphasizes the personal and material benefits that directly result from good-nature and benevolence, benefits like honour, the respect of others, and final material and emotional rewards for the benevolent hero. Nevertheless, he insists

1) III, vi, 293.
throughout his works on the inward pleasure accruing from benevolence. "Men of a benign disposition", he notes, "enjoy their acts of beneficially equally with those to whom they are done." (1) This is illustrated by the surge of inward joy Tom experiences after his benevolent deeds to Mrs. Miller's family. Fielding thus describes his hero's humanity and its reward:

He [Tom] was one who could truly say with him in Terence, Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto. He was never an indifferent spectator of the misery or happiness of any one; and he felt either the one or the other in great proportion as he himself contributed to either. He could not, therefore, be the instrument of raising a whole family from the lowest state of wretchedness to the highest pitch of joy without conveying very great felicity to himself; more perhaps than worldly men often purchase to themselves by undergoing the most severe labour, and often by wading through the deepest iniquity. (2)

1) Tom Jones, XIV,vii; Henley ed., V, 121.
2) Ibid., XV,viii; Henley ed., V,178. Here, there are echoes from Fielding's much admired benevolent exemplar, Steele, whose Spectator is referred to earlier in the novel. (Ibid. VIII,v; Henley ed., IV,82). The Terentian maxim is frequently cited in the works of contemporary moralists and divines, and especially favoured by Fielding. "I remember", cries Amelia, "a sentiment of Dr. Harrison's, which he told me was in some Latin book: I am a man myself, and my heart is interested in whatever can befall the rest of mankind. That is the sentiment of a good man, and whoever thinks otherwise is a bad one." (Amelia, X, ix; Henley ed., VII, 236-37).
Later, he emphasizes that benevolence is gratified by contributing to the happiness of others and,

That in this gratification alone, as in friendship, in parental and filial affection, as indeed in general philanthropy, there is a great and exquisite delight. That if we will not call this disposition love, we have no name for it. (1)

The good action is usually received with an immeasurable gratitude that overshadows any other passion. When describing such supreme moments of gratefulness Fielding's language usually takes a distinct rhetorical note, and the reader senses the author's forceful personal elation. The same elation recurs when the good-natured man considers his benevolent action in retrospect. The sure contemplation of his benevolent deeds overwhelms Tom with a powerful inner spiritual joy almost mystical in its quality.

"What", he asks,

is the poor pride arising from a magnificent house, a numerous equipage, a splended table, and from all the other advantages or appearances of fortune, compared to the warm, solid content, the swelling satisfaction, the thrilling transports, and the exulting triumphs which a good mind enjoys in the contemplation of a generous, virtuous, noble, benevolent action? (2)

Fielding's own enthusiasm for this quality is pronounced.

(1) Tom Jones, VI, i; Henley ed., III, 272. Vide, also, The Champion, May 3, 1740, where he stresses that virtue does not require material rewards.

(2) Tom Jones, XII, x; Henley ed., IV, 346.
Here he is carefully contrasting two values: that of ephemeral material wealth, on which "poor pride" attends, and the permanent passional and refined reality of benevolence. The former is expressed in terms that convey the sense of show and pomp (pride, magnificent, numerous, splendid etc.), while the latter is communicated by an effusive, almost hyperbolic statement, denoting the rich and swelling inward satisfaction, the firmly founded spiritual joy of doing good. (1) The clear dichotomy in Fielding's mind between self-interest and benevolence determines his rhetorical statements, his selection of words, the number and grouping of his adjectives, and the manipulation of effective rhythm through alliteration and assonance. It also resolves the weaving of all these elements into this balanced pattern of his stately, controlled, and lucid prose.

He conceives of benevolence as Christian charity in its widest sense. Though very much concerned with the virtue of charity in its narrower meaning of almsgiving, (2) he repeatedly emphasizes that this kind of charity is only one constituent of benevolence. In the


2) E.g., The Champion (February 16, 1739-40); vide, also, Fielding's "Proposal for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor", Henley ed., XIII, 132 ff., and George Sherburn's essay "Fielding's Social Outlook", PQ, XXXV (1956), 2-5.
long discussion between Allworthy and the hypocritical, antinomian Captain Blifil on the true meaning of the word, the former remarks that true charity "was interpreted to consist in action, and that giving alms constituted at least one branch of that virtue". (1) Again, Fielding attacks the notion that charity, and indeed religion itself, can exist without acts of kindliness. When Partridge cruelly dismisses a lame beggar asking for alms Tom rebukes him saying:

> Your religion... serves you only for an excuse for your faults, but is no incentive to your virtue. Can any man who is really a Christian abstain from relieving one of his brethren in such a miserable condition?

Whereupon Tom gives "the poor object" a shilling. (2)

Tom's whole progress, in fact, is a long, rich, and varied series of exemplary benevolent actions. For, to Fielding, goodness is primarily practical. Like the Latitudinarians, he regards with contempt any abstract formula of benevolence. All intellectual theorizing about the greatest good for the greatest number is "metaphysical rubbish" (3) if not manifested in action. This practical

1) Tom Jones, II, v; Henley ed., III, 82-83.
2) Ibid., XII, iv; Henley ed., IV, 314.
3) Joseph Andrews, II, xii; Henley ed., I, 178-79. Here, Fielding may be referring to Hutcheson's remark, "that Action is best, which procures the greatest Happiness for the greatest Numbers; and that, worst, which, in like manner, occasions Misery." Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, (London, 1725), Treatise II, sec.3.8; 177-78. Cf. the relation between Fielding's thought and Hutcheson's, infra, 249.
faith in love and friendship should govern every man's
conduct in the narrower sphere of his immediate family,
and should extend further to embrace the whole of mankind.
For,

if a man hath more love than what
centres in himself, it will certainly
light on his children, his relations,
his friends and nearest acquaintance.
If he extends it further, what is it
less than general philanthropy, or
love to mankind. (1)

To attain such a degree of social love, Fielding
repeatedly demonstrates, men must cultivate benevolence
and good-nature through religion, education, and social
experience. The path of true goodness is not easy or
plain; it is the result of arduous striving and self-
control. Good deeds arise from religious and moral
discipline, from exaltation of good-nature over bad, and
thus, as Booth's case shows, benevolence is a process that
involves care and effort.(2) Like Steele and the Latitudi-
narian divines, Fielding conceives of the truly benevolent
man as a Christian hero who is constantly conquering
temptation, resisting evil passions, and wayfaring through a
hostile world seeking a better life and practising goodness. He

1) Essay on ... the Characters of Men; Henley ed. XIV, 302.
Vide Dr. Harrison's description of Booth as a dutiful
son and an affectionate brother, "Relations ... in which
whoever discharges his duty well, gives us the rest, a
well grounded hope that he will behave as properly in
2) Vide, infra, Ch. IV, i, ii.
would support Barrow's statement that

this life is a state of travel toward another better country, and seat of rest ... it should not be strange to us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough passages, foul ways, hard lodging, scant or coarse fare. (1)

Fielding's preoccupation with benevolence determines his general attitude to the various classes of his society. To him, only benevolent actions constitute the main criterion of the individual's moral worth, without any regard to title, position, wealth or worldly emolument. His emphasis invariably lies on useful work for the public good; hence his continuous attacks on idleness, especially among the people of 'fashion'. He frequently lashes at the system of aristocratic education with its attendant European Tour, and maintains that the young gentlemen are

1) Barrow, Sermon XXXVII, "Of Contentment", in Theological Works, ed. Alexander Napier (Cambridge, 1859), III, 85-86; vide, also, Tillotson, Sermon CXXV, "The Difficulties of a Christian Life Consider'd", in Sermons on Several Subjects and Occasions (London, 1757), VII,323. At times, however, Fielding utilizes the notion, common in all religious and moral preaching, that the path of virtue is easy and plain. In his Preface to the Miscellanies, he wonders why men should seek false honour by "such perverse and rugged paths", and remarks that "while it is so easy and safe, and truly honourable, to be good, men should wade through difficulty and danger and real infamy, to be great, or, to use a synonymous word, villains." The doctrine underlying Jonathan Wild, he professes, is the pleasing and facile path of innocence and virtue, away from fear and the pangs of conscience. (Henley ed., XII, 243-44)
"bred up to do nothing". (1) There is also too much idleness among the young ladies of society who are educated to do "neither good nor evil". (2) The lower classes imitate the immoral idle ways of their betters, and visit places of entertainment which put them to an expense they cannot afford, and thus contribute to the increase of vice and crime. In his *Inquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* Fielding enumerates the evils that befall "inferior tradesmen" because of such idleness. He also emphasizes the vital importance of labour to society:

> To be born for no other purpose than to consume the fruits of the earth is the privilege (if it may be really called a privilege) of very few. The greater part of mankind must sweat hard to produce them, or society will no longer answer the purposes for which it was ordained. Six days shalt thou labour was the positive command of God in his own republic. (3)

This stress on labour occurs also in his *Proposal for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor*, where he substantiates his argument with Locke's thesis that labour makes the difference in value. Further, he points out that the individual's worth is dependent on his

1) *Tom Jones*, VIII, vii; Henley ed., IV, 89.
2) *A Journey from this World ...*, XIX, vii; Henley ed., II, 326.
3) *An Inquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers*, Henley ed., XIII, 24.
usefulness to society. (Incidentally, he agrees with Mandeville's famous paradox: 'private vices, public benefits' - and concedes that the rich support society by expenditure on their follies.) The rich may benefit society by disbursing wealth, but the poor, "having nothing but their labour to bestow on the society, if they withhold this from it, they become useless members."(1) Fielding never expresses any condescension towards the deserving poor. On the contrary, he prefers their labour to the idleness of the rich, and considers them more capable of attaining happiness than their 'betters'. (2) Heartfree affirms Fielding's opinion when he thinks of the future of his children:

Nor matters it what state of life is allotted for them, whether it be their fate to procure bread with their own labour, or to eat it at the sweat of others. Perhaps, if we consider the case with proper attention, or resolve it with due sincerity, the former is much the sweeter. The hind may be more happy than the lord, for his desires are fewer, and those such as are attended with more hope and less fear. (3)

The complement to his praise of honest goodness, in all stations, is his thorough-going examination, likewise

2) Cf. Pope's lines:
   There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd and great,
   See the false scale of happiness complete! &c.
   Essay on Man; IV,vi,287-88 ff.
in all stations, of vice and folly. This deserves some methodical discussion, as it has a direct bearing on his moral thought and artistic achievement. His condemnation of idleness and ill-nature in all classes, and particularly among the aristocracy, is related to the attitude of mind which brought upon him the accusation of being 'low'. Though he supports a hierarchically ordered society, and recommends the honest performance of duty in one's appointed station, rather than the self-assertion which seeks to rise in rank, he is nevertheless a strong egalitarian in moral values. Judging men only by their value in society, by their fellow-feeling and benevolent actions, led him to expose those egoists who have nothing to show but the acquired trappings of rank, wealth, and 'fashion', and to concentrate on the life of the common men who constitute the major part of society. This, together with a pervading spirit of egalitarianism in the novels, which dared openly to satirize prudishness, snobbery, and vice, resulted in the appellations of 'vulgar' and 'low' by some of his contemporaries. Dr. Johnson, for example, asserted the accusation, and approved of Richardson's abusive comments on Fielding. (1) Fielding himself was

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deeply affronted by such snubs, and his bitterness is shown on the numerous occasions where he ironically inquires into the meaning of the term 'low', or bitterly attacks those who perpetrate slander and calumny against him. In Joseph Andrews he attempts to define the terms 'high', 'low', and 'fashion', drawing attention to the prevailing snobbery of his time:

Be it known then, that the human species are divided into two sorts of people, to wit, high people and low people. As by high people I would not be understood to mean persons literally born higher in their dimensions than the rest of the species, nor metaphorically those of exalted characters or abilities; so by low people I cannot be construed to intend the reverse. High people signify no other than people of fashion, and low people those of no fashion. Now, this word fashion hath by long use lost its original meaning, from which at present it gives us a very different idea; for I am deceived if by persons of fashion we do not generally include a conception of birth and accomplishments superior to the herd of mankind; whereas, in reality, nothing more was originally meant by a person of fashion than a person who dressed himself in the fashion of the times; and the word really and truly signifies no more at this day. (1)

In contrast to Richardson's respectful and wistful adulation of aristocratic life Fielding's depiction of

1) Joseph Andrews, II,xiii; Henley ed., I, 180. For other discussions of the word 'low' vide the Champion, (June 12, 1740); Tom Jones, V, i; Henley ed., III, 205-206.
men and women in high places is often an indictment of evils. The bright colours with which Richardson paints the glamour of such life are replaced in Fielding by dark shades of self-interest, hypocrisy, and vices of the blackest types. Fielding had always been sincere in condemning the idleness, affectation, and social climbing attendant on such a life even before his shock at the public praise bestowed on Pamela. Both his explicit and implicit attacks on "high life" are numerous. "The splendid palaces of the great", "are often no other than Newgate with the mask on". (1) He frequently considers the life of the grandees and socialites affected, effeminate and dull. Denouncing 'high life' in general, he writes:

what Mr Pope says of women is very applicable to most in this station, who are, indeed, so entirely made up of form and affectation, that they have no character at all, at least none which appears. I will venture to say the highest life is much the dullest, and affords very little humour or entertainment. The various callings in lower spheres produce the great variety of humorous characters; whereas here, except among the few who are engaged in the pursuit of ambition, and the fewer still who have a relish for pleasure, all is vanity and servile imitation. Dressing and cards, eating and drinking, bowing and courtesying, make up the business of their lives. (2)

1) Preface to the Miscellanies, Henley ed., XII, 243.
2) Tom Jones, XIV, i; Henley ed., V, 94. Vide, also, the Covent Garden Journal, No. 37 (May 9, 1752), where he calls the people of fashion "the People of Fascination", and devotes the whole essay to expose them, and No. 42 (May 26, 1752).
Fielding's knowledge of 'high life', however, prevents him from issuing a blanket indictment of it. His praise of Lyttelton, Allen, Bedford, and some others, shows that he believes in the existence of really great and good men. This does not of course mean that he, in any way, plays down highly placed corruption.

Like Steele, Fielding pokes fun at the "pretty fine gentlemen" whose sole occupation is pride, affectation, snobbery, and a false, anti-Christian notion of honour. (1) Such ill-natured evils spread to the common people, whose ambition is to attain admission to "advanced" circles of thought and behaviour through imitation of the irreligious practices of the 'great'. This attitude, Fielding notes:

has grown to be a kind of fashion among us, and like other fashions, having begun among the higher ranks of the people, hath descended gradually through all orders, till it hath reached the very lowest in the society. (2)

1) Vide, e.g., the story of Mr. Wilson in Joseph Andrews, III, iii, passim. Again, like Steele and the homilists, Fielding condemns such misconceptions of the term honour as drive 'gentlemen' to duelling. When Amelia speaks about her husband's honour and how it must be preserved by duelling Dr. Harrison comments, "Honour! nonsense! Can honour dictate to him to disobey the express commands of his Maker, in compliance with a custom established by a set of blockheads, founded on false principles of virtue, in direct opposition to the plain and positive precepts of religion, and tending manifestly to give a sanction to ruffians, and to protect them in all the ways of impudence and villany?" Amelia, XII, iii; Henley ed., VII, 305.

2) Examples of the Interposition of Providence in the Detection and Punishment of Murder, Henley ed., XVI, 115-16,
He also draws attention to the prevalence of these evils among women of the lower classes. In a scene in *Tom Jones*, he ironically remarks that these 'noble qualities' are spreading in the country where women are not less practised in the highest feminine arts than their fair superiors in quality and fortune. Here are prudes and coquettes. Here are dressing and ogling; falsehood, envy, malice, scandal; in short, everything which is common to the most splendid assembly or political circle. (1)

He condemns the 'great' for their corruption, cruelty, and lack of compassion toward the deserving men of merit dependent upon their favours. (2) He charges them with undue concern for title and property in marriage affairs and disregard of compatibility and love (3), and with exploitation of power and riches in order to perpetrate their own sinful pleasures. Such high placed vices are dramatically exposed in the novels, particularly in *Amelia*. (4) But Fielding's indictment is not confined

1) IV, vii; Henley ed., III, 169.

2) *Vide*, e.g., *Amelia*, X, ix; Henley ed., VII, 236; and Colonel James' attitude toward Booth regarding the latter's application for a commission, ibid., XI, i; Henley ed., VII, 244; and Dr. Harrison's dialogue with a nobleman, ibid.; Henley ed., VII, 244-53; *vide*, also, Fielding's attack on favouritism in the *Covent Garden Journal*, No. 2 (January 7, 1752).


4) As in the cases of Lady Booby in *Joseph Andrews*, Lady Bellaston in *Tom Jones*, and the rapacious lord in *Amelia*. 
solely to the aristocracy. He is keen on attacking evil wherever it exists, and his denunciations include the prominent vices of the middle and lower classes as well. Despite his emphasis on the importance of trade, and his sympathetic interest in the merchant class (1), he lashes

1) In *The Voyage to Lisbon* he writes, "There is, indeed, nothing so useful to man in general, not so beneficial to particular societies and individuals, as trade. This is the *alma mater*, at whose plentiful breast all mankind are nourished." (Henley ed., XVI, 216); vide his defence of "the most valuable part of the king's subjects - those by whom the commerce of the nation is carried into execution" (ibid.; Henley ed., XVI, 255). His interest in the merchant class may also be attested by his respect, and help to his friend George Lillo, the jeweller of Moorfields (1693-1739). In *The London Merchant*, Lillo had thrown aside the traditions of his age, "ventured to descend so low as to introduce the character of a merchant, or his apprentice into a tragedy". (Tom Davis, *The Works of Mr. George Lillo with some Account of his Life*, 2 vols., London, 1775; I, xii) G.M. Godden rightly stresses "the close relation in intellectual sympathy" between Fielding and Lillo, and notes that Lillo was "the forerunner, on the stage, of that new era in English literature " created by Fielding's immortal portraits. (Henry Fielding, *A Memoir*, London, 1910; 95, 82) Vide, also, Edmund Gosse, *Henry Fielding, An Essay*, London, 1898; ix; and Dudden, 186-88. Fielding was convinced of the great worth of his friend, both as good man and dramatist. In 1736, Fielding, then manager of the Haymarket theatre, helped Lillo to produce successfully his third play, *Fatal Curiosity*, which had been previously rejected by other managers. He also revised the play, wrote its Prologue, and widely advertised it. After Lillo's death, a splendid tribute to him appeared in the *Champion* (February 26, 1740). Here, he is described as having "the gentlest and honestest manners ... the spirit of an old Roman, joined to the innocence of a primitive Christian .... In short, he was one of the best of men, and those who knew him best will most regret his loss". It is reasonable to suggest, as, indeed, William Irwin does, that Fielding may have been inspired by Lillo's personality in drawing the character of Heartfree. (The *Making of Jonathan Wild*, New York, 1941; 73-74.)
at its afection and the evils attending on the increase of its wealth. (1) His satire is often directed at its egoistic mercenary spirit (2), and its pretension to cultural, religious, and political knowledge which is far beyond its capacity. (3) He vehemently attacks its predilection for snobbery and considers this vice particularly connected with "the lower class of the gentry, and the higher of the mercantile world, who are, in reality, the worst-bred part of mankind". (4) Again, in Joseph Andrews, he gives the example of Mrs. Grave-airs, the daughter of a steward who once rode postillion, and satirizes the false haughtiness and prudishness that make her refuse to ride in the same coach as a liveried man. (5) Nor does Fielding spare the lowest orders of society his attacks on their vices: laziness, arrogance, and insolence. (6)

2) The Champion (March 20,1739-40); The True Patriot, No.11 (January 14, 1746).
3) The Covent Garden Journal, Nos.8,9 (January 28 and February 1, 1752), with regard to the deliberations of the Robin Hood Society.
5) Ibid.,II,v; Henley ed.,I,141-43.Vide, also 116,119,121, 130,
6) Vide, e.g., "Essay on Conversation"; Henley ed., XIV,247-48. Vide, also, his strong denunciation of the rows of sailors and watermen who insulted him and jested on his misery while he was being carried to the ship in the Voyage to Lisbon. "It is, I am afraid," he writes, "but little satisfactory to account for the inhumanity of those, who, while they boast of being made after God's own image, seem to bear in their minds a resemblance of the vilest species of brutes; or rather, indeed, of our idea of devils; for I don't know that any brutes can be taxed with such malvolence." Henley ed., XVI,200,201.
His compassion goes only to those who genuinely suffer, and who deserve charity. His plans for the poor exclude (though, one may note, Squire Allworthy's charity does not exclude) those who prefer begging to working. (1) Fielding's love of labour for the public good makes him condemn beggars, and consider them an idle, organized profession with its own rules and orders of procedure. (2) The really low classes of humanity, in his view, are those of all worldly orders who have not acquired and cultivated goodness of mind and heart by instinct, experience and good example.

His opinion of human worth, then, is independent of bias for any social class. He frequently argues against any claim of worth merely based on title or inherited fortune. (3) Genuine superiority lies in good-nature and benevolence which constitute the criteria of worth. Thus he insists on judging people as individuals, and repeatedly emphasizes this point. (4) Benevolence, as Booth explains to Miss Matthews, can exist in all ranks of society:

4) Vide, e.g., Tom Jones, XII,x; Henley ed., IV,344.
I know not ...why we should be more surprised to see greatness of mind discover itself in one degree or rank of life than in another. Love, benevolence, or what you will please to call it, may be the reigning passion in a beggar as well as in a prince, and wherever it is its energies will be the same.

To confess the truth, I am afraid we often compliment what we call upper life with too much injustice at the expense of the lower. As it is no rare thing to see instances which degrade human nature in persons of the highest birth and education, so I apprehend that examples of whatever is really great and good have been sometimes found amongst those who have wanted all such advantages. In reality, palaces, I make no doubt do sometimes contain nothing but dreariness and darkness, and the sun of righteousness hath shone forth with all its glory in a cottage. (1)

Considering Fielding's works as a whole, one feels that, despite his efforts to discover evil and good in all levels of society, his sympathies lie most with the common man, and that his indictment of the privileged classes is much more pronounced. It is interesting to note that many of his good-natured men and women belong to the lower classes of society. In Joseph Andrews for instance the good heroes are a poor parson and a footman; besides these, there are the kind postilion who helped Joseph, Betty the chamber-maid, the servant who lent Joseph clothes (I,x) and the pedlar who parted with

1) Amelia, III,vii; Henley ed., VI,139.
all his money to help Adams pay the hostess of the ale-house (II,xv) and who later saved the Parson's son (IV,viii). Fielding seems to believe that common humanity and fellow-feeling are more pronounced among the lower classes "On account of the evils to which they themselves are liable." (1) A self-professed enemy of vice but not of individual's he seems convinced that luxury and privilege are the natural hotbeds of vice and ill-nature.

Benevolence, then, is not dependent on social rank; it is social love in the widest sense of the term 'love'. The good man is essentially a loving and lovable Christian. His sympathy and fellow-feeling extend from his immediate circle (his family, relations and neighbours) to the larger circle of his social environment. It may not be amiss here to discuss Fielding's attitude to the question of love in its narrower sense (love between the sexes and family affection) as it is closely related to his conception of benevolence, and owing to its importance as a dominant theme in his novels.

His attitude to the relationship between the sexes is largely determined by his conception of benevolence. His position here is an extension of his basic concep-

1) Amelia, X, ix; Henley ed., VII, 236.
tion of benevolence as the essence of warm, generous love and humanity, in contrast to cold calculating self-interest. He regards human nature as comprising two fundamental types of individual: one who is outward-looking and ready to give himself to others, the other devoid of love, imprisoned in his own ego, and selfishly scheming to possess without regard to others. In his penetrating analysis of Fielding's conception of love, John Middleton Murry defines Fielding's attitude to love in relation to self-love and benevolence in this way:

He believed that Christian love and human friendship and the love between man and woman were intimately allied by the tenderness they had in common; he believed, too, that this tenderness could impart a grace even to a casual sex-relation; he believed that there was a generosity of the body. Tender-ness, warmth, sympathy, gratitude, gene-
rosity were the true virtues; cruelty, coldness, hardness and hypocrisy, un-gratefulness, meanness the true vices. Self-regarding egoism, no matter what uniform of respectability it carried, was hateful; solicitude for others, no matter how disreputably arrayed, was to be loved. (1)

Again, Fielding holds that love between the sexes, like good-nature, is the action of both head and heart.

Its tenderness and benevolence are active manifestations emanating from the heart, while reason attempts to direct and supervise. Booth says in *Amelia*, "we reason from our heads, but act from our hearts"; (1) Allworthy, arguing rather for rational control affirms to Jenny Jones that love "as it is a laudable, is a rational passion, and can never be violent but when reciprocal". (2) True love is the child of good-nature, and its crowning felicity in this world. It is essentially a generous, mutual passion. In *Tom Jones* (VI,i) Fielding devotes an introductory chapter to emphasize its benevolent nature. He condemns sexual relations based merely on 'HUNGER' (i.e. not mutual esteem) and stresses that true love will never "shake or remove" from minds which base it on "gratitude and esteem". These he considers "the proper motives to love, as youth and beauty are to desire". (3) Gratitude as a motive to love is explained earlier in *Tom Jones*, when Fielding describes Tom's attitude toward Molly Seagrim. Such a man as Tom, Fielding assures us, can never receive any kind of satisfaction from another without loving that creature to whom that

1) VIII,x; Henley ed., VII,113.
3) Ibid., VI,i; Henley ed., III,272.
satisfaction is owing, and without making its well-being in some sort necessary to their own ease. (1)

Mutuality is a fundamental element in this passion. "Love, I believe", Allworthy explains to Blifil, "is the child of love only; at least I am pretty confident that to love the creature who we are assured hates us is not in human nature". (2) Again Booth expresses the same sentiment when he says to Colonel James, "Beauty is, indeed, the object of liking, great qualities of admiration, good ones of esteem, but the devil take me if I think anything but love to be the object of love." (3)

Fielding's young good-natured men and women are particularly susceptible to the temptations of the flesh. His good-natured hero usually has excellent physical characteristics, in addition to his inborn good breeding, sense of gallantry, gratitude, and, at times, a mistaken sense of obligation to the fair sex. All this, together with his inadequate wisdom and experience in the wicked ways of the world, sometimes leads him to unchastity. This is illustrated in the stories of Tom Jones and Captain Booth. (4) Fielding considers such lapses less

2) Ibid., XVII, iii; Henley ed., V, 261.
3) *Amelia* V, ix; Henley ed., VI, 270.
sinful than the ill-natured vices of egoism and hypocrisy. In *A Journey From this World to the Next*, Minos readily admits into Elysium a man who confesses such offences, but who at the same time claims that he has never intended to harm any person, nor avoided any opportunity to do good. (1) Again, of the two Snap sisters in *Jonathan Wild*, the one who is severely condemned by the rest of the family for having a bastard is shown to have some good qualities. Later she marries and becomes a good wife. (2) Fielding also depicts Square as liable to temptation, and looks more kindly on him than on the cold-hearted bully Thwackum; Square, who is, hilariously, shown hiding in Molly's attic, is finally redeemed and restored to a good, religious life. In *Joseph Andrews*, Betty, the chamber-maid, though having a constitution "composed of ... warm ingredients", and "daily liable to the solicitations of lovers of all complexions" (3), is essentially good.

This attitude seems to account for such criticism as that of Sir John Hawkins, who complains that Fielding is:

1) I,vii; Henley ed., II, 245.
2) IV,xv; Henley ed., II, 207.
teaching that true virtue upon principle is imposture, that generous qualities alone constitute true worth, and that a young man may love and be loved, and at the same time associate with the loosest of women. (1)

These charges of moral laxity and lack of refinement in sexual relations were most pronounced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The twentieth century should be kinder and more just to Fielding's view of sex, considering that open relations between the sexes have now become one of the main obsessional themes of modern culture, and that their treatment has become so disturbingly uninhibited. Fielding's view of sex, however, is a far cry from the view prevalent at present. It is consistent with his vision of reality and Nature, and with his general moral intention. He does not recommend promiscuity or the casual amorous entanglement; he is man-of-the-world enough to condone an occasional adventure if it is harmless on both sides. The lapses of his good men are functional in the novels. They are part and parcel of the long arduous struggle to attain wisdom and experience in the ways of the world. For Fielding's hero must complement his good-nature with wisdom and

prudence. His peregrinations constitute a kind of pilgrimage toward maturity, love, and wisdom, goals the realisation of which is concomitant with attaining the beloved. In Joseph's case this goal is Fanny, in Tom's, Sophia, and in Booth's the enriched resumption of a bliss and a fulfilment that were temporarily broken by imprudence and incontinence. In the Dedication of *Tom Jones*, Fielding points out that his purpose is to show that "virtue and innocence can scarce ever be injured but by indiscretion; and that it is this alone which often betrays them into the snares that deceit and villainy spread for them". (1) Towards the end of the novel Allworthy approves of Tom's final achievement of prudence, "which is indeed the duty which we owe to ourselves", in a dangerous world. (2)

That Fielding generally condemns irregular sexual relations is evident in numerous places in his works. If some of his heroes at times indulge in such relations, they suffer for their indulgence. Moreover, Fielding distinguishes between what they will and will not do. Tom Jones, for example, blames young Nightingale for flirting with Nancy Miller without intending to marry her. When Nightingale accuses Tom of being a hypocrite,

2) Ibid., XVIII, x; Henley ed., V, 346-47.
the latter heatedly answers,

Lookee Mr. Nightingale ... I am no canting hypocrite, nor do I pretend to the gift of chastity more than my neighbours. I have been guilty with women, I own it; but am not conscious that I have ever injured any. Nor would I, to procure pleasure to myself, be knowingly the cause of misery to any human being. (1)

Here, Fielding is deliberately ignoring conventional sexual morality in favour of a good-natured judgement of human values. To have an accidental amour is bad, but worse than that is the sin of harming others. Moreover, Tom himself is honest enough to admit the misery consequent on such bad conduct, and to blame himself for his follies. (2) Booth's folly is more serious, for he commits adultery, and his pangs of conscience are most acute.

Fielding's approach to the issue of sexual relations is both healthy and realistic. He is prepared, for comic purposes and provided no corruption or damage follows, to allow sexual pleasure outside marriage as an occasional slip prompted by youthful warmth and imprudence. But this is always somewhat blamable, and decidedly so, as in the case of Booth, if disloyalty to a wife is caused. It is also blamable, as in the case of Tom, if disloyalty to

1) Ibid., XIV, iv; Henley ed., V, 108.
2) Ibid., XVIII, ii; Henley ed., V, 296.
a loved one is involved. Further, in comparison with the attitude of the 'fashionable world' to sexuality, his position is reasonable and convincing, being the result of a sincere and practical assessment of the social conditions around him. He severely attacks their view of love as sexual indulgence that often leads to lust and adultery, a crime whose 'horror and atrociousness' he vehemently denounces in *Amelia*. (1) He also deplores their conception of marriage as a means of material gain, and satirizes the prudent, conventional marriages approved by the social code, wherein the husband and bride are strangers to each other before and after the marriage, and wherein monetary prospects and expectations of gain are paramount. His sensitivity to, and repugnance of such a convention make him consider such marriages "legal prostitution for hire". (2) Tom and Booth, to say the least, have not committed what Dr. Harrison terms "stealing a human creature for the sake of her fortune"(3); their conception of sex is more healthy, despite their follies, than that imposed by convention. All the same, Fielding repeatedly warns

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1) *Vide*, e.g., Dr. Harrison's sermon-letter read in the masquerade (*Ibid.*, X,ii).


3) *Amelia*, II,iv; Henley ed., VI,80.
against the wild amorous temptations "to whose poison and infatuation the best of minds are so liable". He goes on to say:

Ambition scarce ever produces any evil but when it reigns in cruel and savage bosoms; and avarice seldom flourishes at all but in the basest and poorest soil. Love, on the contrary, sprouts usually up in the richest and noblest minds; but there, unless nicely watched, pruned, and cultivated, and carefully kept clear of those vicious weeds which are too apt to surround it, it branches forth into wildness and disorder, produces nothing desirable, but chokes up and kills whatever is good and noble in the mind where it so abounds. (1)

The only relationship Fielding truly approves is mutual love, based on esteem and honour, within marriage, and leading to lasting loyalty and tenderness for wife and children. Throughout his novels, he demonstrates, both directly and by imaginative rendering, that the real point of sexual satisfaction is family love and domestic happiness. This, he insists,

is the end of almost all our pursuits, and the common reward of all our pains. When men find themselves for ever barred from this delightful fruition, they are lost to all industry, and grow careless of all there worldly affairs. Thus they become bad subjects, bad relations, bad friends and bad men. (2)

1) Amelia, VI,i; Henley ed.,VI,280.
2) Ibid., X,ii; Henley ed., VII,190. Like Steele, Fielding is particularly pleasing on this topic.
He is genuinely moved by scenes of conjugal devotion and felicity; and his novels are replete with movingly tender portraits of domestic happiness. In Joseph Andrews, he delightfully dramatizes Parson Adams' love of his children, and emphasizes that Adams paternal devotion is a manifestation of intrinsic good-nature and benevolence. Adams is overpowered with grief when he hears that his youngest son, Jacky, is drowned, and his joy is great when he later finds his child safe and sound. (1) Adams is also a devoted husband to his wife, "a very good sort of woman, only rather too strict in economics". (2) She declares that the parson has always been a loving and cherishing husband to her, despite his seemingly strict and stern advice to Joseph with regard to his impatience to marry his beloved Fanny. (3) Again, when Mr. Wilson describes himself "stretched on the ground and my children playing round me", Adams reply is "I should reverence the sight". (4) In Jonathan Wild, Fielding describes the domestic happiness of the Heartfree in the same tender and pleasing manner, thus heightening the contrast between their devotion and Wild's constant disputes with the unfaithful and loathing

1) IV,viii; Henley ed., I, 351-52.
2) IV,xi; Henley ed., I, 368.
3) IV,viii; Henley ed., I, 354.
4) III,iv; Henley ed., I, 257.
Tishy. (1) In *Tom Jones*, Sophia's goodness is reflected in her dutiful and loving attitude towards her father, despite the squire's egoistic and blamable conduct, and Tom's benevolence is attested by his filial adoration of his benefactor, and his forgiving and assisting his miscreant half-brother. The whole novel could not be complete without the happy ending where Fielding describes the pleasant domestic scene of Squire Western with his son-in-law, his daughter, and grandchildren leading a life of bucolic happiness. It is in *Amelia*, however, that Fielding's intentions with regard to family life are most pronounced. The whole novel presents a vivid picture of dutiful, and durable conjugal devotion and is rightly regarded as a monument to Fielding's adoration for his first wife Charlotte (2), whose praises he sang in describing the beauty of Sophia in *Tom Jones*. There is much of Fielding's personality in *Amelia*, and, more than any of his novels, it provides a most pleasing and tender portrait of the devoted wife, the loving mother, and the honest, faithful woman. (3)


3) Vide, e.g., XI,viii; Henley ed., VII,281-85, and IV, iii; Henley ed., VI,190-91.
Fielding, the man, is particularly effective in referring to his own family affections. The opening lines of *A Journal of A Voyage to Lisbon* show him as a tender, loving father, and a devoted, considerate husband. His plain, simple, matter-of-fact words, the words of a dying man, and his controlled, unadorned narrative reveal his wholehearted attachment to his wife and children, and the suffering he experienced on that day of parting:

By the light of this sun, I was, in my own opinion, last to behold and take leave of some of those creatures on whom I doated with a mother-like fondness, guided by nature and passion, and uncured and unhardened by all the doctrine of that philosophical school where I had learnt to bear pains and to despise death...(1)

Fielding's good-natured man, then, has a fair share of instinctive goodness of heart balanced by reason and judgement; he is mainly concerned with the practice of benevolence for the benefit of society, his reward being the inward spiritual pleasure, the esteem and gratitude of his fellow-men. He is rare in comparison with the majority of men, who are often bent on satisfying their own self-interest; and he can be found among any class

1) Wednesday, June 26, 1754; Henley ed., XVI,199.
of society. In addition to his distinct emotional and rational characteristics, the good man's universal love and charity are reflected in his countenance, in his good breeding and pleasing demeanour, all of which makes him a loving and a lovable human being. He is an ardent lover, a devoted husband, an excellent father, a dutiful patriot and a lover of the whole of humanity. To achieve this degree of benevolence, he must cultivate his good nature and add prudence and discretion to his intrinsic good passions. In short, he must have both a good head and a good heart.
ii. The Good Head and the Good Heart

Fielding conceives of good-nature as a dominant passion inseparable from good sense and sound judgement. Real greatness, he never tires of emphasizing, is "the union of a good heart with a good head"; (1) these terms sum up the emotional and rational qualities he deems fundamental for benevolent action. They constantly recur in his writings, forming a central point of reference in his portrayal of the good man. Their frequency also demonstrates his awareness of the contemporary discussions on the ethical faculty in relation to reason and sentiment. With regard to the varying views of 'intellectualists' and 'sentimentalists', his position is mainly eclectic and balanced. The heart with its passions, he holds, is the source of moral energy, the centre of motivation, the

1) "Essay on Conversation", Henley ed., XIV, 259. In his poem "Of True Greatness-An Epistle to the Right Honourable George Dodington"Fielding writes: "Greatness ... is to be good and wise", and "True greatness lives but in the noble mind.", Henley ed., XII,250, 256. In his Preface to the original edition of the Miscellanies, he distinguishes between the good, the great, and the great and good men, emphasizing the rational and emotional qualities of the great and good man. Henley ed., XII, 245 f. Squire Allworthy and Dr. Harrison are frequently described as having both good minds and good hearts. They represent what Fielding terms "the true sublime in human nature." Ibid., Henley ed., XII,245.
spring of human action. But in order to achieve goodness it must needs be assisted and joined by the wisdom, prudence, and right judgement of a good head. Thus the highest degree of benevolence is a composite of equally excellent and interdependent rational and emotional factors.

Fielding's attitude toward the rational and emotional elements of human nature requires further examination. This is necessary for a deeper understanding of his conception of human nature, for an attempt to define his position in relation to the moral thought of his time, and for noting the progression and direction of his work with regard to the steadily increasing emphasis on sentiment, a basic issue of the eighteenth century cultural climate.

For abstract, pseudo-philosophical reason, devoid of social love and compassion, Fielding has no respect. He will have no truck with those who consider it by itself the sole guide to virtue and happiness. His works are replete with attacks on so-called philosophers and great men whose cold calculations are both impracticable and deceptive. It is this sort of heartless reason, he believes, that thinly disguises freethinkers,
deists, and atheists, and underlines the empty slogans proclaiming "the naked beauty of virtue", and "the rule of right". It is the same Protean reason of unrepenting Squares, the chill, insensitive schemings of hypocritical Blifils, and the hotbed of affectation and vice utilized by the enemies of religion and morality. In Joseph Andrews, Fielding ironically recounts the experience of Mr. Wilson as a member of a club frequented by so-called philosophers.

"These gentlemen", he writes,

were engaged in a search after truth, in the pursuit of which they threw aside all the prejudices of education, and governed themselves only by the infallible guide of human reason. This great guide, after having shown them the falsehood of that very ancient but simple tenet, that there is such a being as a Deity in the Universe, helped them to establish in his stead a certain rule of right, by adhering to which they all arrived at the utmost purity of morals. (1)

The immediate effects on Mr. Wilson were vanity and pride. Thus, he "held in utter contempt all persons who wanted any other inducement to virtue besides her intrinsic beauty and excellence." (2) Later, when he expressed astonishment at the adultery, lies, and deception of those "rule of right men", he was given a lesson in relative morality. He was told that "there was nothing

1) III, iii, Henley ed., I, 240-41.
absolutely good or evil in itself; that actions were
denominated good or bad by the circumstances of the
agent." (1)

Fielding's condemnation of such abuse of reason is
given much more prominence in Tom Jones. Here, he
parodies Square's parrot-like repetition of the formula
"the unalterable rule of right and the eternal fitness
of things", with the intention of exposing those so-
called philosophers who utilize empty cliches to serve
their own evil purposes. Square poses as a master in
ancient philosophy, especially in the works of Plato
and Aristotle, as having formed himself upon the models
of these philosophers, but in effect, so Fielding
carefully points out, has completely missed the point
of their works, his natural parts not being of the first
rate. (2) Like the members of Mr. Wilson's club, he
abuses true philosophy by echoing the "intellectualist"
formula in order to realize vicious and egoistic ends.
His chop-logic concerning "the law of nature", "the
beauty of virtue", and "the fitness of things" constitutes
the bulk of his learning from the school of Cudworth
and Clarke, and possibly from the deistic school of

1) Loc.cit.
Tindal, Toland and Wollaston. (1) Fielding also describes him as an admirer of Cicero, Tully, and Shaftesbury with a previous hint that Square may have missed all that is valuable in their philosophy. (2) Of all the incongruous smatterings of ancient and modern philosophy in Square's mind, Fielding stresses the deistic strands, and all that distinguish the general irreligious character of his thought. Square's formulas smack too much of deism (a school of thought Fielding particularly abhors) and his irreverent discourses are devoid of reference to religious authority. Indeed, he openly and mischievously insists on dropping "the article of religion" from his arguments, and is intent on belittling the value of Christianity.

Behind his superficial and formular theorizing, Square conceals his real motives: greed, vanity and lust. The confusion of pseudo-philosophical views that clouds his intellect serves only as a façade for his real sentiment: "to regard all virtue as a matter of theory."

1) Wilbur L. Cross maintains that Square's original was Thomas Chubb who "kept a tallow-chandler's shop, but employed his leisure in the theological studies from which he emerged as a deist, though not an unqualified one". He further points out the similarities between the two: their disputatious disposition, their openness to ridicule, and their frequent repetition of the intellectualists' formula. The History of Henry Fielding (2 vols., New Haven, 1918), Vol.II,169-70.

2) Tom Jones, V, ii; Henley ed., III, 212.
only". (1) To him, philosophy is a means. to be used whenever expedient, a convenient mask to hide his machinations to gain Squire Allworthy's confidence, oust his rival Thwackum, and take over Allworthy's estate by marrying Miss Bridget. To achieve all this, he calculates, he must compete with Thwackum in discrediting Tom, and, with his deceit, succeeds temporarily in this ignoble purpose.

Contrasted to this form of unintelligent, hypocritical, and uncharitable conduct is another, even more wicked and more dangerous. Thwackum's behaviour is the product of narrow-mindedness, bigotry, brutality, pseudo-religious pretensions, hypocrisy and stubborn pride - all manifestations of an essentially evil heart. The very name stamps him as a bully, with no rational restraint on his violent passions. By caricaturing such a minister of religion, Fielding expresses the revulsion he feels against fanaticism, faction and blind zeal. Thwackum's conceptions of religion and of human nature, his hectic insistence on 'authority' and 'divine grace', betray an extreme high-church position, together with a touch of the Jesuitry Fielding loathed. Such leanings are

1) Ibid., III,iii, Henley ed., III, 114.
diametrically opposed to the tolerant, reasonable, and humanistic Christianity which informs all Fielding's writings. The portrait of Thwackum is completely blackened by his inveterate pride, faulty judgement, disputatious nature, treacherous scheming, and boundless cruelty. All these are thinly disguised by an appearance of religious learning, and all are concomitants of a narrow mind.

The narrow intelligence of Thwackum and Square is exposed in their telling dispute about honour, a moral quality very close to Fielding's heart, and, according to him, a major constituent of goodness. The motive for Tom's insistence on refusing to divulge the name of his accomplice in poaching (Black George) is justly understood by Allworthy to be "a mistaken point of honour". (1) Here Thwackum heatedly disagrees and exclaims, "Can honour teach any one to tell a lie, or can any honour exist independent from religion?" (2) The debate that follows between him and Square does not reveal any weighty learning, religious or philosophical. On the contrary, it testifies to their ignorance, prejudice and vanity.

Each is too warped in his own ego and his own formula to

1) Ibid., III,ii; Henley ed., III,113.
2) Ibid., Henley ed., III,113.
attempt an explanation of the term. All Thwackum knows about honour is its dependence on his own brand of dogmatic religion, and its being "a mode of Divine grace". (1) Square's argument is equally fatuous and inane. Honour, he holds, "to drop the article of religion", is synonymous with virtue, and both are antecedent to religion. His irreverent sophistry succeeds only in infuriating his rival the more. Thus neither is able to conceive of true honour in any sound practical or even both preceptive terms, and/or are unable to proceed beyond juggling with words. It is this ignorance and formular thinking that Fielding here satirizes. To him, honour is primarily a practical quality which in no sense conflicts with the tolerant, humane, and charitable Christianity he so earnestly emphasizes. Like the Latitudinarian divines, Steele, Hutcheson, and other Christian moralists, he holds that honour is an active disposition, inextricable from true virtue and religion. (2) It cannot be systematized or become merely nominal; nor can it be motivated by pride, vanity, malice or 'fashion'.

Both Thwackum and Square, then, are depicted as ludicrous charlatans who (at least in Square's case)

2) Fielding would support Hume in disagreeing with Addison's view that honour is separated from virtue. Vide, supra. 180.
deliberately misconstrue the real meaning of religion, virtue, and honour, the triumvirate essential for goodness, in order to gratify their vanity, and vicious self-interest. Both are punished, each according to his guilt. In the fifth book of Tom Jones, their masks are ripped off in two climactic hilarious scenes: first of Square squatting "among other female utensils" in Molly's bedroom protesting fitness, and later, of Thwackum having a taste of the punitive aggression he so wrongfully and brutally administered to Tom. (1) Towards the end of the novel the fate of each is again decided according to the enormity of his evil.

Though both Thwackum and Square are motivated by greed and have many vices in common, Fielding considers the evil of the divine far deadlier than that of the philosopher. Square is at least inwardly aware of the falsity of his theories, and pursues them mainly to gratify his vanity and worldly motives. The evil he has done is mitigated by a conscious conviction that the formula of fitness is in effect a worthless moral criterion. Some seeds of goodness still survive in his heart, and he is accredited with a measure of sound reason, however slight:

1) Tom Jones, V,v, and V,xi; Henley ed., III, 226, 263.
for the philosopher very well knew what virtue was, though he was not always perhaps steady in its pursuit; but as for Thwackum, from what reason I will not determine, no such thoughts ever entered into his head: he saw Jones in a bad light, and he imagined Allworthy saw him in the same, but that he was resolved, from pride and stubbornness of spirit, not to give up the boy whom he had once cherished; since by so doing he must tacitly acknowledge that his former opinion of him had been wrong. (1)

Thus Square, unlike Thwackum, is potentially good and redeemable. When towards the end of the novel he realizes the enormity of his injustice, he recants, confesses his guilt, becomes "in earnest a Christian", and dies in peace. In his last letter to Allworthy, he commends Tom's excellent qualities: "the noblest generosity of heart, the most perfect capacity for friendship, the highest integrity, and indeed every virtue which can ennoble a man". (2) About himself he writes:

the pride of philosophy had intoxicated my reason, and the sublimest of all wisdom appeared to me, as it did to the Greeks of old, to be foolishness. God hath, however, been so gracious to show me my error in time, and to bring me in to the way of truth, before I sunk into utter darkness forever. (3)

It is Thwackum's lot to be sunk in perpetual

1) Ibid., IV, xi, Henley ed., III, 189.
2) Ibid., XVIII, iv; Henley ed., V, 308.
darkness. Until the very end, he is adamant in his stubborn pride, his narrow and perverted concept of religion, and his ill-judgement of Squire Allworthy's character. His letter to the Squire reeks of brimstone and hell-fire. In very bad taste and in utter stupidity, he begins a letter, presumably a supplication, by venting his wrath upon Square and Tom, mistakenly thinking that the squire would applaud such vengeful torrents of slander. "I shall not wonder", he writes, "at any murders he may commit; and I heartily pray that your own blood may not seal up his final commitment to the place of wailing and gnashing of teeth." (1) In retrospect, he is driven by an almost pathological hatred for the good-natured boy, accuses Allworthy of "unwarrantable weakness" and expresses his resentment for not having "scourged much of this diabolical spirit of the boy". (2) Fielding selects the right inflated terms most appropriate to the lurid, exaggerated character of the tutor "whose divinity itself was tainted with his temper". (3)

An extreme example of ill-nature, hypocrisy, and ingratitude Thwackum is more dangerous than Square. To perpetrate vice, hypocrisy and brutality in the name of

2) Ibid., XVIII, iv; Henley ed., V, 309.
3) Ibid., XVIII, iv; Henley ed., V, 310.
religion is far worse than committing the same evil in the name of philosophy. This is consistent with Fielding's view of the various kinds and degrees of hypocrisy, and with his strong condemnation of the "sour, morose, ill-natured, censorious sanctity which never is, or can be sincere". (2) In *Tom Jones*, it seems that Blifil has absorbed more of Thwackum's views than Square's. The young hypocrite in his overall character is not very dissimilar to the false champion of religion. Despite his attempts to reconcile both "virtue and religion" during his tutors' presence, Blifil's hidden evils - greed, gravity, affectation, pride, sadistic brutality, malice, and susceptibility to religious fanaticism - are those of Thwackum. Whether his conversion to Methodism in the end, to marry a rich widow of that faith, is in part a product of the divine's view of grace, or of congenital factors, or of worldly egoistic motives, or of Fielding's own prejudice against Methodism as synonymous with hypocrisy and self-righteousness, Fielding seems to imply that Thwackum has exercised more influence on Blifil than has Square. In any case, both Thwackum and Square are deliberately drawn as caricatures.

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1) "Essay on ... the Characters of Men", Henley ed., XIV, 291-94.
2) Ibid., 294.
personifications of extreme false positions: the muddle-headed morality of so-called philosophers, and the narrow-minded intolerance of so-called divines. Fielding explicitly brands them false and pretended champions of virtue and religion, and, in a separate chapter, makes it clear that he does not intend any injury to these two "glorious causes". (1) For to Fielding, true philosophy complements true religion; both are consistent and necessary for the good-natured man, and, in their purity, embrace the essential ingredient of benevolence: goodness of heart. Any system of morality that alienates virtue and religion and ignores the "natural goodness of heart" is basically narrow and deceptive. It is this firm conviction that lies at the root of Fielding's recurring attacks on atheists, deists, Methodists, Quakers, papists, Hobbists, Mandevillians and the elements in Stoic and intellectualistic systems that depreciate the wholesome feelings of the heart. He makes this explicit in the "necessary apology" that embodies his verdict on both Thwackum and Square:

Upon the whole, it is not religion or virtue, but the want of them, which is here exposed. Had not Thwackum too much neglected virtue, and Square, religion, in the composition of their several systems,

1) Tom Jones, III, iv; Henley ed., III, 117.
and had not both utterly discarded
all natural goodness of heart, they
had never been represented as the
objects of derision in this history. (1)

On the whole, Fielding seems to regard philosophy
with suspicion and uncertainty. To him, philosophical
systems are mainly theoretical, restrictive and im­
practicable, while human conduct is something concrete,
unlimited and practical. Although he has great respect
for the ancient philosophers and some of the moderns,
such as Locke and Shaftesbury, he is generally critical
of philosophers because of their abstruse and speculative
methods, and because their systems are open to dogmatism.

1) Ibid., III, iv, Henley ed., III, 118. Vide, his attack
on those philosophers (possibly deists and atheists)
who 
"... have, it seems, in direct opposition to that
ancient tenent of the Stoic school, that virtue is
the greatest good, found out, that virtue is the
greatest evil, and that the surest and indeed only
way to human happiness is utterly to pluck up by the
roots that useless and pernicious word, which every
where obstructs men in all desirable pursuits." The Champion, (Tuesday, January 23, 1739-40.) He
elaborates, attacking Hobbes, Mandeville, and their
followers: "These philosophers have carried on their
war against virtue two ways. They have first, as
much as in them lay, endeavoured to ridicule and
extirpate all our expectations of any future reward
in another life; and secondly, they have represented
it as directly incompatible with our happiness and
advancement in this. While one part of this tribe
have been kicking our religion out of doors, another
have as strenuously applied themselves to send our
morals after. We have seen religion represented as a
grievance, and vices very modestly called the chief
benefits to a nation." (Ibid.)
and other forms of abuse. He is more concerned with the practical and concrete in moral issues than with the abstract and circumscribed. It is for this that he recommends his new novel form as a better device for teaching morality than moral treatises, or even sermons, because his novels offer tangible and concrete examples of good and evil, not mere precepts and narrow rules. Besides, philosophy depends too much on the head and is susceptible of disregarding the heart and its springs of human action. This accounts, in part, for Fielding's frequent attacks on Stoic insensitivity and lack of compassion.

Like the Latitudinarians, Pope, Steele, and several other Christian moralists, Fielding denounces the cold heartless reason of the Stoics. This is the major weakness all Christian thinkers before Fielding found in the Stoic system. Fielding joins in denouncing the Stoics' depreciation of the passional elements in man, and their irreverent pride and egoism. Under their influence, a man may turn inward upon himself and become heedless of the good of others. In Tom Jones Fielding ironically commends

that noble firmness of mind which rolls a man, as it were, within
himself, and like a polished bowl, enables him to run through the world without being stopped by the calamities which happen to others. (1)

In *Amelia*, Colonel James' mind was formed of those firm materials of which nature formerly hammered the Stoic, and upon which the sorrows of no man living could make an impression. (2)

Fielding's repudiation of the extreme rationalism of the Stoics is also evident in the way he draws his ideal good-natured men and their disciples, the good heroes and heroines of the novels. All of these have benevolent passions in abundance, and are motivated by love, compassion and friendship. They are also susceptible to other passions, such as anger. Fielding is realistic enough to think that complete control of the passions, though often desirable, is rarely possible. This question must have been uppermost in his mind when he wrote *Joseph Andrews*. After the robbers beat and strip Joseph, the latter justly finds it impossible to conquer his anger at them, having only the feeble assistance of such Christian counsel as the ignorant and venal Parson Barnabas can give. (3) In *Tom Jones*, the vigour, vitality, and passionate temper of Tom is a symptom of his good-nature. (4)

1) XIV, vi; Henley ed., V, 115.
2) VIII, v; Henley ed., VII, 90.
On the other hand the severe rational self-control of the Stoic receives no praise from Fielding. The calm demeanour of Stilpo, after losing his children, Fielding notes, is due more to "wanting the affection than conquering it" (1) and such an insensitive nature deserves praise. Though his admiration for the Stoic philosophy is frequently expressed (2), his general attitude is essentially Christian. M. Battestin accurately notes that Fielding's admiration for the passionless integrity and self-sufficiency of the 'vir honestus', his unaltering contempt of the vicissitudes of fortune, is almost invariably qualified by an awareness of his limitations. With its stress upon the cultivation of the social affections of benevolence and compassion, its distinctive doctrine of the forgiveness of injuries, and its assurance of the life hereafter, Christianity, said Fielding, "goes much farther." (3)

1) "Of the Remedy of Affliction", Henley ed., XVI, 99.
3) Battestin, 12. Fielding's position is clearly defined in a long passage in the story of the Man of the Hill who is evidently Fielding's mouthpiece. Here, Fielding expresses his preference of "Divine wisdom" to all philosophy. He writes: "True it is, that philosophy makes us wiser, but Christianity makes us better men. Philosophy elevates and steels the mind, Christianity softens and sweetens it. The former makes us the objects of human admiration, the latter of Divine love. That insures us a temporal, but this an eternal happiness". Tom Jones, VIII, xiii, Henley ed., IV, 136.
Like many moralists of his time, Fielding realizes the important role of the passions, and that the emotional part of man motivates, and the rational only guides. The Stoics, then, cannot be praised for their depreciation of the heart impulses. Man, in fact, should derive from both these elements of his being a great deal of pleasure. But here, as in other aspects of life, Fielding finds prudence and moderation necessary to attain the greatest happiness. "The wise man", he writes, "gratifies every appetite and every passion, while the fool sacrifices all the rest to pall and satiate one". (1) Here, Fielding professes a kind of virtuous hedonism, tempered with common sense and prudence, a position very similar to that of Hutcheson. (2)

Fielding seems to believe that in cases where the passions are deeply involved, any appeal to reason alone is inadequate and ineffective. When Parson Adams tries to console Joseph for the loss of Fanny by the usual arguments of Christian Stoicism, Joseph exclaims in agony, "O you have not spoken one word of comfort to me yet!" (3) He starts to recover only when Adams utilizes the passions of hope and fear by suggesting that Fanny may still be unharmed, and that Joseph, by his immediate

1) Ibid., VI, iii, Henley ed., III, 284.
2) Vide supra. 146 f.
grief, may incense that Power whose will alone can restore her to him. (1) Fielding believes that reason, in addition to the passions of hope and fear, should control human conduct and help man preserve his balance and stability in society. This view is in harmony with the teaching of the Cambridge Platonists and the Latitudinarians. Pope has also expressed a similar idea in the lines:

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;
But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in Hope, and these in Fear:
Nor present good or ill, the joy or curse
But future views of better, or of worse. (2)

To Fielding the passion of love, like that of grief, can be obdurate to the dictates of reason alone. After struggling with her love for Joseph, Lady Booby thinks that she has overcome her passion, and credits reason with the victory:

Whither did I suffer this improper,
this mad passion to hurry me, only by neglecting to summon the aids of reason to my assistance? Reason, which hath now set before me my desires in their proper colours, and immediately helped me to expel them. (3)

But the victory of her reason is short-lived. Upon being

1) Ibid., 301.
informed that Joseph may still be within reach, her
passion flares up and regains dominion. Here, Fielding
comments ironically and with evident delight: "This
unexpected account entirely obliterated all those
admirable reflections which the supreme power of
reason had so wisely made just before." (1)

Related to the pseudo-intellectualism of the Squares,
the bigoted reasoning of the Thwackums, and the emotional
sterility of the Stoics is another major abuse of right
reason: the criminal calculation of the hypocrites. In
its extreme forms, this is represented by the Wilds,
Blifil, and 'noble lords' (2) of society; in its milder
forms, by the host of other ill-natured characters whose
calculative shrewdness does not reach the same degree
of corruption. This category presents numerous shades of
moral and religious evil together with an immense variety
of motive. It comprises most of the characters that
people the novels, such as Peter Pounce, Mrs. Slipslop,
Parson Trulliber in Joseph Andrews, the brothers Blifil,
Miss Bridget, Mrs. Deborah, Mrs. Honour, Black George in
Tom Jones, Mrs. Ellison, Fanny Matthews, and Captain Trent

1) Ibid., 374.
2) Reference is here made to the wicked peer in Amelia
in *Amelia*, to mention only a few. (1)

The "perfection of diabolism" of which Jonathan Wild's nature partakes is inextricable from his "greatness of mind". Indeed, Fielding emphasizes that the latter is a concomitant of the former. In his "Preface", included in the *Miscellaneous Writings*, he makes a careful distinction between three kinds of men: the good, the 'great', and the great and good. The 'great' man is distinguished by his intellectual capacities and courage, qualities that could be more frequently abused than benevolently used. 'Greatness' in this sense is completely different from goodness:

... for as it cannot be doubted but that benevolence, honour, honesty, and charity, make a good man; and that parts, courage, are the efficient qualities of a great man, so must it be confessed, that the ingredients which compose the former of these characters bear no analogy to, nor dependence on, those which constitute the latter. A man may, therefore, be great without being good, or good without being great.(2)

Wild's 'greatness' is that type of malicious astuteness utilized by the completely ill-natured man

1) Commenting on such shrewdness in *Tom Jones*, Dorothy Van Ghent rightly observes that "it is made to appear, not intelligent, but unintelligent, because it is not informed with natural feeling, and because it succeeds in corrupting natural feeling". *The English Novel, Form and Function* (New York, 1956) 77.

to satisfy his avarice, lust, and ambition. It is not "the true greatness of mind, in which we always include an idea of goodness"; rather, it is a "bombast greatness" which is, "by the ignorant and ill-judging vulgar, often mistaken for solid wit and eloquence, whilst it is in effect the very reverse", the result of "pride, ostentation, insolence, cruelty, and every kind of villainy." (1) His diabolical wickedness is almost complete, its underlying motive is pure evil and total depravation. Certainly, Wild's most obvious motives for his attempt to ruin Heartfree are avarice and greed, and for his attempt to rape Mrs. Heartfree, lust. But beneath it all runs the deeper motive that actuates all 'great men' and tyrants, "the end for which they seem to have come into the world, viz: of perpetrating vast and mighty mischief." (2) By depicting such portraits of extreme ill-nature as Wild's, Blifil's, and the 'noble Lord's', Fielding is expressing an intense awareness of an incomprehensible force of evil walking the world at large. To him, this force is impelled by a malicious calculative ability whose immediate products are hypocrisy and affectation. He is distressed by the

1) Ibid., Henley ed., 246.
appetite of mind for doing ill, by the "great depravity of nature, which delights in the miseries and misfortunes of mankind". (1) This evil power subordinates all other passions, even those of self-interest, to its own demands, and finds its satisfaction only in the suffering of others. All Fielding's astute villains are personifications of this devilish power.

It has been suggested that Fielding's concern with manners made him turn his back on the idea of evil, being "very affrighted of the idea of the devil". (2) But Fielding's awareness of the existence of evil is both real and intense. If he does not focus on or probe the layers of psychological evil in the manner of Richardson (in Clarissa for example) it is because, like Hume, he feels that the duty of the moral writer is to emphasize the good side of human nature, its susceptibility for improvement, and its original goodness. (3) "It becomes us", he remarks,

to keep within the limits not only of possibility, but of probability too; and this more especially in painting what is greatly good and amiable. Knavery and folly, though

1) The Champion (March 13, 1739-40).
3) Vide, supra. 175.
Moreover, portraits of both diabolical and human evil exist side by side in the novels. The former are those of master-villains whose malignancy is motivated by something more than simple self-interest, ambition, lust, or greed. They are felt to gloat in their evil deeds, urged by a cold, ruthless intellect. The latter constitute a broad category motivated by simple, but wicked, self-interest and the various corrupt passions. The ill-nature of the first type is deadly, mysterious, and diabolic while that of the second is redeemable, understandable, and human. Such are the portraits of Trulliber the greedy parson, young Wilson the profligate, Lady Booby the vain and lustful widow, Beau Didapper, whose name explains his insignificance, and the 'roasting' Squire whose misanthropy leads him to relatively minor cruelties. (2)

Both types of evil, the cerebral and devilish, and the passionate and selfish, are represented in Tom Jones. Here Blifil is the particularly horrifying villain of the novel. His wily ill-nature stands out among the swarms of self-loving, criminal hypocrites that people

1) Tom Jones, VIII, i; Henley ed., IV, 62.
2) All these characters are in Joseph Andrews.
the novel. Again, like Wild, his immediate motives are familiar, "Avarice and ambition", Fielding states, "divided the dominion of his mind between them". (1) He is one of those whose affections... are solely placed on one single person, whose interest and indulgence alone they consider on every occasion, regarding the good and ill of all others as merely indifferent, any farther than as they contribute to the pleasure or advantage of that person. (2) Underlying all his selfish actions there is the sneer of contempt and pleasure at the pain of others. His pride and his light opinion of Tom's understanding prevent him from being jealous on becoming Sophia's suitor. But his contempt changes into venomous hatred on discovering that Tom has conquered the lady's heart. Tom's success causes him much more grief than the loss of Sophia, (3) and he continues plotting behind a mask of piety, loyalty and friendship. This reveals his utterly despicable, vindictive nature, and cold, calculating mind. He has, as Tom asserts,"the cunning of the devil himself". (4)

Most revealing of all Fielding's portraits of ill-natured men is the picture of Blifil's perverse animal

1) VI,iv; Henley ed., III,286.
2) IV, vi; Henley ed., III, 167.
3) Ibid., VI, x, Henley ed., III,312.
4) XII,x; Henley ed., IV,343.
desires. Here, Blifil's perversion of mind is matched by perversion of passion. To him, Sophia is a "delicious morsel", a "human ortolan", whose aversion and agonies do not succeed in driving him away.

On the contrary, this served rather to heighten the pleasure he proposed in rifling her charms, as it added triumph to lust; nay, he had some further views, from obtaining the absolute possession of her person, which we detest too much even to mention. (1)

These dark hints of sexual perversion in Blifil bring to mind the equally corrupt aberrations of the 'noble lord' in Amelia, and Fielding's recurring reference to incest in Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones. They also serve to blacken Blifil's portrait the more. This portrait horrifies even its own creator, and Fielding feels called upon to apologize to "scrupulous persons" who may think it "seems to savour too much of malevolence" to be credible. (2)

Blifil then, is a despicable, diabolical figure, an archetype of hypocrisy who has both a perverted mind and a perverted heart. He functions in Tom Jones, as Wild does in Jonathan Wild, to illustrate "the snares that

1) VII, vi; Henley ed., III, 354.
2) Loc. cit.
deceit and villainy spread" for the good but imprudent man. Like Wild, his treachery and perfidy are discovered in the end, and he is banished from Squire Allworthy's sight forever, becoming "as remarkably mean as he had been remarkably wicked." Such malevolent astuteness as that of Wild and Blifil, Fielding maintains, constitutes a major abuse of true reason. It is basically unintelligent, because uninformed with the natural good feelings of the heart. Nevertheless, it constitutes a serious danger to innocence and good-nature. Hence Fielding's recurring insistence on the supreme importance of the rules of caution, prudence, discretion, and discernment. Indeed, this furnishes him with his most pronounced moral purpose: to provide "a very useful lesson" to his readers,

for they may here find, that goodness of heart, and openness of temper, though these may give them great comfort within, and administer to an honest pride in their own minds, will by no means, alas! do their business in the world. Prudence and circumspection are necessary even to the best of men. They are indeed, as it were, a guard to Virtue, without which she can never be safe. It is not enough that your designs, nay, that your actions, are intrinsically good; you must take care they shall appear so. If your inside be never so beautiful, you must preserve a fair outside also. This must be constantly looked to, or malice and envy will take care to blacken it so,

1) Tom Jones, XVIII, xi: Henley ed., V, 357.
that the sagacity and goodness of an Allworthy will not be able to see through it, and to discern the beauties within. (1)

Fielding even recommends suspicion as a medium of discernment. In a separate chapter, "Containing a hint or two concerning virtue and a few more concerning suspicion", he distinguishes between two degrees of suspicion: the vicious kind motivated by the evil passions, and the virtuous kind emanating from the head:

This is, indeed, no other than the faculty of seeing what is before your eyes, and of drawing conclusions from what you see. The former of these is unavoidable by those who have any eyes, and the latter is perhaps no less certain and necessary a consequence of our having any brains. This is altogether as bitter an enemy to guilt as the former is to innocence: nor can I see it in an unamiable light, even though, through human fallibility, it should be sometimes mistaken. (2)

Fielding, then, rejects any conception of reason as a rigid, false intellectualism, as a narrow factitious instrument, as a vain sterile Stoicism, or as impractical philosophical theorizing devoid of Christian charity and compassion. He abhors the astute shrewdness of the hypocrite both in its extreme and milder forms, and finds his moral purpose as a novelist in guarding the

2) Ibid., XI,x; Henley ed., IV, 297.
good-natured man against the guile of the corrupt. His sympathies are pronouncedly Christian, and partake of the tolerant views of the Latitudinarian divines and other Christian writers. To him, true reason, "the good head", is the ability to control, to discern good from evil, to judge aright, to acquire prudence, and to develop a healthy, benevolent social attitude. But "the good head" is not enough. Even more important is its concomitant, "the good heart". For, to Fielding, the heart includes all the irrational appetites of man, his passions, his moral energy, and the executive instrument of his conscience. Most of the qualities crucial to the happiness of society, indeed, to its very existence, he finds, are those of the heart.

Fielding's conception of the passions reflects his acceptance of the prevalent psychological theories of his time. In general, he agrees with the view that passion constitutes the central motive power underlying conduct, and that its strength should be adjusted and channelled, through reason and conscience, to produce just and benevolent action. He conceives of the passions as violent impulses of the mind that vary in kind and
degree of strength,

... which, when they are extremely prevalent, do, like the predominant humours of the body, flow all to one part, and as the latter are known to absorb and drain off all the corporeal juices and strength to themselves, so the former are no less certain of engaging the affections, spirits, and powers of the mind, and of enlisting them, as it were, into their own service, and under their own command. (1)

They are inborn, of infinite variety, and liable to be subjects of a fixed dominant disposition. In *A Journey from this World to the Next* Fielding describes how a new spirit about to enter the body is given a "Pathetic Potion", "a mixture of all the passions, but in no exact proportion, so that sometimes one predominates and sometimes another". (2) As this potion is a hurried, careless concoction (3), he seems to imply that human behaviour is pre-determined by virtue of the pre-natal mixture of the passions. This view is supported by a recurring acknowledgement of "some unacquired, original distinction, in the nature of one man, from that of another". (4) Fielding, however, is not consistent in this view. Despite these and other direct references

1) The Covent Garden Journal, No. 55, (July 18, 1752).
2) *A Journey from this World to the Next*, I, 6; Henley ed., II, 238.
3) Fielding observes that, "often in the hurry of making up, one particular ingredient [i.e. benevolence and good-nature] is, as we were informed, left out". Loc. cit.
4) "Essay on...the Characters of Men"; Henley ed., XIV, 282.
to determinism (1), and despite his imaginative rendering of this theory in the depiction of such wholly good characters as Allworthy and Dr. Harrison, and wholly bad ones as Wild and Blifil, he generally tends to regard such cases as rare extremes. There are few Lytteltons and Allens, Wilds and Fishers (2), in real life; nevertheless, they exist, and their existence as models of excellence and malignity inspires the committed moral artist. The great mass of men, however, are motivated by mixed and vacillating passions. They are free to come to terms with their impulses, and to work out their own salvation or damnation. These "various men" constitute the majority of human beings, and their conflicting passions provide Fielding with rich material for his art. He is struck by the combinations and permutations of the passions in these average men, and his observation has convinced him that human nature is complex, and that real motives are not always what they seem. It has resulted in the knowledge of


2) In Tom Jones, Fielding relates the history of the ungrateful murderer Fisher, who betrayed his generous benefactor Mr. Derby, killed and robbed him, and manifested "a more seared and callous conscience than even Nero himself". VIII, i; Henley ed., IV, 62-63.
how various men at once all seem;
How passions blended on each other fix,
How vice with virtues, faults with graces mix;
How passions opposite, as sour to sweet,
Shall in one bosom at one moment meet,
With various luck for victory contend,
And now shall carry, and now lose their end. (1)

Such knowledge, Fielding points out, is essential to the
good writer. It enables him to probe deeper into human
conduct, and to discern its underlying motives. Like the
Great Artist, he "diff'ring passions joins,/And love with
hatred, fear with rage combines." (2)

The numerous kinds and degrees of human passions,
and their infinite combinations even within the single
individual, account for the immense variety in the charac-
ters of men, and for their inconsistencies and surprising
behaviour. Here lies the rich and varied raw material in-
dispensable to the moral writer. If human behaviour were
universally and consistently directed by reason, it would
not afford the diversity it displays through the passions.
Such rational direction, Fielding holds, is seldom realized,
and then only by the ideal few. His vocation is to teach
men how to control their impulses by exercising prudence,
wisdom, and discretion in order to attain the golden mean,
the balance of their passions. Though combinations of
passions are infinite, and though "quot homines tot

1) "To John Hayes Esq. On the Mixed Passions of Man",
Henley ed., XII, 275.
2) Ibid., Henley ed., XII, 276.
sententiae may be more properly interpreted of their
men's humours than their opinions" (1), the one
passion that should be encouraged is good-nature. It is
"the only affection of the human mind which can never
be sated". (2) And yet good-nature and innocence are not
enough, for by their very nature these qualities are
vulnerable. They must be guarded by caution, prudence and
right suspicion.

The man of mixed passions is subject to warring in-
clinations. Fielding realizes that, and sees the human
mind as a battlefield wherein passions fight for the
determination of conduct:

Whoever carefully surveys his own mind,
will find sufficient enemies to combat
within; an army of obstinate passions
that will hold him in tight play, will
often force his reason to retreat; and
if they are at length subdued; it will
not be without much labour and resolu-
tion. (3)

These passions, Fielding warns ; are "subtle politicians",
which are bound to work directly on the unguarded, and in
a disguised way on those aware of their harmful effect. (4)
The "various men" should struggle against their devious
ways and guises. Thus Fielding implies that the moral

1) The Covent Garden Journal No. 55 (July 18, 1752).
2) The Champion (March 27, 1739).
3) The Champion (February 2, 1739-40).
4) Ibid.
struggle, for most men, is never decisively won. He insists that the power of the passions can be dangerous, and the images he uses to portray their impending force and imposition are significant: the passions form an obstinate army in a constant state of war among themselves, they are cunning politicians conniving in the dark to dethrone reason, their conflicting forces require a balance of power. Fielding also asserts that

the passions, like the managers of a playhouse, often force men upon parts without consulting their judgement, and sometimes without any regard to their talents. Thus the man, as well as the player, may condemn what he himself acts; may, it is common to see vice sit as awkwardly on some men as the character of Iago would on the honest face of Mr. William Mills. (1)

Reason cannot extirpate the passions, and often finds it difficult to control them. But these very limitations should put it on its guard, and consolidate its efforts to keep harmony and peace in the mind. Like Aristotle, in the Nicomachean Ethics, and his followers, Fielding holds that the secret of rectitude lies in maintaining the mean of the passions; (2). The office of reason is to conduct a thorough self-examination in order to detect imbalance; this achieved, it should proceed to restore the balance

1) Tom Jones, VII, i; Henley ed., III, 335.
2) The Champion, (February 2, 1739-40).
by curbing the excessive passions through prudence and sound judgement. Virtue, he holds, providing that a measure of initial good-nature is given, depends mainly on the individual's control over the passions which challenge his good-nature. In this task, reason should be guided by the principles of religion, society, and the law. Fielding utilizes this traditional view of the passions in depicting the arduous journey of his heroes from vulnerable innocence, immaturity, imprudence and indiscretion, to moral perfection and complete good-nature. He emphasizes the importance of disciplining the passions, demonstrating that good-nature by itself is no guarantee of virtue; for though all virtuous men are necessarily good-natured, not all good-natured men are necessarily virtuous. Thus Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones and William Booth are in a very real sense representatives of Everyman, being inherently good, and setting out to achieve moral excellence by overcoming undisciplined impulses, and developing guards against hypocrisy, malignancy and corruption.

Fielding does not often speculate on the workings and conflicts of the passions, but he is always careful to render these workings and conflicts in imaginative and artistic terms. He is fascinated by the variety of charac-
ters around him, and quotes Horace's observation, "Man differs more from man, than man from beasts". (1) He often presents the conflict of passions in a comically formalized way, as though his readers were at a sort of morality play. In Tom Jones, he satirizes Black George through a comic presentation of the latter's struggling passions. Here, Black George is debating whether or not to steal the purse he carries from Sophia. Fielding terms the debate a "Discussion of a Knotty Point in the Court of Conscience", and gives a minute description of the passions of avarice, ingratitude, false honour, and virtue in their conflict with Black George's conscience. The struggle is finally resolved by fear stepping in to the assistance of conscience, and here Fielding ironically comments,

   By this friendly aid of Fear, Conscience obtained a complete victory in the mind of Black George, and after making him a few compliments on his honesty, forced him to deliver the money to Jones. (2)

Another such conflict between opposing passions may have occurred in Tom's mind when, in the midst of meditating on the charms of his beloved Sophia, he sees Molly Seagrim in all her squalor, and retires with

1) "Essay on... the Characters of Men", Henley ed., XIV, 281. This fascination is reflected in the motto he attaches to the title page of Tom Jones, "Mores hominum multorum videt".

2) VI, xiii, Henley ed., III, 328.
her into the grove. (1) Fielding has prepared the scene in such a way as to lessen the effect of Tom's guilt. The latter's animal spirits were naturally violent, his passions were inflamed by wine, and he was so thrilled by the news of Allworthy's recovery,

that he was not at this time perfect master of that wonderful power of reason, which so well enables grave and wise men to subdue their unruly passions, and to decline any of these prohibited amusements. (2)

The conflict may occur between passions which are in themselves good. Towards the end of the novel, Tom experiences such a struggle when he receives Mrs. Hunt's offer of marriage. Fielding's depiction of this episode may well be worth quoting:

Jones was put into a violent flutter. His fortune was then at a very low ebb, the source being stopped from which hitherto he had been supplied. Of all he had received from Lady Bellaston not above five guineas remained; and that very morning he had been dunned by a tradesman for twice that sum. His honourable mistress was in the hands of her father, and he had scarce any hopes ever to get her out of them again. To be subsisted at her expense, from that little fortune she had independent of her father, went much against the delicacy both of his pride and his love. This lady's fortune [Mrs. Hunt's] would have been exceeding convenient to him, and he could have no objection to her in any respect. On the contrary, he liked her as well as he did any woman, except Sophia. But to abandon Sophia, and marry another, that was im-

1) V, x; Henley ed., III, 256-57.
2) Ibid. V, x; Henley ed. III, 358.
possible; he could not think of it upon any account. Yet why should he not, since it was plain she could not be his? Would it not be kinder to her, than to continue her longer engaged in a hopeless passion for him? Ought he not to do so in friendship to her? This notion prevailed some moments, and he had almost determined to be false to her from a higher point of honour; but that refinement was not able to stand very long against the voice of nature, which cried in his heart that such friendship was treason to love. (1)

Here the good passions of honour, love, pity and friendship conflict in Tom's mind, but at this stage he has gained enough wisdom and prudence to make him weigh values carefully and attend closely to "the voice of nature, which cried in his heart". And so he attains balance and regularity of mind by subjugating all other passions to the supreme authority of honourable love.

Of all Fielding's novels, Amelia is most fully concerned with his attitudes to the passions. It is certainly the most overtly didactic, and the most directly expressive of his conception of religion as the principal means of reforming character. Here, the above issues are both directly and imaginatively rendered. It is the story of a couple firmly bound by the wholesome passion of love, whose conjugal devotion exemplifies the lines from Horace

1) Ibid., XV, xi; Henley ed., V, 192-93.
and Simonides of Amorgos cited upon the original title-page of the novel. (1) The protagonist, Booth, is endowed with the most precious possession, a good wife, but is afflicted with a wavering mind. This accounts for all the misery he brings to himself and his family. Having yet to attain the consummate virtue of the good-natured man, he falls into evil ways: he commits acts of lust and infidelity, lies and gambles away his wife's hard-earned pittance. The very name (William), Fielding suggests elsewhere, implies light-headedness. (2)

Throughout the greater part of the novel, Booth is portrayed as a man of highly impressionable nature.

1) For Horace's lines, vide, supra, 237; the quotation from Simonides reads, "A man cannot have a better possession than a good wife, nor a more miserable than a bad one." Simonides, Iamb. 6; in Anthologia Lyrica, ed. Theodor Bergk; Teubner series, (Leipzig, 1897), 18.

2) The Champion (June 7, 1740). Here Fielding discusses the significance of names. He gives the examples of the names Thomas and Will and points out traditional associations of these names with foolery and lightness. This essay is interesting in that it sheds light on the naming of Fielding's characters, and points out the moral purpose underlying the choice of the names Thomas Jones and William Booth. It has been suggested that the names of many characters in Fielding's novels curiously correspond to those of certain subscribers to Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (folio, 1724-34); I. Y. X., "Names of Characters in Fielding's Novels", N&Q, ninth Series, II (Nov. 26, 1898), 426. Wilbur Cross holds that any similarity in the names is coincidental, The History of Henry Fielding, op. cit. I, 342. J. P. Watt, however, suggests that Fielding's naming is deliberate, "The Naming of Characters in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding", R.E.S., XXV, (1949), 335. Battestin finds that "the names are in general too commonplace for one to determine whether the similarity is coincidental... or deliberate". The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, op. cit., 164 n. 3.
He is easily swayed by immoderate passions. His outpourings, be they of self-pity, adulation, gratitude, remorse, jealousy or anger, are marked by an extravagance and indulgence that betray immaturity. Though genuinely good-natured, and, at heart, a well-wisher to religion, he lacks the discretion fundamental to a good head. Without the ballast of religion, his emotions gain supremacy and leave him wavering in his beliefs, vacillating between triumphant virtue and ignoble vice. From the very beginning, Fielding points out that Booth was what they call a freethinker—that is to say, a deist, or, perhaps, an atheist; for though he did not absolutely deny the existence of a God, yet he entirely denied his providence, (1) and later he remarks that though Booth was "in his heart an extreme well-wisher to religion ... yet his notions of it were very light and uncertain". (2) This dual position sets the stage for the journey to attain wisdom and a firm faith in God. Fielding emphasizes Booth's lack of solid religious conviction in several ways: by underlining his aimless drifting, and his being deluded by a deterministic doctrine of the passions in terms of which he interprets all actions, by exposing the Stoic strands in his reasoning, by pointing out Amelia's disapproval of his weak religious belief, by contrasting his position with that of his wife and Dr. Harrison, by showing him

1) Amelia, I,iii; Henley ed., VI, 25.
2) Ibid., I,iii; Henley ed., VI, 25.
slipping dangerously, adding one misery to another in quick succession, and, most of all, by intensifying the threat to Amelia's virtue.

Fielding points out that Booth's doubting condition is that "so finely described by a passage in Claudian".(1) He quotes from In Rufinum, and the translation reads as follows:

> then in turn my belief in God was weakened and failed, and even against mine own will I embraced the tenets of that other philosophy [Epicureanism] which teaches that atoms drift in purposeless motion and that new forms throughout the vast void, are

Rufinus' tyranny and rapacity were familiar to Fielding's contemporaries. Claudian's poetry was available both in the original Latin and in various translations. For example, Jabez Hughes renders the above-mentioned passage as follows:

> But when I saw th' Affairs of Human Kind
In Clouds involv'd,impervious to the Mind,
The Wicked flourishing,from Trouble free,
The Righteous vex'd with long Adversity,
Then Piety,again supplanted foul'd,
And that Opinion, undesir'd prevail'd,
That blindly moving, and without Design,
The Seeds of Things, help'd by no Hand Divine,
Roll'd thro' the Void, and all at random hurl'd,
Assum'd new Figures, and compos'd the World;
While or not Gods there are, or none who know
How Things proceed, or interpose below.

Claudian the Poet, His Elegant History of Rufinus, (London,1711), 156.
shaped by chance and not design - that philosophy which believes in God in an ambiguous sense, or holds that there be no gods, or that they are careless of our doings.

This position leads Booth "into a disadvantageous opinion of Providence", a conclusion caused by "viewing our virtues and vices as through a perspective, in which we turn the glass always to our own advantage, so as to diminish the one, and as greatly to magnify the other". (1)

Thus, Booth is the victim of a philosophy that relieves the individual from responsibility for his actions, by explaining all conduct in terms of a deterministic theory of the passions. This theory denies the validity of belief in a providential deity, and in the value of right reason and conscience. Booth's slight notions of Christianity are insufficient to enlighten his vision of the world, and make him waver in supporting the idea of a beneficent God.

Fielding considers the passions as basic elements in motivation, but he rejects any conception of them as blind, purposeless powers, though they cannot in themselves provide a valid interpretation of conduct. To him, a belief in the passions as mechanical forces is false

since it perpetuates a godless, superstitious faith in fortune. The conduct these elements originate should be purposive, and should aim at the happiness of mankind. He emphasizes this point in the first chapter of *Amelia*:

> To speak a bold truth, I am, after much mature deliberation, inclined to suspect that the public voice hath, in all ages, done much injustice to Fortune, and hath convicted her of many facts in which she had not the least concern. I question much whether we may not, by natural means, account for the success of knaves, the calamities of fools, with all the miseries in which men of sense sometimes involve themselves, by quitting the directions of Prudence, and following the blind guidance of a pre­dominant passion; in short, from all the ordinary phenomena which are imputed to fortune, whom, perhaps, men accuse with no less absurdity in life, than a bad player complains of ill luck at the game of chess. (1)

Fielding's recurring attacks on the followers of Hobbes and Mandeville, those who belittle man by explaining his conduct in terms of pre-determined selfish passions, testify to his genuine Pelagian position. Throughout his works he repeatedly asserts the importance of purposive moral struggle. In *Amelia*, he affirms this when he writes,

> To retrieve the ill consequences of a foolish conduct, and by struggling manfully with distress to subdue it, is one of the noblest efforts of wisdom and virtue. (2)

In summary, Fielding conceives of the passions as the fundamental motivating force in man. They are inborn,

1) Ibid., I,i; Henley ed., VI,13-14.
2) Ibid., loc.cit.
of immense variety, and constantly warring to gain supremacy over reason and conscience. Though they may be predetermined in relatively few extreme cases of good-nature and ill-nature, they exist in a mixed and vacillating form in the great mass of men. Thus, on the whole, man is free to work out his own destiny and should strive to keep the balance of his mind and guard his good passions by reason and conscience, guided by the authority of religion, the good of the public, and the law. In all this, he displays a basic agreement with the moral thought prevailing in his day. His good man, like Locke's, should conform to the three basic laws: the divine, the civil, and the law of true reputation. (1)

It is reasonable to suppose that other writers had influenced Fielding's conception of the workings of human passions. His readings were so vast and varied in both ancients and moderns that any attempt to define his exact debt to any one writer is hazardous. It is likely that he found much usable material in Steele, Pope, the Latitudinarian divines, and the moralists of the sentimentalist school. There are parallels in the works of these writers concerning the importance of social love, benevolence, good-nature, the ruling passions of self-love and vanity, the insensitive passivity of the Stoics, the vices of the town, and the joys of a benevolent re-

1) Vide, supra, 53.
tirement. But these ideas were common property, and no one writer can claim originality for their content. The Spectator expressed the temper of the day when, in opposition to Hobbes, it asserted "that kind and benevolent Propensions are the Original Growth of the Heart of Man ..." (1) The defence of benevolence and the good passions, as previously noted, was a common factor in the religious, moral, and literary thought of the period.

Fielding frequently expressed his admiration for Pope, both as poet and as moral philosopher. In his Preface to Plutus he writes, "the inimitable author of the Essay on Man taught me a system of philosophy in English numbers, whose sweetness is scarce inferior to that of Theocritus himself". (2) Both artists share the common heritage of their times, a factor that largely accounts for most of the similarities in their thought. These include their views of the complexity of human nature (3), the mixture

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1) The Spectator No. 588.

2) Henley ed., XVI, 61. In The Champion (November 27, 1739), Fielding hails Pope as "our greatest poet" whose works "will be coeval with the language in which they are writ". In Joseph Andrews he praises Pope for eulogising the two philanthropists John Kyrle of Ross and Ralph Allen of Bath; Ibid., III, vi. For other references Pope vide the Champion (December 4, 1739; March 1, April 15, May 31, June 12, 1740.) Vide, also, his modified view of Pope's translation of the Iliad in Amelia, VIII, v.

3) Vide, supra, 129-30.
of good and evil in man (1), and his suffering from
"an army of obstinate passions". Both accept the doctrine
of the ruling passion, and emphasize its importance in
judging character, and in interpreting motive and action.

In his Moral Essays Pope asks:

Judge We by Nature? Habit can efface,
Int'rest o'ercome, or Policy take place:
By Actions? These Uncertainty divides:
By Passions? These dissimulation hides:
Opinions? They still take a wider range:
Find if you can, in what you cannot change.
Search then the Ruling Passion ... (2)

In Fielding this doctrine obtains imaginative expression
in his portrayal of the good-natured man. Here good-nature
is the fixed passion that governs all others, working in
unison with a healthy conscience and sound reason. Without
such a passion, he points out, all other abilities and
accomplishments

may well be called splendida peccata;
for the richer, stronger, more powerful,
or more knowing an ill-natured man is,
the greater mischiefs he will perpetrate. (3)

Again, the ill-natured man's actions are motivated by
a powerful malignancy that subjugates all inclinations.

Thus at the top of Fielding's scale of morality there

1) Vide, supra, 128; and Pope's lines: "Virtuous
and vicious ev'ry man must be/Few in the extreme,
but all in the degree", Essay on Man, II, vi, 231-32.
2) I, 168-74.
3) The Champion (March 27, 1740).
are the Allworthys and Harrisons, who are wholly governed
by good-nature and reason, exemplifying the consummate
perfection of mankind. They represent the ideals by
which the rest of humanity should be guided, and, as
personifications of Fielding's central theme of benevo-
ence, they provide him with the point of departure in
constructing his novels. (1) At the bottom of the scale
there are the Wilds and Blifils who, utterly ruled by
a fixed ill-nature, constitute the elements of social con-
lict and disruption. Between these two extremes there
are the men with mixed passions, who act from whichever
passion happens to be uppermost. They are potentially
good-natured, and must struggle to overcome the harmful
passions resulting from unreasonable self-love.

Like, Pope, Fielding regards vanity as a principal
form of self-love, a complete opposite of benevolence.
"No passion", he declares, "hath so much the ascendant
in the composition of human nature as vanity". (2) As an
amiable weakness, it is harmless, and affords a convenient
subject of ridicule; but in its serious form it is the
root of all human misery. Most men and women seem to

1) Vide, infra, III,ii, 348 f.

2) The Champion (April 15, 1740). Vide his description of
vanity as "the worst of passions", and as "more apt
to contaminate the mind than any other"; vide, also,
Joseph Andrews, I, xv; III, iii; Henley ed., I, 82-83,
242.
suffer from one form of vanity or other, and their
distinction lies not so much in the power of the passion
as in their ability to subdue or conceal it. (1) Fielding the novelist is more interested than Pope the poet
in depicting its various kinds and shades. Thus, between
the amiable vanity of Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews* and
the vicious vanity of Blifil in *Tom Jones* there is a
whole scale of vanities each differing in kind and degree.
Adams', though comical, does not prevent him from being
the best of men while Blifil's represents the hypocritical
extreme. (2) Other kinds and shades of vanity exist in
Fielding's characters; for vanity is a fault which allies
itself with the hypocrisy he detests, and with all kinds
of self-assertion; but it can also occur, with comical
and indeed charming effects in good characters like Tom
and Amelia. (3) Fielding comes close to Pope, however, in
considering vanity the master passion in women. (4) Pope
points out that the female sex is subject to the "Love of
Pleasure" or the "Love of Sway" (5); Fielding would qualify

1) The Champion, (April 15, 1740).
2) For Adams' vanities, vide, e.g., *Joseph Andrews*, I, xvi;
   III, v; Henley ed., I, 91, 261, respectively. Vide, infra,
   360 f.
3) For Tom, vide *Tom Jones*, XV, xi; Henley ed., V, 193-94;
4) Vide his confessed agreement with Pope in this respect,
   supra, 286.
this view by confining vanity to a certain type of "fine woman". Commenting on Mrs. Fitzpatrick in Tom Jones, he remarks,

There are some fine women (for I dare not here speak in too general terms) with whom self is so predominant that they never detach it from any subject; and, as vanity is with them a ruling principle, they are apt to lay hold of whatever praise they meet with, and, though the property of others, convey it to their own use. (1)

Like Pope and his contemporaries, then, Fielding considers the passions "the elements of life" (2), and is prepared to accept the doctrine of the ruling passion so long as it does not lead to the dangerous fatalism Booth uses as an excuse for not governing himself well. But Fielding deplores such flabby conduct as excludes moral purpose and the struggle for perfection. The ruling passion, though the motive of all our actions, ought to be scrutinized by right reason; it should not be blindly followed, for its very strength should put men on their guard and prevent their uncritical yielding to it. He would agree with Booth's statement in Amelia, "we reason from our heads, but act from our hearts", provided thought and action have, as Dr. Harrison points out, the sanction and guidance of religion. (3)

1) Tom Jones, XVI.ix; Henley ed., V,240-41.
3) VIII,x; Henley ed., VII,113.
from the heart is not always (as Booth's recklessness shows) to act virtuously; yet in common parlance the phrase implies acting warmly, generously, from sympathetic emotion, and this is its general tenor in the thought of Fielding and Shaftesbury.

Shaftesbury's ethical system is thought to have influenced both Pope and Fielding. Indeed, much has been written to support the view that Fielding owes Shaftesbury a substantial debt. (1) But Shaftesbury's

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moral thought is not original: his conception of benevolence and good-nature, his pronounced emphasis on the importance of the passions, his optimistic view of man and the necessity to achieve a balance of the affections—all these ideas, and much more, appear prominently in the writings of the Cambridge Platonists and the Latitudinarians; and the relation between his thought and Fielding's is less marked than that between Fielding's and the liberal divines. Martin C. Battestin has admirably argued the case for the Latitudinarians, and rightly notes,

It is the liberal moralism of the Low Church divines—not the principles of Cicero or Shaftesbury—that underlies the ethos, and much of the art, of Joseph Andrews. (1)

Though similarities exist between the writings of Shaftesbury and Fielding this does not necessarily mean that the former has directly influenced the latter. Shaftesbury's ideas contributed to the moral thought of the day in that they provided philosophical support and additional urgency to the already existent cult of benevolence and the good heart; but they were tinged, at least in the minds of some of his contemporaries, with deism and scepticism, both of which are alien to Fielding's pronounced Christian temper. Moreover, the facile

1) Battestin, 13.
misrepresentation of Shaftesbury's moral system and its reduction to a mere formula, "the beauty of virtue", common among his deistic admirers, was anathema to Fielding, whose hilarious satire on Square attests to his rejection of such speculative distortions of virtue. It is reasonable to say, however, that Shaftesbury's moral thought constitutes a notable part of the rich and varied body of moral writing which, as a whole, informs Fielding's work.

Fielding may have been inspired by Shaftesbury's division of the affections into good, vicious, and indifferent. (1) It has been noted how Fielding's characters fall into three main categories, the wholly virtuous, who are dominated by good-nature, the wholly vicious, ruled by ill-nature, and the 'various men', swayed by passions which in themselves are neither good nor vicious. (2)

About these indifferent passions Fielding writes:

There are certain qualities, which, notwithstanding the admiration the world hath been pleased to allow them, are, in themselves, quite indifferent, and may enable a man to be either virtuous or vicious, according to the manner in which they are exerted; or, to speak more philosophically, according to the other qualities with which they are blended in the mind. (3)

Again, both writers, as many others, agree that it is natural to men to have good affections issuing in bene-

1) Vide, supra, Ch. II, 136-7.
2) Vide, supra, Chs. III, ii, IV, iii.
3) The Champion (January 3, 1739-40.)
volent action and both are basically optimistic in their view of human nature; for though Fielding believes that "no mind was ever yet formed entirely free from blemish" (1); and Shaftesbury that "vice and virtue are found variously mixed, and alternately prevalent in the several characters of mankind" (2), both hold that the natural tendency of man is toward the good.

Shaftesbury is no inflexible rigorist, he distrusts Puritan fanaticism too much for that, and his view of human nature leads him always to seek for signs of emerging good, towards which he is charitably sympathetic. Thus, in the Inquiry he writes,

> For it seems evident from our inquiry, that how ill soever the temper or passions may stand with respect either to the sensible or the moral objects;... however vicious the mind be, or whatever ill rules or principles it goes by; yet if there be any flexibleness or favourable inclination towards the least moral object, the least appearance of moral good..., there is still something of virtue left, and the creature is not wholly vicious and unnatural. (3)

Fielding's argument that his reader should not "condemn a character as a bad one because it is not perfectly a good one", doubtless owes little to Shaftesbury - it is too commonsensical a notion to need deriving from elsewhere.

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3) Ibid., loc.cit.
But it is typical of him to have a tolerant view at least of the less harmful weaknesses of human nature, though to the harmful ones he can be severe. At best Shaftesbury's interested analysis of motives influenced his age towards a more refined psychology, and Fielding likewise looks carefully into motive and action before judging human nature. It is not farfetched to conclude that Shaftesbury's careful analysis of the passions, and his assiduous searchings into the constituents of virtue and vice, may have inspired Fielding, and contributed to his conception of character. One immediately thinks of Jones and Booth after reading the following passage from the Inquiry:

> If there be any part of the temper in which ill passions or affections are seated, whilst in another part the affections toward moral good are such as absolutely to master these attempts of their antagonists, this is the greatest proof imaginable that a strong principle of virtue lies at the bottom and has possessed itself of the natural temper. Whereas if there be no ill passion stirring, a person may be indeed more cheaply virtuous, that is to say, he may conform himself to the known rules of virtue without sharing so much of a virtuous principle as another. Yet if that other person, who has the principle of virtue so strongly implanted, comes at last to lose these contrary impediments supposed in him, he certainly loses nothing in virtue; but on the contrary, losing only what is vicious in his temper, is left more entire to virtue, and possesses it in a higher degree. (1)

1) Inquiry, I,iv; Robertson ed., I,256-57.
Fielding would agree with this. In his conception of human nature he clearly recognizes the very different degrees of tension in those cold-natured persons with weak appetites, and those hearty people with strong and healthy appetites and vigorous passions. He favours the latter because of his conviction that they are essentially good and, if they are tempted by these impediments to virtue, their good passions will nevertheless succeed in the end. The person who is passionate and strongly tempted by the flesh, he seems to consider, is the one who is most likely to be generous and benevolent. Blifil, a cold, dispassionate person, is indeed "cheaply virtuous" in that he subdues without difficulty his weak sensual appetites, whereas Tom, the robust, good-natured, passionate, young hero finally attains a higher degree of virtue by overcoming the impediments to it. Other similarities in the thought of both writers include the emphasis on the complexity and variety of human nature, on the urgency of exercising benevolence at home and in an ever extending circle that encompasses the whole of mankind, and on the good man as a civilized, urbane, and refined man of taste who perfects the classical ideal of "the art of life". But these ideas recur throughout the moral thought of the period, notably in the writings of the divines, Hutcheson,
and Hume.

The thought of Hutcheson, Butler, and Hume must have provided a most favourable environment for Fielding's ideas of the passions, reason and the moral faculty. It seems that, at a very early stage of his writing career, he achieved his own synthesis of contemporary thought, an eclecticism that runs throughout the plays and the early essays, to be elaborated and perfected later in the novels. The sentimentalists' emphasis on the passions, for instance, must have reinforced his view that the benevolent action is primarily the product of the good heart. Most of his references to good-nature tend to lay particular stress on the emotional element in man. Such, for example, is this definition:

Good-nature is that benevolent and amiable temper of mind, which disposes us to feel the misfortunes, and enjoy the happiness of others; and, consequently, pushes us on to promote the latter, and prevent the former; and that without any abstract contemplation on the beauty of virtue, and without the allurement or terrors of religion. (1)

Again, in describing the good-nature of Tom Jones, he emphasizes this passion's practical, as opposed to its speculative character. (2) He eloquently explains the moral value of sentiment in his "Invocation":

2) Tom Jones, IV, vi; Henley ed., III, 163.
And thou, almost the constant attendant on true genius, Humanity bring all thy tender sensations. If thou hast already disposed of them all between thy Allen and thy Lyttleton, steal them a little while from their bosoms. Not without these the tender scene is painted. From these alone proceed the noble, disinterested friendship, the melting love, the generous sentiment, the ardent gratitude, the soft compassion, The candid opinion; and all those strong energies of a good mind, which fill the moistened eyes with tears, the glowing cheeks with blood, and swell the heart with tides of grief, joy, and benevolence. (1)

It is this insistence on the good tender passions, effectively and artistically expressed in *Tom Jones* (2), and blown to a larger proportion in *Amelia* (3), which made Sir John Hawkins charge Fielding with resolving virtue into good affections. (4) Moreover, Fielding's consistent aversion to those cold-natured calculating Blifils and his marked preference for those hearty, robust

1) Ibid., XIII,i; Henley ed., V,33.

2) Sophia is Fielding's own mouthpiece when she thus describes the book she was reading, before being surprised by her aunt, "there appears to me a great deal of human nature in it; and in many parts so much true tenderness and delicacy, that it hath cost me many a tender tear!" -"Ay, and do you love to cry then?" - says the aunt. "I love a tender sensation", answered the niece, "and would pay the price of a tear for it at any time." *Tom Jones*, VI,v, Henley ed., 288.

3) The number of passionate outbursts, and "very tragic scenes" - the words are Fielding's (XI,ix; Heading of the chapter) - is increasingly felt in *Amelia*. The tearful anguish of both Amelia and Booth is frequently expressed in successive scenes where both are torn and distracted by contending passions; vide, e.g., XI,ix; Henley ed., VII,285 ff. et passim.

Josephs, Toms, and Booths who have vigorous passions and appetites, attest to his clear recognition of the supreme value of healthy natural affections.

Further, in his opinion, people are seldom what they seem, and the 'world' seldom judges aright; thus he finds himself committed, as artist and moralist, to teach men how to evaluate character properly through motive, spirit and action. He repeatedly calls for the sound discernment of men's dispositions, and advises his readers to probe deeper into human nature, and to suspend their judgement until the real motives are ascertained. He constantly warns against mere appearances and deceptive physiognomical traits. (1) All this indicates a pronounced emphasis on the heart, an attitude which may have been developed and re-inforced.

1) Fielding repeatedly refers to the obscurity in human vision and warns against the deception resulting from too much reliance upon appearances and facial expression. His essay on the "Knowledge of the Characters of Men" contains his most detailed analysis of facial expressions as they bear on character. Here, he derides the prevalence of hypocrisy and advises accurate observation, "for Nature, which unwillingly submits to the imposture is ever endeavouring to peep forth and show herself." (Henley ed XIV, 283.) He considers Juvenal's adage *Fronti nulla Fides* and finds that "the satirist surely never intended by these words ... utterly to depreciate an art, on which so wise a man as Aristotle, hath thought proper to compose a treatise". (Ibid., 284) He, however, concludes that facial expressions though they tell much are not the best index to character, and declares that only actions best interpret the thoughts of men. (Ibid., 289. This sentiment seems to be taken almost verbatim from Locke's *Essay* Bk I, ch. ii, sec. 3; I, 66-67. The same idea is expressed in his *Champion*, December 11, 1739. Vide also its rendering in *Joseph Andrews*, II, xvi, Henley ed. I, 196-205, *A Voyage to Lisbon* he seems to favour the idea that the characters of men, especially the wicked, are partly reflected in their faces and physiques as was the case with Mrs. Francis (Sunday July 19, 1754),
through his vast and varied readings in sentimentalist ethics. His opposition to such intellectualist formulae as 'fitness' and 'relation', evident in his satire of Square, and his assaults on Stoic deterministic and speculative systems, underline his distrust of intellectualist ethics, and denote a leaning, however slight, to an ethics principally founded on the passions.

Fielding's conception of benevolence and good-nature seems to have more in common with Hutcheson's than with any other single moralist. Like Hutcheson, he considers benevolence the only direct source of all good actions and extends its meaning to include the whole of virtue. Both conceive of it as the sole criterion of goodness, and the primary means to achieve pleasure and universal happiness. Both writers are aware of the various degrees of benevolence and self-love, (1) and of the close interrelation of such passions as honour, sympathy and gratitude. They agree in their insistence on prudence and discretion as guards to benevolence, and on cultivating good-nature through maintaining the balance of public and private passions. Furthermore, Fielding's conception of the good man has a striking similarity to Hutcheson's. To both writers, he is primarily good-natured, honourable,

1) Vide, supra. 152 f.
ever innocent, charitable, sympathizing and grateful. He is the good friend, the prudent adviser, the tender husband and the affectionate parent, whose benevolence encompasses the greatest number, causing happiness to all. To both, he is a proper gentleman with charming manners and open countenance. His sweet airs and proportions attract the love and esteem of others, and his dominant good-nature is ever striving for perfection through prudence and avoidance of harmful excess. (1)

Fielding's scale of goodness corresponds to Hutcheson's division of benevolence. (2) Furthermore, Fielding may well have been influenced by Hutcheson's conception of the good man as hero, though this idea had been a recurring theme in religious sermons, in the Spectator, in Steele's Christian Hero, and other moral writings. (3) This notion constitutes a major element in Hutcheson's view of the ethical value of literature.

1) Vide, supra, 150 ff.; and the Champion (March 27, 1740), where Fielding describes the good man as "the dutiful son, the affectionate brother, the tender husband, the indulgent father, the kind master, the faithful friend, and the firm patriot." ; and the Champion (March 13, 1739-40) for his conception of good breeding.

2) Vide, supra, 152.

in general, and of the novel in particular, a view totally in line with Fielding's moral and artistic convictions. (1)

With regard to the issue whether reason or passion is the foundation of the moral faculty, Fielding's position is particularly similar to that of Bishop Butler. Both often call it conscience, but are in fact not quite sure of the exact appellation. Bishop Butler emphasizes its intuitive magisterial authority, "whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both". (2) Butler's comment appears in the *Analogy of Religion* which was published in 1736, and Fielding seems to have it in mind when he describes this faculty in *Tom Jones*,

Mr. Jones had somewhat about him which, though I think writers are not thoroughly agreed in its name, doth certainly inhabit some human breasts; whose use is not so properly to distinguish right from wrong as to prompt and incite them to the former, and to restrain and withhold them from the latter... (3)

This authority, Fielding is careful to explain, is

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1) *Vide, supra*, the section on Hutcheson's conception of the good man, 150 f.
2) *Dissertation II*, appended to the *Analogy of Religion* in *Works*, I, 304.
3) *Tom Jones*, IV, vi; Henley ed., III, 163.
sitting on its throne in the mind, like the Lord High Chancellor of this kingdom in his court, where it presides, governs, directs, judges, acquits, and condemns according to merit and justice, with a knowledge which nothing escapes, a penetration which nothing can deceive, and an integrity which nothing can corrupt. (1)

Further, it is an ever active principle that "doth not content itself with knowledge or belief only". (2) Being "the severest of all judges" (3), it is ever acute in discerning motive and inciting man to follow the just path. It is the same principle that differentiates between "running away with a man's daughter from the motive of love, and doing the same thing from the motive of theft". (4) Allworthy, Fielding's perfectly good man, asserts that "a good conscience is never lawless in the worst regulated state and will provide those laws for itself which the neglect of legislators hath forgotten to supply". (5) This marked emphasis on the judicial function of conscience, together with Fielding's numerous references to the supreme importance of justice, are analogous to Butler's marked concern for this quality, a concern that must have had a special appeal to Fielding the moralist and justice of peace. He frequently depicts the

1) Ibid., 164.
2) Ibid., loc.cit.
3) Ibid., XV, x; Henley ed., V, 187.
4) Ibid., IV,vi; Henley ed., III,164.
5) Ibid.,XVIII,iii; Henley ed., V, 257.
effect of conscience on his characters, and utilizes his primary technical medium, contrast, in setting off "that solid inward comfort of mind" against "that horror and anxiety which, in their room, guilt introduces into our bosoms". (1) The influence and effects of conscience are vividly portrayed in Amelia where Booth suffers intensely for his guilt. He is tormented by the pricks and proddings of a bad conscience, living under a cloud of fear, trembling, and remorse that leaves him numb:

> It is certain that there were very few men in the world more seriously miserable than he was at this instant. A deep melancholy seized his mind, and cold damp sweats overspread his person, so that he was scarce animated; and poor Amelia, instead of a fond, warm husband, bestowed her caresses on a dull, lifeless lump of clay. (2)

Fielding then conceives of the moral faculty as an inherent force of supreme authority, just, discriminating, and essential for good nature and benevolent conduct. He does not so much speculate on its name or functions as depict it at work. His emphasis rests on its dominion, activity, justice, and its primarily reflective nature. In all this his thought is in accord with the orthodox Christian conception of the faculty, and is particularly analogous to that of Bishop Butler who considers it,

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1) Ibid., Dedication; Henley ed., III,12.
2) Amelia, IV,iii; Henley ed., VI, 184.
a superior principle of reflection... which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions: which passes judgement upon himself and them... which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself... and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence.... It is by this faculty, natural to man, that he is a moral agent, that he is a law to himself: but this faculty, I say; not to be considered merely as a principle in his heart, which is to have some influence as well as others; but considered as a faculty in kind and in nature supreme over all others, and which bears its own authority of being so. (1)

On the whole, Fielding would agree with Butler's conception of conscience. He also recognizes that it involves both rational and passional elements. This, in addition to the similarities in their thought on Christian Providence and benevolence (2), may well give support to the view that Butler's ethical views inspired Fielding. (3)

Though Fielding, with the sentimentalists, gives prominence to the heart as the centre of moral energy, and insists on the social virtues of compassion, sympathy and charity, he does not go to the sentimentalist extreme

2) Vide, supra, 165-71.
of considering reason to be an indolent force, utterly subservient to the passions. He would not accept, for instance, Hume's limited conception that "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them". (1) Fielding is aware of the dangers inherent in such a proposition, and frequently warns against the extreme of blindly following the heart. A man carried away by his passions would be no better than Squire Western whom Fielding ridicules for being enslaved to his impulses: a predominant love of his dogs and of hunting, an inconsiderate love of his daughter, and an uncontrollable temper reflected in tempestuous, and often puerile, outbursts of rage and vanity. Again, Fanny Matthews' dangerously temperamental character is a bad example to be shunned. It is her unwieldy, violent feelings and lack of prudence that cause her undoing in the country, and send her to prison in the town, thus altering the whole course of her life and that of Booth. Deluded by "that charming fellow Mandevil", she is led to believe that virtue and religion "serve only as cloaks under which hypocrisy may be the better enabled to cheat the world". (2) When Booth disagrees with her,

1) Treatise, op.cit., 415.
pointing out Mandeville's omission of love, "the best passion in the mind", she quickly changes her mind, not because of Mandeville's reported rejection of virtue and religion, but for the grave mistake of denying "the good passion of love", and probably in the hope that agreement with Booth would further her plan to seduce him. Here, Fielding has drawn the interesting character of the country-girl-turned-courtesan, enmeshed in her own impetuous passions of self-love, envy, vanity, lust, and revenge. These motives account, in great part, for the tragic undertones in her character which, though far more softened, bears some resemblance to Lillo's fatal, cruel, and seductive Millwood. (1) Again, as previously indicated, Fielding warns his readers against the danger of a supine and deterministic morality based on a belief in the passions. His insistence on discretion and right suspicion constitutes a major element of his moral purpose. An excess of the tender passions, he holds, is a betrayal of sound judgement; this error is an inevitable concomitant of good-nature when its primary attributes are merely innocence and lack of guile. Even the wise and perfectly benevolent Allworthy is not free from this

1) Lillo's The History of George Barnwell, based on a ballad, was produced in 1731.
error. He is misguided by his heart; for example, when he accepts Blifil's plan to court Sophia. Here, Fielding, who vindicates Allworthy's conduct at every point, observes: "thus is the prudence of the best of heads often defeated by the tenderness of the best of hearts." (1) Booth repeats the same sentiment when he says to Fanny Matthews, "A good heart will at all times betray the best head in the world". (2) Moreover, in his discussions of good-nature, Fielding is often careful to point out that it should not act in a weak, indiscriminate or unjust way that encourages vice. (3)

In all this Fielding seems to be aware of the increasing predilection of his age for feeling in general, and of its profuse acclaim of the tender passions attendant on benevolence. His attitude is one of considered moderation and healthy balance, together with a careful awareness of the realities of life. Though at times he

verges on the sentimental, especially in Amelia, he is

1) Tom Jones, XVI, vi; Henley ed. V, 229.
2) Amelia, II, ii; Henley ed., VI, 72.
3) Vide, e.g., Allworthy's rebuke to Tom for carrying his forgiving temper too far, when the latter tries to save Blifil from punishment; Tom Jones, XVIII, xi; Henley ed., V, 358; and Booth's similar attitude to Amelia when she expresses her readiness to excuse her maid who had committed theft, Amelia, XI, v; Henley ed., VII, 270-71.
usually persistent in distinguishing between true good-
nature and flaccid sentiment. His commitment to the
goodness of the heart is conditioned by an affirmation
of the primacy of reason and conscience. However, his
tolerant disposition toward the frailties of the flesh
in his good-natured heroes, Tom and Booth, was in-
strumental in making some critics underestimate his
pronounced emphasis on reason, prudence and discretion.
It accounts, in part, for the attacks of Richardson,
Dr. Johnson, Hawkins, and several others.

Fielding's view of the passions then, and indeed
of morality in general, is in line with the prevalent
moral and religious thought of his time. He is eminently
eclectic: for whatever idea he finds most conducive to
the realization of benevolence, be it ancient or modern,
be it expounded by a divine or a lay moralist, he culls
and appropriates, demonstrating its efficacy both directly,
and in the imaginative terms of his art. As an acute ob-
server of men, he must have been convinced of the in-
consistencies of human nature itself, with its faltering
reason and contending passions, its limited potentialities
and soaring ambition. If he at times seems inconsistent, it is because human beings are complex and illogical. As an artist, he is intensely aware of their intricacies and contradictions, and as a self-professed 'historian' his function is to record his findings, after sorting them out, in a generalized way. It is this function of the moralist-artist-historian that underlies his preference for demonstrating experience rather than exploring it. For, the later novelists - such as Henry James or Joseph Conrad - give the impression that their novels but actually explore into unknown moral territory/ with Fielding one feels - so firm and clear are his positions - that he has already settled his values in his mind and is using the novels to demonstrate rather than explore the urgency of his commitment as a moral writer who feels a compulsion to interpose directly as a "Christian Censor", necessitates demonstrating the general, the ordinary, and the commonsensical, rather than delving into the particular, the exceptional, and the quaint.

From the very start of his writing career, and throughout the short span of his fully fruitful life, Fielding's eclectic moral message was expounded again and again in essay, play, and novel. Benevolence, it insisted, is the primary means to improve man's lot in
this world and to attain felicity in the next. During his arduous years of public service he was actively practising his own views of benevolence, justice and the love of others. Whether he is inspired by the heathen philosophers, the Latitudinarian divines, or the prominent moral writers of his time, or as may well be the case, by all of these, he makes it clear that his preoccupation is not so much with the idea as with its translation into action, not simply with motive, but effect as well. The ultimate purpose of his novels is inculcating goodness and the cultivation of benevolence through the perfection of both head and heart.
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IV. THE MORALIST AS ARTIST

i. Ethical Intentions

The purpose of the following pages is to indicate the ethical intentions of Fielding's novels, to examine the means he deems most conducive to the cultivation of benevolence, and to demonstrate how the novels dramatize his leading moral ideas and reflect a rare combination of moral commitment and imaginative expression. Hitherto, the emphasis has been on his moral thought in relation to that of his times, and this has involved a necessary deflection from his art. The following study will attempt to remedy this shift of focus by assessing the interaction between his ethical intentions and his conception and execution of the novels.

Fielding is extremely conscious of his mission both as moralist and artist. In effect, art to him is inconceivable without a moral purpose. His view of the novel as an effective ethical medium is distinctly stated in each of his four novels, and constitutes the basic justification for initiating his "new province of writing". There is an urgent need, he feels, for a literary medium superior to other existing media, because more representative of moral truth, and more conducive to the inculcation
of benevolence. Hence his assertion that his kind of 'history' is more effective than the contemporary brood of romances, epics, and fictions, most of which he considers harmful products of a feverish imagination. Their poor moral content and dependence on the marvellous deprive them of both delight and moral and literary worth, and render them deficient in entertainment and instruction.

The new medium, Fielding insists, is also more effective than sermons, moral and philosophical treatises, or other forms of ethical regulation. These can easily lead to bigotry and distortion of religious and moral values. The novels are replete with dramatizations of such evils. His scathing ridicule is aimed at such hypocritical utilizers of religion as Parsons Trulliber and Barnabas in Joseph Andrews, Dr Thwackum and Captain Blifil in Tom Jones, and Cooper, the Methodist pickpocket in Amelia. (1) Again, the novels abound with attacks on such misleading philosophies as those of Mandeville, the deists, and the Stoics (e.g. Booth, Fanny Matthews, and Robinson in Amelia, and Square in Tom Jones). Even when moral and philosophical speculation is sound, it still allows a wide gap between theory and practice, precept and example. It seeks to teach men how to attain happiness, but often tends to be repetitious,

platitudinous and profuse:

Philosophers and moralists have already filled so many thousand pages with their declarations on this head [happiness], that I shall add no more to them, especially since examples convince us more speedily than precepts. (1)

At times their systems and theories lead them away from the simple, the real, and the commonplace to such 'wonderful' discoveries, as that the human breast contains such a passion as love. (2) At other times they reach faulty conclusions, for instance, that virtue is the sure road to happiness, and vice to misery - "to which", Fielding declares, "we have but one objection, namely, that it is not true". (3) True wisdom, he maintains, must be both useful and practical, and only then can it be considered synonymous with virtue. (4)

His frequent depreciatory remarks on philosophy stem from a belief in the inefficacy of abstract speculation, its remoteness from the real, concrete problems of everyday life. This belief may account in part for his frequent thrusts at contemporary science and its protagonists: the members of the Royal Society. For, in the satirical manner of Meric Casaubon, prebendary of Canterbury, Pope, Swift, and Robert South, all of whom he greatly admires, Fielding ridicules in play, essay, and novel the pre-

1) The Champion (February 26, 1739-40).
2) Tom Jones, VI, i, Henley ed., III, 270.
3) Ibid., XV, i, Henley ed., V, 141.
occupations of those who vainly attempt to defy the
decrees of religion, morality and nature. (1)

Fielding, then, regards scientific, philosophical, and
moral speculation with considerable suspicion. To him,
truth cannot be merely conceptual, nor can it be an end
in itself; to be worthy of pursuit it must be both
practical and useful. Religion and morality are not mere
systems, their truth lies in their utility and their
appeal to common sense. Accordingly, the medium of incul­
cating them should be as concrete and as convincing as
possible. As a moral artist Fielding is acutely aware of

1) Cf. "The critics of science believed that religion, morality,
education, and art were so closely associated with
the past that a contempt for antiquity, generated
by an overweening faith in, and by an exaggerated
emphasis upon, the superiority of modern science
over all other learning, would tend towards the
destruction of the Church, the corruption of edu­
cation, and the brutalization of man. They viewed
with great concern the perils, as regards man's moral
and spiritual interests, of a naturalistic philosophy
based upon the new science, and they supported the
cause of a humanistic culture against the aggressive
demands of a utilitarian and mechanistic science.

(R.F. Jones "The Background of the Attack on Science
in the Age of Pope" in Pope and His Contemporaries,
Essays presented to George Sherburn, edited by
J.L. Clifford and Louis A. Landa (New York, 1949),
105.
It is interesting to note that Fielding's hostile
attitude to the new science constitutes a significant
departure from the marked favourable attitude of
such leading Latitudinarian members of the Royal
Society as Thomas Sprat, Joseph Glanvill and Arch­
bishop Tillotson."
the difficulties this issue involves. In *Tom Jones* he asserts: "I am not writing a system, but a history, and I am not obliged to reconcile every matter to the received notions concerning truth and nature." (1) For even if they are intellectually acceptable these notions conflict with the facts of experience and practical truth. (2) Like his other novels, *Tom Jones* is mainly concerned with the cultivation of benevolence, not through sermons, treatises or fanciful chimeras, but through contriving natural happenings and life-like characters. These should dramatize

> the great, useful, and uncommon doctrine, which it is the purpose of this whole work to inculcate, and which we must not fill up our pages by frequently repeating, as an ordinary parson fills his sermons by repeating his text at the end of every paragraph. (3)

To excel in such dramatization, Fielding has to resort to the only science he so greatly respects: the 'science of human nature'. By this he means nothing specialized, new-fangled or esoteric, only the general practical knowledge of the 'world' and the characters of men, a knowledge to be arduously attained through close observa-

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1) XII,viii, Henley ed., IV,337.

2) Commenting on this passage A.D. McKillop writes,"Facts are stubborn, but principles are valid, and facts and and principles conflict. The attitude the novelist takes toward this conflict determines whether he is to write tragedy or comedy. Cervantes alone wrote both." *Early Masters of English Fiction* (London, 1957), First edition, 121.

3) *Tom Jones*, XII,viii, Henley ed., IV,337.
tion, actual experience and sound insight. Its primary qualities are applicability, utility, and common sense. The artist should have an abundant share of this knowledge, and his office is to develop and convey it through his medium. Such a knowledge is an essential qualification, for it entitles him to be a well-informed and reliable teacher of men. Fielding is confident that he has contributed to this 'science', and that, by his art, he has done humanity a service no less worthy or dignified than that rendered by preachers and philosophers.

Like many of his distinguished contemporaries, Fielding stresses the Horatian rule that poetry should both instruct and entertain. In his carefully considered pronouncements on the novel, he notes that the criterion of a writer's success is his ability to blend pleasure with instruction. "When the agreeable is blended with the useful then is the writer said to have succeeded in every point". (1) His emphasis on the dual function of art, especially when his comic prose epics are concerned, is genuine and sincere. It is not simply motivated by the urge to ward off the numerous accusations of immorality and 'lowness', accusations which deeply hurt the conscious ethical artist in him, and make him lash savagely at his

1) The Covent Garden Journal, No. 10 (February 4, 1752).
'reptile' critics. The teachings of the moralists and such moral artists as his friend Hogarth, and his rival Richardson, are very much in his mind when he discusses the ethical function of art. He describes Hogarth as "one of the most useful satirists any age has produced", and finds that "the Rake's and the Harlot's Progress, are calculated more to serve the cause of virtue, and for the preservation of mankind, than all the folios of morality which have been written". (2) His admiration for Hogarth's work stems from the latter's ability to expose "the delusive scene ... with all the force and wit of humour". (3) Fielding is fully conscious of the close kinship between his art and that of his friend. Both artists "correlate to each other" he maintains, and both are comic historians whose aim is to please and edify, the one with line and colour, the other with words. (4) Again, Fielding's genuine faith in the dual office of the artist is evident in his unstinted praise of Richardson's Clarissa. In his preface to the novel, Richardson points out that entertainment should be the means to instruction, and Fielding wholly approves. Despite the fact that

1) The Champion (June 10, 1740).
2) Ibid., loc.cit.
3) Ibid., loc.cit.
Richardson's moral pill is very thinly gilded, Fielding observes that "Pleasantry (as the ingenious author of Clarissa says of a story) should be made only the vehicle of instruction". He goes further to assert:

When no moral, no lesson, no instruction is conveyed to the reader, where the whole design of the composition is no more than to make us laugh, the writer comes very near to the character of a buffoon... In the exercise of the mind, as well as in the exercise of the body, diversion is a secondary consideration and designed only to make that agreeable which is at the same time useful, to such noble purposes as health and wisdom. (1)

Fielding's novels display a brilliant fusion of both elements, and, on the whole, attest to a masterly balance and admirable control in this respect. Though most conspicuous in his first three novels, the element of pleasing is seldom out of hand, and is often intended as a medium to expose vice. His openly humorous scenes are usually functional and ethically oriented. Whether it is Lady Booby's vain attempt to seduce Joseph (2), or the final romp in Joseph Andrews where "Mr Adams fell into many hairbreadth 'scapes, owing partly to his goodness and partly to his inadvertancy" (3), whether it is Molly Seagrim's churchyard battle (4), or the scene in her

1) The Covent Garden Journal (February 4, 1752). The same idea is repeated in the Preface to the Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon, where Fielding agrees with both Richardson and Addison about the secondary importance of entertainment, Henley ed., XVI, 185-86.
3) Ibid., IV, xiv; Henley ed., I, 376-83.
4) Tom Jones, IV, viii, Henley ed., 169-75.
bedroom where Square is discovered, whether it is Squire Western's endearing antics, Major Bath's cut-throat humour, or any such hilarious episode, it shows the moral satirist convinced of the compatibility of laughter and morality. (1) In such scenes, he is in his element, and his satiric genius is most artistically and most satisfactorily displayed. Like Swift, he is a master in using laughter as a satiric weapon, and fully approves of the former's view that humour is certainly the best Ingredient towards that Kind of Satyr, which is most useful, and gives the least Offence; which instead of lashing, laughs Men out of their Follies and Vices, and is the Character which gives Horace the Preference of Juvenal. (2)

In his introduction to *Joseph Andrews* Fielding emphasizes the corrective function of laughter and finds the latter probably more wholesome physic for the mind, and conduce better to purge away spleen, melancholy, and ill affections, than is generally imagined. Nay, I will appeal to common observation, whether the same companies are not found more full of good-humour and benevolence, after they have been sweetened for two or three hours with entertainments of this kind, than when soured by a tragedy or a grave lecture.

All this, however, does not obviate the fact that Fielding's novels teem with scenes and remarks that are

1) Vide, e.g., *The Covent Garden Journal* No. 18 (March 3, 1752).

just funny. In *Joseph Andrews*, several of Adam's remarks are simply and delightfully comic without being strictly moralistic. In *Tom Jones*, Partridge's disparagement of Garrick seeing the ghost (1), and many of Squire Western's remarks are sheerly amusing and endearing. Even in *Jonathan Wild*, where the intention is most moral, a great deal is just funny and hilarious. (2) It seems that Fielding, the comic, and moral writer, found it incumbent upon him to defend his art against the accusations of 'low' humour and immorality by insistently maintaining, that his type of humour is natural, medicinal, and moral.(3) His distinction as an artist, in effect, lies in his combining comic genius with the ardent spirit of the dedicated moralist and social reformer.

In order to achieve the maximum moral effect on the good-natured reader, Fielding does not rely wholly on the humorous dramatization of folly and vice. He utilizes other artistic methods not the least prominent of which is the conscious attitude of the omniscient


2) Vide, e.g., the account of Wild's genealogy, his matrimonial dispute with Tishy, and his jumping overboard and getting back again to London;I,ii; III,viii;II,xi,xii,xiii, respectively.

3) Vide his defence of "humour and nature" against the call for a false refinement of art in the Prologue to *The Universal Gallant*, Henley ed., XI, 78, and in *Tom Jones*, i; Henley ed., 206, and XIV,i; Henley ed., V, 93-94.
narrator. For, like any dedicated moralist, he is bent on making his convictions crystal clear. Hence his spotlights that focus on one moral position after another, and his persistent intrusion to eulogize, denounce, or appraise. Hence also the accusations of arrogance, smugness, simplicity, monotony of effect, and lack of subtlety.(1) To make his narrative and his moral tenor convincing he finds it incumbent upon him to lay his own person, his character, his authority, and his views, open to inspection, for he must be seen to feel, think, and judge; he must be observed at work in order to appeal, persuade and convince. The direct satirical statement must be reinforced by imaginative rendering, the central moral idea must be repeated again and again, the plot must be strengthened by a sub-plot, and the panoramic view of human nature must be clearly and cogently drawn in sharp, bold strokes, allowing enough room for colour, shade and variety.

Throughout the novels, Fielding's presence as a moral artist is constantly felt. He deliberately indulges in commentaries on himself, on the characters and events he depicts, on his intentions, and on his readers. Indeed,

the subjective element is very pronounced in his work. It is particularly explicit in the prefatory chapters, in chapter headings, in the defence and description of his good-natured men and women. (1) The distinctive tone of Fielding's voice is not only confined to lengthy, direct statements, it is sustained throughout such highly dramatized scenes as the one in *Joseph Andrews*, where Adams, stretched on his back, snores peacefully, and Joseph and Fanny, amusing themselves innocently, watch a frightened hare pursued by hounds and horsemen:

Fanny was wonderfully pleased with the little wretch, and eagerly longed to have it in her arms, that she might preserve it from the dangers which seemed to threaten it; but the rational part of the creation do not always aptly distinguish their friends from their foes; what wonder then if this silly creature, the moment it beheld her, fled from the friend who would have protected it, and traversing the meadows again, passed the little rivulet on the opposite side? It was, however, so spent and weak that it fell down twice or thrice in its way. This affected the tender heart of Fanny, who exclaimed, with tears in her eyes, against the barbarity of worrying a poor innocent, defenceless animal out of its life, and putting it to the extremest torture for diversion. She had not much time to make reflections of this kind, for on a sudden the hounds rushed through the wood, which resounded with their throats and the throats of their retinue who attended on them on horseback. The dogs now past the rivulet, and pursued the footsteps of the hare; five horsemen attempted to leap over,

1) Cf. for instance his defence of Tom in the opening paragraph of *Tom Jones*, IV,vi; Henley ed., III,163.
three of whom succeeded, and two were in
the attempt thrown from their saddles into
the water; their companions, and their own horses
too, proceeded after their sport, and left
their friends and riders to invoke the
assistance of Fortune, or employ the more
active means of strength and agility for
their deliverance. (1)

Here the narrator's voice and point of view complement
the narrative, giving it force and direction. The rhetori­
cal, the aphoristic and the ironical elements unite to
add moral point and character to the whole episode.

Fielding's commentaries, whether explicit or implicit,
constitute a substantial part of his novels. Though he
may term some of them digressions they are, in general,
indispensable contributions, integral parts of the finished
fictional whole. A skilful master of structural form, he
is fully conscious of their function as moral and literary
devices. They allow more room for inducing moral attitudes,
and accord with his strong sense of the novel as a com­
pleted literary product. (2) In a cogently argued essay
on the self-conscious narrator in eighteenth century
comic fiction, Wayne C. Booth demonstrates the moral and
comic effectiveness of Fielding's intrusions. (3) He
rightly emphasizes that Fielding's commentaries are

1) III,vi; Henley ed., I,267-68.
2) Vide Northrop Frye's essay "Towards Defining an Age
of Sensibility", ELH, XVIII, No. 2, 1956,144-52.
Here Frye distinguishes between the 'process' type
of novel, and the novel as a finished product, an
artefact.

3) "The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction Before
functional in the sense that they have a principal contribution to the moral effect of the novels. Of all Fielding's forms of intrusion, Booth deems most functional, those used to differentiate between good-natured and ill-natured readers and to manipulate the good-natured readers into the moral attitudes Fielding desires. (1) He offers the following passage as an example of very effective moral manipulation:

Examine your heart, my good reader, and resolve whether you do believe these matters with me. If you do, you may now proceed to their exemplification in the following pages; if you do not, you have, I assure you, already read more than you have understood; and it would be wiser to pursue your business, or your pleasures (such as they are), than to throw away any more of your time in reading what you can neither taste nor comprehend. To treat of the effects of love to you, must be as absurd as to discourse on colours to a man born blind, since possibly your idea of love may be as absurd as that which we are told such blind men once entertained of the colour scarlet; that colour seemed to him to be very much like the sound of a trumpet: and love probably may, in your opinion, very greatly resemble a dish of soup, or a surloin of roast-beef. (2)

Receptivity to the virtuous, wholehearted love of Tom and Sophia is here made the criterion of the reader's benevolence, and Fielding's literary devices are utilized

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1) Ibid., 177.
2) Tom Jones, VI,i; Henley ed., III,273.
to convince as many readers as possible of such benevolent love, and to defend Tom's character, thus ensuring their sympathetic understanding of the young hero's indiscretions. Throughout, Fielding is careful to remind the reader of Tom's original good-nature. This he achieves through direct personal statement and rendered imaginative expression.

In addition to their moral function the commentaries are often intended to elicit or reinforce the comic response of the reader. Examples of this abound in Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones. Here is how Fielding describes Trulliber's amazement at Parson Adams' innocent request of a loan of fourteen shillings:

Suppose a stranger who entered the chambers of a lawyer, being imagined a client, when the lawyer was preparing his palm for the fee, should pull out a writ against him. Suppose an apothecary, at the door of a chariot containing some great doctor of eminent skill, should, instead of directions to a patient, present him with a potion for himself. Suppose a minister should, instead of a good round sum, treat my lord -, or sir -, or esq. - with a good broomstick. Suppose a civil companion, or a led captain, should, instead of virtue, and honour, and beauty, and parts, and admiration, thunder vice, and infamy, and ugliness, and folly, and contempt in his patron's ears. Suppose, when a tradesman first carries in his bill, the man of fashion should pay it; or suppose, if he did so, the tradesman should abate what he had overcharged on the supposition of waiting. In short - suppose what you will,
you never can nor will suppose anything equal to the astonishment which seized on Trulliber, as soon as Adams had ended his speech. (1)

In *Tom Jones* Fielding frequently resorts to this device in order to enhance the moral and comic effects of his scenes. He thus comments on Square's discovery in Molly's closet:

Philosophers are composed of flesh and blood as well as other human creatures; and however sublimated and refined the theory of these may be, a little practical frailty is as incident to them as to other mortals. It is, indeed, in theory only, and not in practice, as we have before hinted, that consists the difference: for though such great beings think much better and more wisely, they always act exactly like other men. They know very well how to subdue all appetites and passions, and to despise both pain and pleasure; and this knowledge affords much delightful contemplation, and is easily acquired; but the practice would be vexatious and troublesome; and, therefore, the same wisdom which teaches them to know this, teaches them to avoid carrying it into execution. (2)

At times, Fielding employs this method in a way reminiscent of his coarse humour in the plays. Such for instance is his intrusion to condemn Squire Western's bad habit of swearing, particularly that type "intro-


duced into all controversies that arise among the lower orders of the English gentry at horse-races, cock-matches, and other public places." (1) Such also is his humorous satirical comment on female combats in the hilarious churchyard battle sung in the Homeric style. (2)

Fielding, then, displays a great deal of shrewdness in running commentaries and introductory chapters, all of which increase his intimacy with the reader, and convince the latter of the omniscience and moral acuteness of his entertaining companion. (3) From these commentaries Fielding himself emerges as a well drawn character inseparable and inextricable from the 'world' he has created, making it more tangible and more convincing. Throughout the novels he officiates as a chorus, and, in many respects, he is to the reader what Parson Adams is to Joseph, Squire Allworthy to Tom, and Dr. Harrison to Booth: a benevolent Mentor to a Telemachus seeking a complete good-natured, balanced and well-ordered life. Far from being merely extrinsic to his art, his commentaries determine the qualities of his world, reinforce

1) VI, ix; Henley ed., IV, 308.
2) IV, viii; Henley ed., III, 169-75.
3) Cf. Tom Jones, XVIII, i; Henley ed., 293-94.
its 'rendered' delineation, and make explicit to the reader the moral and artistic activities of the author, which the 'purist' novelist usually undertakes behind the scenes.

Though Fielding was not original in writing commentaries and prefatory chapters, he was the first English novelist to employ them so brilliantly in the service of his moral ends. (1) It has been noted that

No one else in English fiction had ever tried to attain the degree of intimacy that Fielding attains in his intrusive conversations with his "readers", and it is not strange that his intimacy should have been copied without reference to his ends. (2)

Like his other literary devices in the novels, they are mainly wielded to contribute to the propagation of benevolence and good-nature.

Fielding does not seem to consider the novel a 'fine art' in the sense that it is an aesthetic end in itself. He regards the novel as a primarily ethical instrument whose value depends on the degree of its contribution to the good life. He seems to imply that

1) Ethel M. Thornbury suggest that Fielding was perhaps merely following the custom of his day in writing prefaces. She observes that prefaces appeared with "all epics, original or translations, serious or mock epic". Henry Fielding's Theory of Comic Prose Epic, in University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature No. 30, 1931, 113. Fielding's prefaces, however, are more than conventional. They are statements of his moral and artistic purpose, and a justification of his art. As such, they are integral parts of the novels.

2) Booth, op.cit., 179-80.
if it were possible to have so many living examples of goodness as to afford numerous lessons in virtue to a large number of their acquaintances there would be little need for fiction.

But as it often happens that the best men are but little known, and consequently cannot extend the usefulness of their examples a great way, the writer may be called in aid to spread their history farther, and to present the amiable pictures to those who have not the happiness of knowing the originals; and so, by communicating such valuable patterns to the world, he may perhaps do a more extensive service to mankind than the person whose life originally afforded the pattern. (1)

Thus, the principal fine art to him is the art of life; books reflecting it rank only second, for, at best, literature is an imitation of life. In A Journey from this World to the Next, he recounts how a dramatist sought entry into heaven on account of his literary achievement:

"What works?" answered Minos. "My dramatic works", replied the other, "which have done so much good in recommending virtue and punishing vice." - "Very well", said the judge, "if you please to stand by, the first person who passes the gate, by your means, shall carry you in with him; but if you will take my advice, I think, for expedition sake, you had better return, and live another life upon earth." The bard grumbled at this, and replied, that besides his poetical works, he had done some other good things: for that he had

once lent the whole profits of a benefit night to a friend, and by that means had saved him, and his family from destruction. Upon this, the gate flew open, and Minos desired him to walk in, telling him if he had mentioned this at first he might have spared the remembrance of his plays. (1)

Like several other moralists of his time (2), Fielding accepts the Stoic view of life as an art. To him, human life is a process that requires a special skill in the application of such knowledge of human nature as has been compiled by the learned, and derived from practical experience. This knowledge calls for minute observation and unflagging attention. Men should work this knowledge into a skill that orders their lives, and the 'historian' of human nature is he who teaches this skill through the imaginative presentation of human models. Fielding points out the ways in which both writer and reader can best benefit from human experience:

Life may as properly be called an art as any other; and the great incidents in it are no more to be considered as mere accidents than the several members of a fine statue or a noble poem. The critics in all these are not content with seeing any thing to be great without knowing why and how it came to be so. By examining carefully the several gradations which conduce to bring every model to perfection, we learn truly to know that science in which the model is formed: as histories of this kind, therefore, may properly be called models of HUMAN LIFE.

1) I,vii; Henley ed., II,241-42.
2) In particular, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Hume.
so, by observing minutely the several incidents which tend to the catastrophe or completion of the whole, and the minute causes whence those incidents are produced, we shall best be instructed in this most useful of all arts, which I call the Art of LIFE. (1)

Thus the art of life and the art of fiction are analogous; and the intricate pattern of a novel, like that of the real life it represents, is far from haphazard. To learn how to live aright necessitates knowledge, proportion, and design. For the artist to be effective, he must invent purposively, constructing models of human life, interweaving the several incidents which lead "to the completion of the whole". For the reader to be well instructed, he must carefully scrutinize those models, and note the various incidents and their effects with assiduous care. Both writer and reader, therefore, must make use of human models, the former to draw them well, so as to excel in the art of fiction, the other to scrutinize them well, so as to excel in the art of life.

Fielding repeatedly emphasizes the influence of example on the human mind. There is a dynamic, persuasive quality in a human model, he believes, that urges his readers to imitate the good and shun the evil. This idea is frequently stressed in the novels. In Jonathan Wild

1) Amelia, I,i; Henley ed., VI, 14.
he points out that when the lives of great men are presented to us by sensible writers,

we are not only most agreeably entertained, but most usefully instructed; for, besides the attaining hence a consummate knowledge of human nature in general; of its secret springs, various windings, and perplexed mazes; we have here before our eyes lively examples of what ever is amiable or detestable, worthy of admiration or abhorrence, and are consequently taught, in a manner infinitely more effectual than by precept, what we are eagerly to imitate or carefully to avoid. (1)

1) Jonathan Wild, I,i; Henley ed., II,1. It is interesting to note that this openly didactic recommendation is similar to pre-Tudor and Tudor 'chroniclers' recommendations of history-writing. The introduction to William Caxton's edition of the Polychronicon refers to "wryters of hystoryes, whiche gretely have prouffyted oure mortal lyf, that shewe unto the reders and herers by the examples of thynges passyd, what thinge is to be desyred, and what is to be eschewed." The Polychronicon was originally written by Ranulf Higden and translated by John Trevisa in 1387. Printed by William Caxton, (London, 1482.) The praises of history go back to Cicero, who, in De Oratore hails history as "testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae", (recorder of times past, light of truth, life of memory, mistress of life), Cicero, De Oratore, Bk II; Loeb Classical Library edn., translated by E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (London, 1942), 2 vols., I,224. Hobbes, Locke, the Latitudinarian divines, Hume, and numerous writers of the period emphasized the value of history as a means of instruction and moral betterment. Hobbes, for instance, held that the study of history would give a man wisdom and enable him to look to the future with some 'foresight';and that the past experiences of men would give the 'prudence' necessary to the good life. ( Cf. Discourse on Human Nature, in English Works of Thomas Hobbes, ed. William Molesworth, vol. IV (London, 1840), 18. Fielding must have been familiar with the classical tradition and the vogue of history and history writing in his own time. This, however, does not mean that the passage from Jonathan Wild, quoted above, is a deliberate echo of a particular classical or contemporary writer.
In *Joseph Andrews* he expresses the same sentiments, stressing the appeal of the good man's example. The ideal case, he maintains, is to have a real model, a man whose benevolence is known well enough and widely enough to incite general imitation and emulation. (1) Reality lends the character of the good man dimensions that make his appeal more irresistible than that of his imaginary counterpart. Recording and publicizing the lives of good men, real or imaginary, is the principal occupation of the good novelist. Hence the appropriateness of the title 'historian' for the writer who draws as concrete and real pictures of virtue as possible. Again, in his "Dedication" to *Tom Jones*, Fielding reaffirms the efficacy of example. He thus states his intentions to George Lyttelton whom he considers a shining model of goodness: (2)


2) Lyttelton may well have been Fielding's principal example of goodness throughout a long period of his writing career, and particularly so in the novels. Surely Lyttelton's character as displayed in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and F. Homes Dudden's discussion of his relations with Fielding afford evidence enough to support this view. Though Dudden emphasizes Fielding's relations with Ralph Allen and considers him the major figure who inspired Fielding's portrait of Allworthy (I,411), he constantly refers to Fielding's close relations with Lyttelton. These relations were indeed very intimate. Both were together at Eton and their close friendship later is established. It was Lyttelton's pronounced practical benevolence that Fielding has more cause —

P.T.O.
I declare, that to recommend goodness and innocence hath been my sincere endeavour in this history. This honest purpose you have been pleased to think I have attained: and to say the truth, it is likeliest to be attained in books of this kind; for an example is a kind of picture, in which virtue becomes, as it were, an object of sight and strikes us with an idea of that loveliness, which Plato asserts there is in her naked charms. (1)

In his emphasis on the efficacy of example, Fielding is following a long literary and religious tradition reflected in the character and periodical essays and in the sermons of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The numerous moral, religious, and educational writings of this period deal with type figures illustrating ethical concepts, and social and religious forces. They also emphasize the theme of the Christian hero, and express the need for the imaginative representation of the good hero in literature. The sermons of the Latitudinarian divines in particular frequently to commemorate in novel, poem, and essay. The central trait of Lyttelton's character is his excessive and yet vulnerable benevolence, a virtue that by its very nature, embodies a lurking canker. This very virtue is the central message Fielding makes it his literary career to dramatize in characters like Boncour, Parson Adams, Allworthy, and Dr. Harrison. This would seem to point to the possibility that Lyttelton was Fielding's principal copy for the good man throughout a long period of his writing career.

1) "Dedication", Henley ed., III, 12.
demonstrate the peculiar force of example in the formation of conduct. Archbishop Tillotson considers that a good example is

an unspeakable benefit to mankind, and hath a secret power and influence upon those with whom we converse, to form them into the same disposition and manners. It is a living rule that teacheth men without trouble, and lets them see their faults without open reproof and upbraiding; besides we see that it adds great weight to a man's counsel and persuasion, when we see that he advises nothing but what he does ... (1)

Fielding's faith in the power of example conditions his view of character. In the main, he conceives of his personages in terms of good and bad examples, and his portraits of good-natured and ill-natured men and women stand out as vivid exemplifications of the benevolence he is committed to spread, and the vicious self-love he strives to expose. It is characteristic of him to think of his characters as 'patterns' and 'types' representative of human nature. Thus Allworthy was "as great a pattern

1) Works, (London, 1748), I, 30. Richard Fiddes, the divine and historian (1671-1725) stresses the importance of examples taken from the highest ranks of society: "For no Principles, or Rules of any Kind, ever operate with so great Force, as when we confirm, and illustrate them by living Examples, especially from very high, and conspicuous Stations... For such Instances shew, in the best Light, that the Maxims of Morality, which are so reasonable, and beautiful in Theory are also, in Fact, truly adapted to the present State and Condition of Human Nature." A General Treatise of Morality (London, 1724), Dedication.
of wisdom as he was of goodness" (1), and Thwackum and Square were "objects of derision" for wanting "natural goodness of heart". (2) Such patterns, Fielding points out, must represent what is natural and real, for there are no good purposes served by inserting characters of such angelic perfection, or such diabolic depravity, in any work of invention; since, from contemplating either, the mind of man is more likely to be overwhelmed with sorrow and shame than to draw any good uses from such patterns ... (3)

But Fielding's theories are not always realized in his practice. Some of his characters, especially those representing ill-nature, hypocrisy and corruption, are distinctly one-sided. Such, for instance are Mrs. Towmouse, Trulliber, and Peter Pounce in Joseph Andrews, the Blifils, Mrs. Wilkins, and Lady Bellaston in Tom Jones, the trading justice Thrasher, the wicked sister, Betty, and the depraved lord in Amelia. The story of Jonathan Wild is professedly intended as a picture of complete vice, unrelieved by human feeling (4) despite Fielding's half-hearted attempts to make his anti-hero human.

1) Tom Jones, VI,iii; Henley ed., III,284.
2) Ibid., III,iv; Henley ed., III,118.
3) Ibid., X,i; Henley ed., IV,195.
4) Preface to Miscellanies; Henley ed., XII,246.
These characters appear in profile, and the graphic quality of their delineation helps to emphasize their one-sidedness. Indeed, Fielding does not spare any means in underlining their repugnant nature, and his effects converge on presenting them as caricatures. His emphasis on their distorted physical appearance and their evil motives, his dramatizing, through action and dialogue, of their hypocrisy and vice, and the telling names he accords most of them - all this serves to impress on the reader's mind the generic quality of the various planes of vice such characters represent, and attest to the forceful pressure of the artist's ethical bias. Fielding here does not take any chances, and would rather sacrifice 'probability' than appear ambiguous or condoning vice. The bad characters are mainly intended as foils (1) to set off the virtues of the good-natured opposites whose examples count the most. It is good-nature, benevolence and prudence he sets out to propagate, and this, he feels, must inform and control his conception of character. The moral writer should concentrate more on

1) Except, perhaps, in the case of Jonathan Wild. But even the portrayal of Wild indicates a positive moral alternative. It is a negative delineation of the good man, and Fielding's sustained irony is a persistent reminder of the norm against which Wild is measured throughout.
the realistic depiction of good examples. In the introductory chapter to Bk VIII of *Tom Jones*, Fielding expounds his view of probability and discusses the relation between historians of 'public' and 'private' life. He writes,

we who deal in private character, who search into the most retired recesses, and draw forth examples of virtue and vice from holes and corners of the world, are in a more dangerous situation. As we have no public notoriety, no concurrent testimony, no records to support and corroborate what we deliver, it becomes us, to keep within the limits not only of possibility, but of probability too; and this more especially in painting what is greatly good and amiable. Knavery and folly, though never so exorbitant, will more easily meet with assent; for ill-nature adds great support and strength to faith. (1)

The two contrasted paragraphs that follow are intended as a practical exemplification of this view. In the first, Fielding relates the case of the horrible murder of Mr. Derby by the depraved Fisher. The second and longer paragraph is an enthusiastic eulogy of a real good man (evidently Ralph Allen). It is replete with such abstract nouns as integrity, taste, simplicity, goodness, charity, beneficence, and hospitality, but lacks the dramatic and forceful effects of the first account. Evil, Fielding seems to say, effects a deeper

1) Henley ed., IV, 62.
impression on the mind than does good. This notion may explain the tenor of his Champion article where he says, "we are much better and easier taught by the examples of what we are to shun, than by those which would instruct us what to pursue". (1) The whole article is written in a sustained ironical vein, and is, in effect, a scathing satire on those who claim that evil examples are instructive.

Fielding is aware of the difficulties involved in producing accurate and convincing portraits of human nature. This is evident in his famous invocation in the introductory chapter of Bk XIII of Tom Jones. Here, he calls for the assistance of genius, humanity, learning and experience, attributes essential for the realistic representation of character. To him, realism means a close adherence to the true and observed facts about human character. Man, he observes,

is the highest subject (unless on very extraordinary occasions indeed) which presents itself to the pen of our historian, or of our poet; and, in relating his actions, great care is to be taken that we do not exceed the capacity of the agent we describe. (2)

On the whole, he prides himself on his ability to re-

1) The Champion (June 10, 1740).
2) Tom Jones, VIII,i; Henley ed., IV,60.
present human nature truthfully, and considers this
the main distinction of the 'historian' as compared
with the writers of romances and classic epics. His
contemporaries were quick to applaud his novels as
lively portraits of the ordinary life around them, and
to note his departure from the conventional flights of
the romances. One admirer writes,

Mr. Fielding therefore, who sees all
the little Movements by which human
Nature is actuated, found it necessary
to open a new Vein of Humour, and thought
the only way to make them [the reading
public] lay down Cassandra, would be to
compile Characters which really existed,
equally entertaining with those Chimaeras
which were beyond Conception. (1)

With the critical reader and the rule of verisimilitude
constantly in mind Fielding frequently attempts to prove
the naturalness of his characters' behaviour. At times,
he anticipates some objection from the reader, and is
intent on explaining the motives justifying such behaviour.
An instance of this is his explanation of the motives
underlying Tom's irresponsible conduct with Molly Seagrim
immediately after expressing adoration for Sophia. Early
in the chapter, Fielding points out his loyalty to "that

1) Anon., An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded
by Mr. Fielding (London, 1751), 16. Cf. Warburton's
enthusiastic acclaim when he commends Fielding as
"the foremost among those who have given a faithful
and chaste copy of life and manners" quoted by G.M.
historic truth to which we profess so inviolable an attachment". (1) After dramatizing the episode he explains:

Some of my readers may be inclined to think this event unnatural. However, the fact is true; and perhaps may be sufficiently accounted for by suggesting that Jones probably thought one woman better than none, and Molly as probably imagined two men better than one. Besides the before-mentioned motive assigned to the present behaviour of Jones, the reader will be likewise pleased to recollect in his favour, that he was not at this time perfect master of that wonderful power of reason which so well enables grave and wise men to subdue their unruly passions.... Wine now totally subdued this power in Jones ... (2)

At other times he deigns no explanation. For example, he feels that some readers may consider it 'absurd' and 'monstrous' that Sophia is more offended at the freedoms she thinks Jones has taken with her name than at his adultery with Mrs. Waters. Here, Fielding comments,

But so matters fell out, and so I must relate them; and if any reader is shocked at their appearing unnatural, I cannot help it. I must remind such persons that I am not writing a system, but a history, and I am not obliged to reconcile every matter to the received notions concerning truth and nature. (3)

1) **Tom Jones**, V,x; Henley ed., III,256.
2) **Ibid.**, V,x; Henley ed., III,258.
3) **Ibid.**, XII,viii, Henley ed., IV,337.
Thus, it is not 'conventional' truth that Fielding purports to communicate, for this may be tarnished by general misconceptions, and lead to faulty and immoral practice. Rather, he professes to draw character and conduct no matter how odd they may seem. Again, he refers to this point when he comments on the lieutenant's care to secure Northerton before attending the wounded Tom. Fielding attempts to forestall any censure by remarking:

> We would have these gentlemen [the critics] know we can see what is odd in characters as well as themselves, but it is our business to relate facts as they are; which, when we have done, it is the part of the sagacious reader to consult the original book of nature whence every passage in our work is transcribed, though we quote not always the particular page for its authority. (1)

Fielding's persistent assertion that his characters are taken from life stems largely from a dominant urge to convince, and is consonant with his conception of the novel as a medium of instruction and entertainment. On the whole, the memorable characters of his novels justify this claim, and attest to his vast experience of human nature. Many of his characters seem to have been modelled on people personally known to him, and he himself admits

1) Ibid., VII,xii; Henley ed., IV, 37.
in Joseph Andrews that there is "scarce a character produced" which is not taken from his own observation and experience. (1) His emphasis on the importance of experience for the writer, for the character, and by implication, for the reader, reflects the strong contemporary interest in the educational value of experience, an interest reinforced and publicized by the moral teachings of the period, especially by those of Locke and Hume. (2)

Fielding's confidence in his superiority as a realistic novelist is accompanied with an awareness of the problems facing him. "In reality", he writes in Tom Jones, "true nature is as difficult to be met with in authors as the Bayonne ham, or Bologna sausage, is to be found in the shops" (3), and in Amelia he refers to that "strict adherence to universal truth which we profess above all other historians". (4) The term 'uni-

2) Vide Kenneth Maclean, John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century, op. cit., 59-60. Howard O. Brogan classes Tom Jones with Tristram Shandy and The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, and considers the three novels "critiques of empirical educational theory"; "Fiction and Philosophy in the Education of Tom Jones, Tristram Shandy, and Richard Feverel", College English, XIV, 1952, 114-49. For Hutcheson's and Hume's emphasis on the value of experience; vide supra, Ch. II.
3) I, i; Henley ed. III, 18-19.
4) II, ii; Maynadier ed., VII, 80. The word 'universal' does not appear in Henley's ed., VI, 75.
versal' here points out Fielding's conception of realism. In effect, he is more of an Aristotelian, imitating life through a method of selection, shaping his material in such a way as to project the universal characteristics of men and women. This method is explained in Joseph Andrews:

... I declare here, once for all, I describe not men, but manners; not an individual but a species. Perhaps it will be answered, Are not the characters taken from life? To which I answer in the affirmative; nay, I believe I might aver that I have writ little more than I have seen. The lawyer is not only alive, but hath been so these four thousand years. (1)

Fielding's distinction as a pioneer novelist rests largely on his providing, for the first time in English fiction, a coherent and workable theory of character (2), and on rendering, through the medium of his art, a multitude of vigorous and faithful portraits of ordinary men and women. His greatest achievement lies in his able depiction of character: for it is Fielding's characters that have a lasting impression on the memory, after reading the novels. F. Homes Dudden well observes:

1) Ibid., III,i; Henley ed., I, 215.
it is as novels of character that Fielding's books preeminently excite our interest. Such a collection of human figures - so solid and real, so vital, so varied - is not to be found in the works of any earlier English writer, except Shakespeare. The delineation is masterly. (1)

To achieve this effect of vividness and clarity, so essential to his moral purpose, Fielding resorts to an extensive use of contrast, a most appropriate method for satire. His novels abound in scenes where good-natured characters confront their ill-natured counterparts. In *Joseph Andrews* the scenes in the Tow-wouses' inn afford many an example. The highly dramatized scene between the charitable Mr. Tow-wouse and his ill-natured, greedy wife concerning the naked and wounded Joseph is reminiscent of Fielding's early stage technique, and reflects the sharp opposition in his mind between virtue and vice, benevolence and harmful egoism. (2) In *Tom Jones* the most obvious antithesis between characters is the moral opposition consistently emphasized between Tom and Blifil. As in *Joseph Andrews*, contrast is here utilized as a highly functional method. Early in the novel Fielding depicts the scene when the baby (Tom) is first discovered


between the Squire's bed-sheets. (1) Allworthy is all compassion, benevolence and good-nature, and he is therefore eager to help the helpless baby, while Mrs. Wilkins is all hypocrisy, brutality and 'worldly' prudence. Allworthy is sincere, 'candid', and motivated by genuine feeling, Mrs. Wilkins dissembles, calculates and gloats over the miseries of others. What she cares for is an externally prescribed system of behaviour in order to avoid social disapproval. The first thing she does is to heap abuse on the mother and demand that the latter be committed to Bridewell; then she expresses disgust at the very sight of the baby, "Faugh! how it stinks! It doth not smell like a Christian", and advises that it be laid in the rain and wind. She calls that discharging her "duty in taking proper care of it". In this and in numerous other scenes, Fielding

so obviously has his eye firmly on the characters, the outlines are so notably prominent, the behaviour deliberate, the control strongly exercised even when the outlines are farcical. His method deals particularly well with sharp formal oppositions of character or with symmetrical points of view in distinct antithesis. (2)

2) A.R. Humphreys, "Fielding's Irony: Its Methods and Effects", RES, XVIII (April, 1942), 193.
The outlines, motives, behaviour and conversation of Fielding's characters are dependent on and inseparable from their leading moral qualities. They are mainly types of good-nature or ill-nature, benevolence or disruptive self-love, and yet each is individualized and has a life completely its own. Each represents a particular plane of virtue and vice, and is so brilliantly drawn and juxtaposed that it stands out, differentiated from the rest. Thus, Mrs. Slipslop in *Joseph Andrews*, for instance, is unique in her distortion of body and language, in her hypocrisy, egoism, and lust. Her affected haughtiness and prudery are different from those of Miss Grave-airs, and her lust for Joseph is distinguished from that of Lady Booby. She is markedly different from her counterpart in *Tom Jones*, Mrs. Deborah Wilkins, though both belong to the same class and share the common denominator of ill-nature. Again, each of the relatively large number of innkeepers and their wives who people the novels (especially in *Tom Jones*) is carefully personalized. Most of these are greedy, egoistic and uncharitable, but each is so skilfully and economically drawn that he or she is easily distinguished from the others. The same applies to Fielding's portraits of the 'great and good' men of
the novels. Here, his attention to the representation of generic moral qualities is coupled with his ability to endow each portrait with specific distinctive traits. Though these characters exemplify Fielding's ideal of a moral constitution embracing both good-nature and wisdom—an ideal that has not changed during his career as a novelist—and though they are accorded the same primary functions of the good example, the benevolent friend, and the guiding counsellor, each is so conceived as to be plainly different from the rest. Thus Parson Adams is easily distinguishable from Squire Allworthy, the Squire from Dr. Harrison, and all are obviously different from Heartfree. Fielding carefully individualizes each, consciously attempting to impregnate it with the dual force of the ideal and the real, the general and the particular, the typical and the individual.
Fielding's portrayal of good-natured characters deserves further notice. This is necessary for a fuller appreciation of their function as embodiments of his positive moral thesis, and for noting the progression of his art toward a more realistic, and thus more satisfactory, depiction of the good man. On the whole, they constitute the mainstay of the novels, and are intended as the norm against which all other characters should be placed and judged. Hence Fielding's persistent efforts to vindicate their conduct and to convince the reader of their moral distinction. They are essential in dramatizing his main theme: helping to make the good man wise. (1) Jonathan Wild apart, each novel utilizes the mentor-disciple formula which corresponds to the author-reader relationship as Fielding conceives of it. And though each novel has its specific themes and emphases (2), these are

1) Cf. Dedication to Tom Jones, Henley ed., III, 12.

2) Thus in Jonathan Wild the emphasis is on politics and politicians and on greatness versus goodness; in Joseph Andrews there is special stress on the duty and the good character of the clergy and the importance of chastity and innocence; in Tom Jones concern with education and social experience is especially pronounced; in Amelia there is particular emphasis on married life and the remedy of social evils. W.L. Cross suggests that Amelia may be a fictional representation of the concern for the social conditions Fielding previously dealt with in his Enquiry into the Increase of Robbers, The History of Henry Fielding, II, 312-13.
often interwoven with, and made subservient to the major purpose of demonstrating the progress of the good-natured hero. (1)

Fielding's preoccupation with the needs and fortunes of the good-natured man dates from his early career as a dramatist. His portrayal of the good man then, as later, emphasizes the need for prudence, the quality of the mind that ensures skill in the practical affairs of life, and calls for careful self-examination and control through reason. As he progresses in his writing career, his emphasis on the necessity of prudence becomes more felt, and his portraits of the good-natured man become more and more realistic. In the play, The Fathers or the Good-Natured Man (2) Boncour is a stock portrait of the naive good-natured but imprudent man who illustrates Fielding's endorsement of Horace's dictum: "Excess ... even in the pursuit of virtue will lead a wise and good man into folly". (3) Fielding's moral attitudes and methods are here bared to their essentials. His satire holds up to ridicule both the avarice of Valence and the erring imprudence of Boncour. The latter is made the bubble of the wily Valence, of his own

1) Except in Jonathan Wild which deals mainly with the progress of the 'great' Wild.

2) Staged and published posthumously (1778); according to Austin Dobson, Fielding had it by him unfinished in 1742; Fielding, (London, 1907, 2nd edn.), 94.

3) The Covent Garden Journal, No. 55 (July 18, 1752).
termagent wife, his children and his friends. (1) Fielding's method of sharp contrasts is evident in setting off Boncour's one-sided good-nature against the wickedness of Valence and the prudence of Sir George. The Knight's good-nature is combined with a show of toughness which allows him to tell a man "he deserved to be hanged when he ought to have been broke on the wheel" (that is, he deserves to be executed, though not cruelly so), or to refuse to go to law with a debtor on the grounds that the expense would not be worth it. (2)

In this play, Sir George approaches Fielding's ideal of the 'great and good man', the wise counsellor and benevolent friend of the later novels. In effect, he is all these when he condemns the indulgence that has resulted in spoiling the Boncours, and when he saves his brother from impending ruin. Boncour may think,

I had rather be the bubble of other men's will than my own; for ... whatever impositions knavery puts upon others, it puts greater on itself. (3)

but Fielding clearly prefers such good-natured prudence and circumspection as Sir George's. Towards the end of the play, Boncour demonstrates that he has benefited

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1) Vide, e.g., the opening scene where Boncour is wrongly upbraided by his wife, and his innocent protests of sincerity and good intentions, The Fathers, I, i; Henley ed., XII, 157-58.

2) Ibid., 210.

3) Ibid., 187.
from his experience. There is a notable increase in his resistance to the demands of his family, and particularly to those of his affected, self-loving wife. Throughout the larger part of the play his portrait is necessarily one-sided, it lacks in depth and appears almost unreal. He is too simple and good-natured to be living in Fielding's London. After his experience, he ceases to be ridiculous, and seems to gain in stature. But his character remains, on the whole, a stock portrayal of goodness, without real dimension, analysis, or complexity.

In his preface to *Jonathan Wild* Fielding states for the first time his conception of the good man, as distinct from the 'great' and the 'great and good man', a conception it will be his literary career henceforth to dramatize in fiction. Originally intended as a polemic piece, *Jonathan Wild* concentrates more on the callousness of the so-called great man and thus, as a whole, tends to define the character of the good man negatively. Here Fielding, in the more free medium of fiction, sets out to give imaginative expression to astute vice striving to overpower the natural elements of good in society. It is a markedly allegorical novel where the characters
take on a symbolic simplicity. (1) Wild and Heartfree are personifications of abstractions and rarely exist in real life. They represent the polarity between greatness and goodness and do not allow for realistic portrayal. The strong contrast the novel requires has to be sustained. Thus, if 'prudence' and 'parts' are the distinguishing qualities of Wild, their absence must distinguish Heartfree. Fielding's sense of the verisimilar, however, impels him to write of Wild that he had only enough of that 'meanness' i.e. benevolent impulses, "to make him partaker of the imperfection of humanity, instead of the perfection of diabolism" (2), and of Heartfree, that Wild was forced to remember that his faults were rather in his heart than in his head; that, though he was so mean a fellow that he was never capable of laying a design to injure any human creature, yet was he by no means a fool, not liable to any gross imposition, unless where his heart betrayed him. (3)

2) Joaathan Wild, I,i; Henley ed.;II,4.
3)Ibid.II,ii; Henley ed., II,58.
Such realistic touches are scarce in the novel, and the characters of Wild and Heartfree remain for the most part rather flat personifications of astute evil and innocent good-nature.

In this novel, Fielding elaborates the moral message that pervades his writings: he expounds the dangers threatening the good-natured man's innocence and his need for experience so that he may not become the victim of the unscrupulous. Heartfree, who was of that sort of men whom experience only, and not their own natures, must inform that there are such things as deceit and hypocrisy in the world, and who, consequently, are not at five-and-twenty so difficult to be imposed upon as the oldest and most subtle. (1)

At times, Fielding attempts to tone down Heartfree's shortcomings to the extent of contradicting himself. For instance, he defends Heartfree's frank openness and simplicity (2) and even credits him with a good head. (3) This appears to conflict with his ironic description of Heartfree as one

of the pitiful order of mortals who are in contempt called good-natured; being indeed sent into the world by nature with the same design with which

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1) II,i; Henley ed., II, 52.
3) Vide supra. 352.
men put little fish into a pike-pond, in order to be devoured by that voracious water hero. (1)

The part Heartfree plays in the novel imposes certain restrictions. Fielding's professed intention of eulogizing roguery makes it necessary that Heartfree does not have courage or parts. Like Boncour, he is the passive victim of his own innocence and simplicity. Both characters lack the amiable follies and passions that would make them "partake of the imperfection of humanity."

Their reality suffers because of the limited functions accorded them by the author. They are one-sided and static, each being more of a symbol than a man.

In *Joseph Andrews*, the portrayal of the good man is more realistic and convincing. The prominent good men here, Parson Adams and Joseph, spring to life displaying a fulness and vigour that are wanting in Fielding's previous portraits of good men. His invention is now focussed on two good-natured heroes, and this allows him more scope to explore and dramatize various facets of their characters. Fielding renders them frankly human and alive by endowing each with several individualizing traits, and by effectively depicting their frailties as well as their virtues. Thus, the quixotic Adams combines

a glowing religious fervour and an active benevolence with a laughable ignorance of the world, an amusing absent-mindedness, and a vain insistence on his own abilities as scholar, teacher, and preacher. (1) Early in the novel, Joseph's dominant passions of good-nature and chastity are alloyed with immaturity and impulsiveness. These find expression in his susceptibility to the influence of the Town as represented by his liveried colleagues (2), and in venting his wrath upon the thieves he cannot forgive. (3) The other good-natured characters in the novel, though they are not drawn at length, often display a marked mixture of good and bad qualities. Such, for instance, is the postillion who takes pity on Joseph and willingly parts with his only coat, but is later deported for robbing a hen-roost. (4) Again, Betty the chamber-maid has "good-nature, generosity, and compassion", but "unfortunately", these are hampered by lust. (5)

Parson Adams and Joseph are not represented simply as passive victims of a predominantly corrupt world; the positive sides of their natures are revealed and emphasized.

1) Vide, infra, 359f.
2) I, iv; Henley ed., I, 34.
3) I, xiii, Henley ed., I, 72.
4) I, xii, Henley ed., I, 64.
in forceful dialogue and lively action. (1) Both deal vigorously with the world around them, upholding true religion and virtue, and repelling all forms of self-love, hypocrisy, and affectation. Adams does not take inhumanity or oppression lightly. His responses to these are quick and forceful. He wins the readers affection partly because his expectations are noble, and partly because (like Don Quixote again) he hurls himself upon the oppressor thinking only of the blows his two fists or his crabstick will deliver, and nothing of those he will receive. (2)

He goes about in the world with keen relish and curiosity, and his resourcefulness is manifest throughout the book. He emerges victorious from almost every fight, and is shown, towards the end of the novel, to be leading a happy domestic and social life despite his meagre annual income. Both Adams and Joseph are equipped with spiritual, moral, and physical qualities that render them capable of grappling with the evils that confront them. Adams is not merely the poor English parson on his way to and

1) Instances of this abound in the novel. A few of these are: Adams' struggle with the inhuman host (Ibid.,II,v; Henley ed., I, 137-38), his argument with Barnabas (Ibid., I, xvii; Henley ed., I, 93-97), his denunciation of Peter Pounce's view of charity, followed by the Parson's jumping from the chariot (Ibid., III, xiii; Henley ed., I, 309-12), his argument with Trulliber (Ibid., II, xiv; Henley ed., I, 187-93) the scene of ducking the 'roasting' squire into the tub (Ibid., III, vii; Henley ed., I, 275-84), and Adams' dialogue with Lady Booby (Ibid., IV, ii; Henley ed., I, 318-20). Vide, also, Joseph's defence of his chastity in the famous dialogue between him and Lady Booby (Ibid., I, v; Henley ed., I, 36-39) and his defence of Fanny (Ibid., III, ix, IV, xiv; Henley ed., I, 291-93, 382).

from the Town, he is also Abraham the Patriarch tending his flock, with pronounced religious and moral principles, a vast learning and a powerful physique. Joseph, like his Biblical prototype, is both handsome and chaste. He confounds the attempts on his chastity, and, like his mentor utilizes his moral and physical strength in defending himself and in doing good. Both are militant in the cause of virtue and religion. (1) They are Galahads in their own right, seeking a better world, not only in a specific time and place, but for all time and wherever human nature exists. Their journey is not simply one of 'true-to-life' adventures. It is fundamentally a moral journey that achieves a symbolic significance. The heroes, too, are not simply true-to-life characters; each functions with the full force of the real and the ideal, the man of flesh and blood, and the exalted symbol. (2)

The character of Parson Adams towers above all other characters in the novel, and has a unique and palpable reality of its own. It stands out as a permanent testimony of Fielding's genius, and of the energy

1) Ernest A. Baker rightly describes Adams as "a knight in the finest sense of the word, and he has a mission, not to uphold a defunct ideal, but to teach and in his whole conduct exemplify the standards of primitive Christianity, unadulterated by the compromises which the world has tempered its idealism.", History of the English Novel (London, 1930), IV, 93.

and creative ability he bestows upon the portrayal of the good man. It is, indeed, a labour of love worthy of the liberal acclaim it has merited for over two centuries. According to Sir Walter Scott, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, and several commentators of more recent date, Parson Adams is the greatest character in English fiction. His appeal far exceeds that of any other good-natured personage in Fielding's novels. Fielding himself appears to have a special regard for his masterly creation. He makes use of Adams' sound judgement in A Journey from this World to the Next, and prints several long letters in the True Patriot where Adams is made to comment on current affairs. (1) In Tom Jones, Adams replaces Thwackum in Allworthy's household, and is so admired by Sophia that she decides he should be tutor to her children. (2) In Joseph Andrews, the reader senses the marked delight, the high spirits, and sustained verve which inform the portrait of the parson. It is as if Fielding himself were discovering Adams and following his fortunes for the first time. This adds to the freshness and vivacity that permeate the whole novel.

1) A Journey from this World, Henley ed.,II,212; The True Patriot, No.7 (December 17, 1745) and No.13 (January 28, 1746). Adams is mentioned in No.11 (January 14, 1746) and No.23 (April 8, 1746), Henley ed., XIV, 40-41.

2) Tom Jones, XVIII, Chapter the last, Henley ed., V, 371. There is also a reference to Adams in the Prologue to The Wedding Day (1743), Henley ed., XII, 68.
The character of Adams is the product of a pre-occupying moral vision, an all embracing humanity, and a rich comic invention. The parson embodies Fielding's conceptions of Christian benevolence, practical charity and good works, conceptions often reiterated by the Latitudinarian divines and moralists of the day. (1) He also embodies some of the weaknesses of which human beings are bound to partake. He is "a man of good sense, good parts, and good nature; but was at the same time as entirely ignorant of the ways of this world as an infant just entering it could possibly be". (2) Fielding makes him memorable through vivid description, sharp, telling contrasts, and a brilliant manipulation of dramatic effects.

There is a wealth of detail about Adams' appearance, his physical strength, his idiosyncrasies, and his moral excellence. He is depicted with a tattered cassock hanging below his short, white coat, his knuckles are no less than those of an ox and are often used to lay the ill-natured sprawling on the floor. (3) His great strength is also dramatized in the scene where he and Joseph engage a whole hunt in battle. (4) Such strength,

Fielding carefully points out, is used only to fend off aggressive physical attacks. For, "nothing could provoke Adams to strike but an absolute assault on himself or his friend." (1) Adams, in fact, combines peace and piety with the righteous pugnacity of a formidable opponent in a brawl. He is also a scholar well versed in the ancient authors, but ignorant of the works of the 'moderns', except for Addison's Cato and Steele's The Conscious Lovers, both of which he finds "fit for a Christian to read". (2) The ascendance of Steele's moral teaching in Fielding's mind finds expression in the Parson's significant remark "I must own, in the latter, there are some things almost solemn enough for a sermon". (3) He can remember long pieces from Aeschylus, Homer, and Horace, but forgets his own sermons, his horse, and his money. His confidence in his own competence as teacher and preacher betrays a touch of vanity that Fielding delights in exposing. Adams "thought a schoolmaster the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest of all schoolmasters, neither of which points he would have given up to Alexander the Great at the head of his

2) Ibid., III,xi; Henley ed., p301.
3) Ibid., Loc.cit.
army". (1) As for his sermons, he is sure to sell them for an immense sum of money. (2) His firm belief in his absolute spiritual and moral authority at times tempts him to apply rigid moral theories without regard to natural human passions. This is humourously dramatized in the famous scene where he exhorts Joseph to control his love, and moderate his haste for marrying Fanny. Adams says,

"You are too much inclined to passion, child, and have set your affections so absolutely on this young woman, that if G- required her at your hands, I fear you would reluctantly part with her. Now, believe me, no Christian ought so to set his heart on any person or thing in this world, but that, whenever it shall be required or taken from him in any manner by Divine Providence, he may be able, peaceably, quietly, and contentedly, to resign it." At which words one came hastily in and acquainted Mr. Adams that his youngest son was drowned. He stood silent a moment, and soon began to stamp about the room and deplore his loss with the bitterest agony. (3)

Adams has other minor lapses. Such, for instance, is his faith in the practical value of the wisdom culled from books, a faith that leads him to affect the worldly wisdom he so notably lacks. (4) Fielding is here giving

1) Ibid., III,v; Henley ed.,I,263.
2) Ibid., I, xvi; Henley ed.,I,91.
3) Ibid., IV,viii; Henley ed.,I,351.
4) Ibid., II,xvi,xvii; Henley ed.,I,203,208-210 respectively.
dramatic expression to his view that theory and practice are not the same, and that actual experience of the world is of paramount importance to the good man. Another lapse of the parson is his belief in the superiority of private education, a view Fielding tends to oppose both through Joseph's argument in favour of public schools, and through the satirical attack on the 'roasting' squire's private education. (1)

Such failings and idiosyncrasies emphasize Adams' humanity, and contribute to the richness and vitality of his character. They also set off his Christian heroism, active benevolence, and warm, generous heart. The good-natured humour their dramatization evokes renders him a charming, lovable figure, and wins the reader completely to his side. Adams can fall in a pigsty, struggle against a whole hunt, or suffer boorish practical jokes without diminishing his spiritual or moral stature. His function as chief moral exemplar is not restricted because of his exposure to mockery and indignity. Indeed, it is reinforced by the sharp moral confrontations such exposure entails. These confrontations are humorously dramatized with an ease and wealth of invention that only Fielding

1) Ibid., III,v,vii; Henley ed., L260-64, 275 ff. respectively.
can so brilliantly display. They constitute, in great part, the staple of the novel, and the moral issues they enact are never out of sight. Fielding skilfully manipulates his artistic media to deepen the moral contrast in these scenes. His swift, graphic strokes, his homely imagery, and his mastery of dialogue and stage techniques are all utilized in the opposition of Adams to such ill-natured, self-centered hypocrites as Peter Pounce, Mrs. Tow-wouse and Parson Trulliber. The highly dramatized 'interview' between the two parsons illustrates this point. Here, the dominant, shaping idea is the exposure of a self-interested, uncharitable hypocrite, who is not only a bad Christian, but a bad clergyman as well. The scene opens with Trulliber "stript into his waistcoat, with an apron on, and a pail in his hand, just come from serving his hogs". (1) Fielding's stage experience shows in the great care he takes to convey a visual picture of his characters' appearance. In this case Trulliber's is as repellent as his immoral and irreligious practices. At the start his corpulence is satirized in an unlaboured, seemingly harmless manner, but Fielding soon conjures a distorted picture of the mercenary parson. Thus,

1) Ibid. II, xiv; Henley ed., I, 186.
Mr. Trulliber was a parson only on Sundays, but all the other six might more properly be called a farmer ... The hogs fell chiefly to his care ... he was liable to many jokes, his own size being, with much ale, rendered little inferior to that of the beasts he sold. (1)

And, in an easy, well modulated conversational tone,

Fielding proceeds to ridicule Trulliber's ugliness in a sequence of derogatory visual images:

He was indeed one of the largest men you should see, and could have acted the part of Sir John Falstaff without stuffing. Add to this that the rotundity of his belly was considerably increased by the shortness of his stature, his shadow ascending very near as far in height, when he lay on his back, as when he stood on his legs. His voice was loud and hoarse, and his accents extremely broad. To complete the whole, he had a stateliness in his gait, when he walked, not unlike that of a goose, only he stalked slower. (2)

The laughter here is pejorative; it succeeds in breeding antipathy and contempt. There is a marked difference between Fielding's gibes at Trulliber and his like, and the sympathetic, generous treatment of Adams, whose innocence and benevolence are constantly eulogized. Thus, when Trulliber, blinded by greed, pushes the good parson into the sty Fielding writes:

Adams, whose natural complacence was beyond any artificial, was obliged to comply before he was suffered to explain himself; and, laying hold on one of their

1) Ibid.
2) Ibid. ,Henley ed.,I,186-7.
tails, the unruly beast gave such a sudden spring, that he threw poor Adams all along in the mire. Trulliber, instead of assisting him to get up, burst into a laughter, and entering the sty, said to Adams, with some contempt, "Why, dost not know how to handle a hog?" and was going to lay hold of one himself, but Adams, who thought he had carried his complacence far enough, was no sooner on his legs than he escaped out of the reach of the animals, and cried out, "Nihil habeo cum porcis: I am a clergyman, sir, and am not come to buy hogs." (1)

The dialogue, throughout, is natural and functions in complete harmony with the moral sentiments dramatized. It has an engaging artlessness, and, by its appropriateness to the respective characters, accentuates the basic moral theme. The picture is completed by Mrs. Trulliber who, shorn of her will, stands behind her husband's chair echoing his rebukes and exclaiming, "Ifacks, a good story, to preach to my master!" (2)

The portrait of Adams is an artistic demonstration of Fielding's arguments that laughter is compatible with morality, and that virtue cannot be made ridiculous. (3) The reader's laughter at Adams' victimization does not impair the affection and respect felt for the parson's goodness. It is actuated by Adams' eccentricities, by the intrinsic funniness of the situations Fielding contrives, and by the incongruity resulting from contrasting a world of affectation, hypocrisy, egoism, and false appearances.

1) Ibid. 187-8.
2) Ibid. 192.
to the parson's world of Christian and moral absolutes. Adams is funny, and is meant to be so; but the reader is aware, at least subconsciously, of a deeper level of meaning. Even as he laughs, he is intended to ask himself: is it not disturbing that a truly good Christian in the practical world should be abused and maltreated? The laughter at Adams himself is not so much censorious as endearing. For the reader knows all the time that Adams, like Sir Roger de Coverley, Don Quixote, and Dostoevsky's 'Idiot', Prince Myshkin, is the author's friend, who walks about exposing human corruption. The parson's simplicity and want of worldly knowledge, an essential ingredient of good-nature in the raw, cannot be a source of ridicule in the ordinary sense. In 1754 Sarah Fielding found it necessary to defend Fielding's conception of Adams in the face of critics who considered the parson to be a ridiculous and contemptible figure. (1) She

1) Vide, e.g., Allan Ramsay An Essay on Ridicule (1753), 78, and Arthur Murphy's attack on Adams in Gray's-Inn Journal (1756 ed.) Nos. 96 and 97. By 1762, however, Murphy has changed his view. In his essay on Fielding he accepts Adams, and notes that his learning and honesty "command our esteem and respect; while his simplicity and innocence in the ways of men provoke our smiles by the contrast they bear to his real intellectual character, and conduce to make him in the highest manner the object of mirth, without degrading him in our estimation." He finds Adams "almost a rival of the renowned Don Quixote". "An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding Esquire", in Fielding's Works, 1762, I, 36. In 1810 Mrs. Barbauld praised Adams as a lovable and laughable figure. She commends Fielding's "great skill in making us laugh so heartily at a character, and yet keeping it above contempt". The British Novelists, XVIII; XIV.
devotes an introductory chapter of The Cry to refute theories which debase Adams, and emphasizes that the "noble simplicity of his mind, with the other innumerable beauties in his character" should not be overlooked. The greatest of men may have "oddnesses and peculiarities" which actuate sheer mirth and pleasantry,

but the honest laughs they create in the judicious and benevolent mind are such, as their own candor (if they are truly great men) will readily excuse; and their good humour, if they have any, will then induce them to join the mirthful chorus; and the result must be the charm of universal cheerfulness and innocent mirth. (1)

Fielding's skill in fusing the humorous and the morally earnest finds brilliant expression in the character of Adams. Here, there is a mixture of the serious and the light-hearted, the sublime and the earthy, the perfect and the imperfect. It is a complex of rich humane elements, full of colour and vitality, the components so artistically balanced as to give the reader the sense of spontaneity and easy artlessness. The elements of Adams' character, his vulnerable good-nature, his vanities and idiosyncrasies, his cheerful, and optimistic outlook, and his pronounced Christian

fervour, are so convincingly dramatized that Adams emerges with a palpable reality of his own. (1) He is, indeed, Fielding's fullest personification of good-nature,(2) and the main vehicle communicating the novel's dominant ethical themes.

Fielding is not content to give his readers a vivid portrait of Christian heroism, he is also keen on demonstrating the process of attaining such goodness. He invents Joseph, the disciple who carries the burden of demonstrating the progress of the good man's growth and development. Thus Adams is not only upheld as the good father, the good husband, and the exemplar of Christian benevolence, he is shown primarily to be the good clergyman and the good counsellor. It is he who initially supervises Joseph's religious education, teaches him reading and writing, and plays a paramount part in helping him come of age morally. Joseph, of course, has the innate good-nature and original perspicacity that make him capable of moral development. Through these, and through his mentor's advice, his character gains in depth of insight and attains considerable maturity. This mentor - disciple relationship

2) Cf. M.C. Battestin's detailed account of the function of parson Adams in relation to the meaning and structure of the novel, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, ch. VI, 85 ff. et passim. He well argues the case for Adams' embodiment of the essential characteristics of good-nature as preached by the Latitudinarians, iii et passim.
(to be utilized again in Tom Jones and Amelia) is intended, together with the moral pilgrimage theme, to induce the reader to live, vicariously, Joseph's experiences, and partake of his progress to moral betterment.

The portrayal of Joseph serves also as a reinforcement of both the comic and moral strains of the novel. In the early stages, the reader enjoys the fun made of the male Pamela, and particularly the famous seduction scene in Lady Booby's bedroom. But Fielding is also keen on depicting the chaste footman's development into maturity, and on delegating to him the functions of the author's spokesman and the counterbalance to the tutor who, despite his good heart and good head, leans heavily on classical readings, and is open to deception and misconceptions. (1) In such cases Joseph serves as commentator and even adviser, and half-way through the novel his independence and practical disposition are increasingly marked. Thus, as Dick Taylor well observes, the reader notes a sympathetic change and development in the character of Joseph:

1) E.g. Adams' error in judgement regarding the false promiser (II, xvi), his argument with the good-natured host regarding travel (Ibid.), and his views concerning education, and Joseph's defence of public schools (III, v). Fielding seems to support Joseph's view, judging from his comments and dramatization of the scenes with the 'roasting' squire (III, vii). Vide also Joseph's 'sermon' on charity (III, vii).
From Joey, the beautiful singer, and from Joseph the footman who is a paragon of male chastity, Fielding has brought Joseph Andrews a long way. Even against the engrossing figure of Adams, he has given Joseph a personality of his own, a stature and force and meaning in the novel which contribute to its thought and richness of characterization. (1)

Throughout the novel Joseph is consistently upheld as the embodiment of chastity, honesty, discernment, and healthy, passionate attachment to his beloved Fanny. In his capacities as a loyal servant, a dutiful son, and a good lover, he complements and reinforces the virtues of his master. They are the chief moral protagonists, utilized to illustrate the hypocrisy, greed and corruption of the world around them.

In *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* Fielding is still concerned with the portrayal of the good-natured man, both as a mature, 'great and good' Christian, and as a disciple wanting in experience, wisdom, and prudence. Here, Squire Allworthy and Dr. Harrison represent the sublime in human nature: greatness and goodness, and function as guards of virtue who insist upon the importance of prudence and worldly wisdom. Allworthy, for instance, on his supposed death-bed, warns Tom:

> I am convinced my child, that you have much goodness, generosity, and honour, in your temper if you will add prudence

and religion to these, you must be happy; for the three former qualities, I admit, make you worthy of happiness, but they are the latter only which will put you in possession of it. (1)

Squire Allworthy is represented as the epitome of the mature good-natured man. Fielding is rhapsodic when he describes the Squire's heart "that hungers after goodness" and his excellent mind in which "benevolent passions always ruled". (2) Allworthy has attained the golden mean, that balance and poise praised by the ancient philosophers, but he is first a Christian, and humanity and charity are the dominant rules of his life. "His mind was, indeed, tempered with that philosophy which becomes a man and a Christian. He affected no absolute superiority to all pleasure and pain, to all joy and grief; but was not at the same time to be discomposed and ruffled by every accidental blast, by every smile or frown of fortune." (3) His progress throughout the novel is emphasized by a series of dramatic illustrations of charitable, benevolent, and, in the circumstances, just and wise actions. Examples of these actions abound in the novel; the most prominent is the scene in his bedroom, when he first discovered the baby (Tom). (4)

3) Ibid., VI, iii; Henley ed., III, 283.
4) For the analysis of this scene vide supra 344-45.
Despite Fielding's direct description and imaginative rendering of the Squire's benevolence and wisdom, the character of Allworthy has suffered at the hands of several commentators on Tom Jones. F. Homes Dudden, for instance, finds that Allworthy is hardly satisfactory, even as a type of consummate virtue:

He is represented as the very incarnation of kindliness and goodness. But he is too dull and unintelligent to be altogether admirable. Though 'replete with benevolence' and ever 'ready to relieve the distresses of others', he has not the sense to confine his benefactions to deserving objects. He thus becomes the dupe of plausible hypocrites and adventurers, whom a man of moderate perspicacity would easily have seen through. Under their influence he is led to perpetrate even so great an act of injustice as the expulsion of Tom from his house without a full and thorough examination of the charges brought against him. (1)

Such charges deserve notice, for they bear upon Fielding's portrayal of the good man, and seem to detract from his achievement in Tom Jones as a whole.

It is true that Allworthy is deceived by scheming, hypocritical, and self-loving people such as Bridget, Captain Blifil, Thwackum, Square, and young Blifil. The deception, however, is not the outcome of Allworthy's lack of prudence, or of his being "too dull and unintelligent". Fielding anticipates objections to Allworthy's wisdom, and writes at length to ensure that the reader will not mistake

1) F. Homes Dudden, Henry Fielding, op.cit., II, 646.
his intentions. In the opening chapters of the novel, Allworthy is described as a man favoured by both nature and fortune. He has "solid understanding" (1), and, although he "had missed the advantage of a learned education", was "blest with vast natural abilities". (2) Fielding persistently justifies the reasonableness of every decision taken by the Squire. In incident after incident, he shows how such decisions are the most just, wise, and good under the circumstances. When Bridget and Captain Blifil successfully hide their 'amour' from the good man, Fielding explains, "Mr. Allworthy must have had the insight of the devil ... to have entertained the least suspicion of what was going forward". (3) Again, in the trial of Partridge for the paternity of Jones, Allworthy, "whose natural love of justice, joined to his coolness of temper, made him always a most patient magistrate in hearing all the witnesses which an accused person could produce in his defence", (4) had ample evidence for his decision of Partridge's guilt. Indeed, Fielding intervenes to explain that "whatever was the truth of the case, there was evidence more than sufficient to convict

2) Ibid., I, x; Henley ed., III, 47.
3) Ibid., I, xi; Henley ed., III, 56.
him before Allworthy; ... much less would have satisfied a bench of justices on an order of bastardy". (1) Here it is Fielding the lawyer defending a character very close to his heart. He explains Allworthy's acceptance of Thwackum as tutor in this way:

Thwackum, at his first arrival, was extremely agreeable to Allworthy; and indeed he perfectly answered the character which had been given to him. Upon long acquaintance, however, and more intimate conversation, this worthy man (Allworthy) saw infirmities in the tutor, which he could have wished him to have been without; though as those seemed greatly over-balanced by his good qualities, they did not incline Mr. Allworthy to part with him, nor would they indeed have justified such a proceeding; for the reader is greatly mistaken, if he conceives that Thwackum appeared to Mr. Allworthy in the same light as he doth to him in this history; and he is as much deceived, if he imagines that the most intimate acquaintance which he himself could have had with the divine would have informed him of those things which we, from our inspiration, are enabled to open and discover. Of readers, who, from such conceits as these, condemn the wisdom and penetration of Mr. Allworthy, I shall not scruple to say, that they make a very bad and ungrateful use of that knowledge which we have communicated to them. (2)

Fielding's exhortation to the reader with regard to a just interpretation of Allworthy's character is also evident in his comment on a most important episode: Tom's banishment by Allworthy. Here, it is noticeable that Jones offers no defence, and, indeed, his attitude in the circumstances is one of admitted guilt. Again, Fielding warns; "the reader must be very weak, if, when he considers the light in which Jones then appeared to

1) Ibid., II, vi; Henley ed., III, 89-90.
Mr. Allworthy, he should blame the rigour of his sentence." (1) The first four books of the novel contain several examples of the Squire's perfections. The trial of Jenny Jones reveals his deeply felt Christian convictions regarding the importance of chastity. Denouncing the crime of debauchery he says:

"The heinous nature of this offence must be sufficiently apparent to every Christian, inasmuch as it is committed in defiance of the laws of our religion, and of the express commands of Him who founded that religion ....

"For by it you are rendered infamous, and driven, like lepers of old, out of society; at least, from the society of all but wicked and reprobate persons; for no others will associate with you ... (2)

The strong, forceful language here, evident in the selection of adjectives, and the earnest, persuasive tone of the whole speech (which very much resembles a Latitudinarian sermon), reflect Allworthy's deep preoccupation with religious and moral issues. The rhetorical urgency and eloquence of this exhortation are combined with a rational element of deduction that can only be the outcome of a mature and perceptive mind. Jenny's intelligent reply and assurances were such that she gained credit with the worthy man, and he easily believed what she told him; for as she had disdained to excuse herself by a lie, and had hazarded his further

1) Ibid., VI, xi; Henley ed., III, 317.
2) Ibid., I, vii; Henley ed., III, 37.
displeasure in her present situation, rather than she would forfeit her honour or integrity by betraying another, he had but little apprehensions that she would be guilty of falsehood towards himself. (1)

Hence the justice of the Squire's decision of removing her "out of the reach of that obloquy she had incurred". (2)

His decision, after the trial of Partridge, again shows his just assessment in the circumstances. Fielding intervenes to explain that Allworthy's conception of mercy and justice was the right one:

for though Mr. Allworthy did not think, with some later writers, that mercy consists only in punishing offenders; yet he was as far from thinking that it is proper to this excellent quality to pardon great criminals wantonly, without any reason whatever. Any doubtfulness of the fact, or any circumstance of mitigation, was never disregarded: but the petitions of an offender, or the intercessions of others, did not in the least affect him. In a word, he never pardoned because the offender himself, or his friends, were unwilling that he should be punished. (3)

Allworthy is consistently portrayed as the heroic Christian, the good father, the dutiful brother, the just magistrate, and the good man whose benevolence reaches all those around him. He combines the functions of both spiritual and secular authority. As such, he is distinguished by rational and charitable moral insights.

In the novel, he is the antithesis of all Fielding's

1) Ibid., Henley ed., III, 41.
2) Ibid.
representations of greed, egoism, hypocrisy, and diabolism.

His central position with regard to the novel's meaning, and to Fielding's moral beliefs, is evident throughout: he is not merely the realization, in artistic terms, of Fielding's benevolent friend Ralph Allen; he provides the main element in the sharp moral confrontations dramatized by Fielding, the religious and ethical criterion by which the goodness of Tom and others is measured, and to which the depravity and hypocrisy of Blifil and his brood are contrasted. In this he is Fielding's mouthpiece, voicing and demonstrating such ideas as the nature and meaning of the terms charity, chastity, love, marriage, and the good woman. (1) Thus, "Love", he says,

However barbarously we may corrupt and pervert its meaning, as it is a laudable, is a rational passion, and can never be violent but when reciprocal; for though the Scripture bids us love our enemies, it means not with that fervent love which we naturally bear towards our friends; much less that we should sacrifice to them our lives, and what ought to be dearer to us, our innocence. (2)

When he praises the "quality" of Sophia, who represents Fielding's ideal of the perfect woman, he says,

I must use negatives on this occasion. I never heard anything of pertness, or what is called repartee, out of her mouth; no pretence to wit, much less to that kind of wisdom which is the result only of

1) For Allworthy's Latitudinarian conception of charity, vide his arguments, built into the structure of chapter v of the 2nd book. In this chapter "containing much matter to exercise the judgement and reflection of the reader", Allworthy explains to Captain Blifil the practical and active aspects of Christian charity.

2) Ibid., I, vii; Henley ed. III, 38.
great learning and experience, the affectation of which, in a young woman, is as absurd as any of the affectations of an ape. No dictatorial sentiments, no judicial opinions, no profound criticisms. Whenever I have seen her in the company of men, she hath been all attention, with the modesty of a learner, not the forwardness of a teacher. (1)

These virtues of the good woman, in addition to genuine good-nature, a dominant Christian frame of mind, and whole-hearted loyalty and love for her family, are frequently emphasized in Fielding's novels. (2) As for marriage, Allworthy holds that it should not be subject to the conventional mercenary and utilitarian considerations. He does not find any reason why he should object to his sister's choice, nor does he attempt to force the marriage between Blifil and Sophia: "I will never give my consent to any absolute force being put on her inclinations, nor shall you ever have her unless she can be brought freely to compliance" he tells Blifil. (3) All these aspects of his character are projected in brilliantly contrived scenes that form an inextricable part of the structure of Tom Jones. They are not alien or superimposed, nor are they shown to be unattainable signs of ideal heroism.

1) Ibid., XVII, iii; Henley ed., V, 255-56.
2) The prominent embodiments for these virtues are Sophia and Amelia. It is interesting to note that the theme of the good woman runs parallel to that of the good man in Fielding's novels and is inseparable from it. Fielding's satire directed at such characters as Bridget, Mrs. Slipslop, Lady Booby, the 'learned' Jenny Jones, and Mrs. Atkinson - confirms, in a negative way, his conception of the good woman stated above.
3) Tom Jones, XVI, vi; Henley ed. V, 227-29.
He is not meant to be a faultless paragon of virtue in the manner of Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison; nor do his superior qualities seem out of reach. Fielding upholds Allworthy as an example to be completely imitated, unlike Richardson who intends Sir Charles as a perfect gentleman to be endeavoured after. (1) 

Unlike Richardson, Allworthy is not self-conscious of goodness, natural endowments, or worldly position. He is not devoid of imperfection. That he is deceived by the devilish hypocrisy of Blifil for a long time is, in itself, an indication that Fielding takes care to depict him as a human being. Moreover, his vulnerability is essential to the structure of the novel, and to the demonstration of how human goodness operates, how it is attained, and how, supported with divine providence, it emerges triumphant in the end, and is quick to make restitution for any wrongs that hypocrisy and greed may bring about. If at times he is made the bubble of the vicious, it is evidence of their wickedness and not of his folly. "The prudence of the best of heads" Fielding insists, may be "defeated by the tenderness of the best of hearts". (2)

1) In the Postscript of his novel *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, entitled "A Concluding Note by the Editor", Richardson concedes that Sir Charles may be considered a perfect example and that his principles and conduct "cannot always be accommodated to particular imitation". In support of his protagonist, he quotes from Tillotson's *Sermon LVII*. Part of the quotation reads: "He that aims at the heavens, which yet he is sure to come short of, is like to shoot higher than he that aims at a mark within his reach." *The History of Sir Charles*
It has often been remarked that Allworthy is an allegorical figure, lacking in vigour. Such comments have as their bases the inevitable comparisons held between Allworthy on the one hand, and Parson Adams and Dr. Harrison on the other. It is true that the character of the Squire is generalized and functions on an allegorical plane. But this does not preclude that he is individualized and endowed with personal qualities, which make him operate on a realistic plane as well. For instance, he at times in an unconventional way which, as has been recently observed "marks him out not as an ideally conforming country squire but as one whose comportment is fearlessly individual, if not always clear­sighted". (1) It is also true that he does not have the vigour, vitality, and exuberence noticeable in the characters of Parson Adams, Tom Jones, or Squire Western. It should be noted, however, that Allworthy, unlike Adams and Western, is not a comic creation, nor is he intended to be the protagonist of Tom Jones. Fielding repeatedly underlines his gravity and serious-mindedness. This is consonant with his role in the novel as the guardian, counsellor, and spiritual father of Tom; and his sobriety and high-mindedness.

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(footnotes continued from the previous page)

2) Tom Jones, XVI, vi; Henley ed., V, 229.

1) Andrew Wright, Henry Fielding Mask and Feast (London, 1965), 160. For Allworthy's unconventionality, vide his attitude towards the marriage between his sister and Capt. in Blifil. Tom Jones, I, xii, and Wright's account, op. cit. 161.
are meant to set off the folly and imprudence of his disciple. As the high-minded exemplar of religion and morality he fits into the basic scheme of the novel. This is a very thorough contrast of social hypocritical, formal, and conventional behaviour, and genuine, deep-rooted Christian benevolence. (1) Allworthy's character, as portrayed, is essential to this scheme. If his portrait seems to be lacking in detail, this may be due to the very nature of his role as the 'great and good man'. For the portrayal of human weaknesses affords the moral artist richer and more varied scope than do human perfections. This, however, does not mean that the Squire is a static figure. Indeed, his presence is felt throughout the novel, mainly through his relationship with Tom. Fielding is careful to convey this living relationship throughout the novel, even when Allworthy is not actively taking part in the action. For, despite the hardships Tom struggles with during his peregrinations, and despite his distracting love, the thought of his benefactor is ever prominent in his mind.

1) Cf.: "The central theme in Fielding's work is the opposition between the flow of the soul - of selfless generosity - and the structures - screens, defenses, moat of indifference - that people build around themselves. The flow is the active energy of virtuous feeling; the structures are these forms that are a frozen travesty of authentic order." Martin Price, To the Palace of Wisdom, Studies in Order and Energy from Dryden to Blake; (New York, 1964), 286.
The touching scene between Tom and the Squire, after the discovery of Blifil's evil, is forcefully depicted by Fielding. Here, the language imparts Allworthy's cogency of reason and Tom's frankness and openness of regret:

After Allworthy had raised Jones from his feet, where he had prostrated himself, and received him into his arms, 'O my child!' he cried, 'how have I been to blame! how have I injured you! What amends can I ever make you for those unkind, those unjust suspicions which I have entertained, and for all the sufferings they have occasioned to you?' - 'Am I not now made amends?' cries Jones. 'Would not my sufferings, if they had been ten times greater, have been now richly repaid? O my dear uncle, this goodness, this tenderness, overpowers, unnmans, destroys me.... To be again restored to your presence, to your favour; to be once more thus kindly received by my great, my noble, my generous benefactor.' - 'Indeed, child,' cries Allworthy, 'I have used you cruelly.' (1)

These and the following lines constitute an orderly and compelling construct of dictum, where every term is well placed and fully expressive. The reader could almost hear the actual tones of voice and expression, the short sentences, exclamations, questions, and interjections have a force and vitality of their own.

And yet there is no sense of mechanical demonstration, as there would be, for instance in a speech by the 'philosopher' Square or his like. Here, there are no clichés, and the spontaneity of utterance and overflow of feeling convince the reader of the reality of

Allworthy's compassion and his nephew's adulation. The effect is enhanced by the many details of address, the repetition of which underlines the powerful and living relationship between benefactor and grateful recipient. Fielding's final justification regarding Allworthy's decision to banish Tom is voiced by the penitent protagonist:

'indeed, sir, you have used me nobly. The wisest man might be deceived as you were; and, under such a deception, the best must have acted just as you did. Your goodness displayed itself in the midst of your anger, just as it then seemed. I owe everything to that goodness, of which I have been most unworthy.' (1)

The character of Squire Western stands out in marked contrast to that of Allworthy. It is a unique, comic creation, depicted with a gusto and vivacity reminiscent of Joseph Andrews. It attests to Fielding's masterly power of invention, his profound humour, effortless handling of materials and rich varied effects. Western is a memorable portrait of the robust, hilarious, drinking, and hunting squire of 'Merry England'. He is a mixture of childish innocence and thoughtless tyranny. He is openly selfish and cruel, but he, at the same time, is endearingly simple, and a loving father. Despite his greed, self-love, pronounced animal appetites, and

1) Ibid. Henley ed., V, 346. The character of Tom Jones and its moral basis and implications have been discussed earlier. Vide chapters II, III, et passim.
imperious whims, he is an attractive figure. His great appeal to the reader is due to Fielding's conception of him as an essentially good man. True, he is portrayed as a boisterous, capering, thoughtless Jacobite squire with uncouth manners and gross talk. He is also depicted as a man of violent emotional outbursts, and capable of brutality. (1) But the reader is made aware that Western is the father of the exquisite, dutiful, and affectionate Sophia, and that he is utterly devoid of guile and malice. This distinguishes him from the host of calculating hypocrites with whom the novel teems. In the first part of the novel, he is admired for his simplicity, sportsmanship, and frank utterance. The truly winning quality is his just and sympathetic kindness to Tom Jones. Fielding renders this in more than one way. When Thwackum and Square defend Blifil's malicious act (releasing Sophia's bird) and compete in praising him, Western sides with Tom, and acts as Fielding's mouthpiece in denouncing the spiteful deed, and condemning the hollow learning and mistaken

1) Vide, Fielding's scathing depiction of his cruelty and insensitivity when he ruthless rejects the pleadings of his trembling, sobbing daughter. Tom Jones, XVI,ii; Henley ed., V,207-8. Here Fielding's prose is forceful, deliberate, and lashing, in the manner of Swift. The images used here are sinister, and reveal crystalized anger at the tyranny of those parents who force marriage on their daughters. The language is controlled and balanced, but has unusual intensity. It reflects the novelist's deep moral commitment.
judgement of the prejudi__ tutors: "I am sure I don't understand a word of this", he tells the debating disputants:

It may be learning and sense for aught I know; but you shall never persuade me into it. Pox! you have neither of you mentioned a word of that poor lad who deserves to be commended; to venture breaking his neck to oblige my girl was a generous-spirited action; I have learning enough to see that. D--n me, here's Tom's health! I shall love the boy for it the longest day I have to live. (1)

He is quick to realize Tom's benevolence and chivalrous nature, though, naturally, his love for his daughter plays a part in this. Again, it is the righteous "honest squire" who rushes to the defence of Tom during the fight with Thwackum and Blifil. (2) Thus, the spontaneous, simple, and just reactions of Western tend to the support of Tom, and in their spontaneity and simplicity achieve ends unattainable by the wicked and astute. Moreover, Fielding is careful to show that Western is capable of moral betterment and civilized behaviour. Towards the end of the novel the reader is given a very pleasant picture of the robust squire. Western has resigned the greater part of his estate to his son-in-law, is a frequent visitor of his daughter, and is so delighted with his grand-children "that he spends much of his time in the nursery, where he declares the tattling of his little grand-daughter, who is above a year and a half old,

1) Ibid., IV,iv; Henley ed., III, 155.
2) Ibid., V, xi; Henley ed., III, 263-4.
is sweeter music than the finest cry of dogs in England". (1)
This is quite a departure from the hardened, heavy-drinking, uncivilized Western of earlier chapters. It is noticeable that in the first part of the novel, before the 'artful' Mrs. Western sways him regarding the match between Sophia and Blifil, the squire's frank and hearty attitude is sympathetically accentuated; later, during the period of Sophia's resistance, his tyranny is emphasized. Thus, in so far as Western is aligned with Tom, Allworthy, and Sophia and exemplifies the spontaneous goodness of the heart and sound moral attitudes (2), he is good and wins the reader's sympathy; in so far as he is alien to the good characters, thwarting the love of the protagonists, he is brutal, self-loving, and unsympathetic.

Firmly rooted in the good world of Allworthy, Tom, and Sophia is the benevolent, courageous, and honourable Mrs. Miller. She is the personification of Fielding's idea of the good matron, the loyal friend, and the decent, simple, and cheerful heart. Her main function in the plot

1) Ibid., XVIII, Chapter the Last; Henley ed., V, 372-73.
2) As, for instance, his attitude towards duelling. The reader is meant to sympathize with Western's refusal to duel with Lord Fellamar. To describe his attitude as 'inglorious', as Dudden does, or to censure it, suspecting interpolation in the passages related to this attitude, as Scott does, is inconsistent with Fielding's intentions and his satire of this crime, particularly pronounced in Amelia. The meeting between Captain Egggle and the squire is a refreshing rendering of such satire. Henley ed. V, 200-5. Cf. Dudden, op.cit, II, 644.
is to illustrate the theme: "the good or evil we confer on others very often ... recoils on ourselves". (1) Both Allworthy and Tom bestow their beneficence on her and her family: Allworthy by his usual secretive charity and financial assistance, and Tom by saving her poor relative, Anderson, from hanging as a highwayman, and by saving her daughter Nancy from ruin. These good deeds are doubly repaid by her glowing gratitude, and by her intercession to reconcile Allworthy and Tom on the one hand, and Sophia and Tom on the other.

Fielding's presentation of the good woman is striking. The reader feels the passionate involvement of the author, his insistent moral commitment, and his preoccupation with the theme of the good heart. This is evident in the 'pathetic' scenes between Mrs. Miller and Sophia, and later between her and Allworthy. (2) Fielding introduces the good woman with an admirable mastery of economy:

Mr. Jones, then, had often heard Mr. Allworthy mention the gentlewoman at whose house he used to lodge when he was in town. This person, who, as Jones likewise knew, lived in Bond Street, was the widow of a clergyman, and was left by him at his decease in possession of two daughters and of a complete set of sermons. (3)

1) Ibid., XIV, vii; Henley ed., V, 121.
2) Ibid., XVII, vi and vii respectively.
Her virtues are both directly described and imaginatively rendered. Thus:

the widow had all the charms which can adorn a woman near fifty. As she was one of the most innocent creatures in the world, so she was one of the most cheerful. She never thought, nor spoke, nor wished any ill, and had constantly that desire of pleasing, which may be called the happiest of all desires in this, that it scarce ever fails of attaining its ends, when not disgraced by affectation. In short, though her power was very small, she was in her heart one of the warmest friends. She had been a most affectionate wife, and was a most fond and tender mother. (1)

Fielding dramatizes the various aspects of her goodness in episodes of common life. This is done with a marked vitality and forceful assurance. Such, for instance, are the scenes illustrating her gratitude, when she acts as the earnest advocate for Tom (2), her courage and insistence on keeping a reputable house (3), and her simplicity and innocence which make her play into the hands of Mrs. Western, when the good woman was deceived and thus gave away the secret of her mission. (4) The naturalness of these episodes, their inter-relation, and splendid management attest to Fielding's effortless inventiveness. The very idea of creating the character of Mrs. Miller to play such an important part in the plot,

2) Ibid., XVII,vii; Henley ed., V, 275-77.
3) Ibid., XIV, iii; Henley ed., V, 102 104.
4) Ibid., XVII,viii; Henley ed., V, 283.
thus reinforcing the central theme of benevolence, is a masterly stroke. The portrait of Mrs. Miller indicates the direction in which Fielding was moving: it anticipates the depiction of the perfect woman in *Amelia*. In effect, the whole of the second half of *Tom Jones* shows him progressing to a more serious and earnestly didactic position.

Fielding's last novel succeeds in constructing a permanent example of the good woman. Here, Amelia combines every Christian and moral virtue previously demonstrated by such characters as Fanny in *Joseph Andrews*, Mrs. Heartfree in *Jonathan Wild*, and Sophia and Mrs. Miller in *Tom Jones*. She is the embodiment of chastity and modesty, and has a discerning mind and a loving, compassionate heart. She is portrayed as the dutiful daughter, the loving wife, the tender, caring mother, the loyal companion, and the epitome of tact and grace. In all this she is the devout Christian practising the diffusive benevolence of the Latitudinarian divines, and the good-nature of the moral writers. A disciple of the excellent Dr. Harrison, she "hath a sweetness of temper, a generosity of spirit, an openness of heart - in a word, she hath a true Christian disposition". (1) Her virtues and accomplishments are brought into clear focus in the novel.

and conveyed with admirable skill and directness. Fielding wields his powers of invention, his dramatic experience, his language and learning, and his mastery of the manners of speech to present this memorable portrait of goodness. With all her perfections and charm, he makes her breathe in the novel. The scenes depicting her concern for the misfortunes of her husband, her fortitude and self-denial, her tenderness and care to instruct her children, and her excellent house-keeping attest to Fielding's moral intentness, imaginative realism, and to his personal involvement and commitment. (1) In such scenes he is really in his element; the reader senses the presence of the moral artist, and visualizes him vigourously preparing the stage and the characters for the right moments of pathos. Here, Fielding, the artist and the man, is felt to be rendering an intimate experience both urgent and insistent, and Amelia emerges a living example of feminine heroism, a lively and lovable spouse that towers above all the characters of good women in contemporary English fiction. (2)

1) Ibid., XI, ix; X, v; IV, iii; XI, viii respectively.

2) A.D. Mckillop considers Amelia "the first respectable married heroine in English fiction" (Early Masters of English Fiction - London, 1957, 139), and Austin Dobson writes, "there is no more touching portrait in the whole of fiction than this heroic and immortal one of feminine goodness and forbearance", (Fielding, op. cit, 155-56)
The character of Dr. Harrison is central to the meaning of the novel as a whole, for "it is in the relationships of Booth, Amelia, and Dr. Harrison that the heart of the novel lies". (1) The portrait of the divine is Fielding's last attempt to depict the mature, good-natured man, and is, perhaps, more forceful than that of Allworthy. Although the divine's character is not nearly so detailed as the character of Allworthy, and although he does not play such a central part in the first books of Amelia as does Allworthy in the first half of Tom Jones, he stands out as the more robust, the more energetic and effective. His function is the same as that of Allworthy: to counsel and guide the good-natured but imprudent man, and assist him to attain wisdom and prudence. Like Allworthy, he is a "great and good man" who has "a tenderness of heart" that always accompanies true goodness. (2) His conduct is marked by an "excessive good-nature", and his "great penetration into the human mind, joined to his experience" makes him a prominent expert among the "physicians of the mind". (3) But he differs from Allworthy in being, primarily, a clergyman with great influence on his parishoners, and in combining piety and prudence with

2) Amelia, IX,iv; Henley ed., VII, 142.
3) Ibid., III, ii; Henley ed., VI, 115.
wit, good humour, and urbanity - all of which makes him "the most agreeable companion in the world". (1) These last qualities distinguish him from all other good-natured characters in Fielding's novels, and render him capable of dealing with serious problems cheerfully, and "with a pleasant countenance". (2) He is the embodiment of Fielding's ideal of the cheerful Christian: always ready with a jest or humorous comment when he sees Booth or Amelia concerned and worried. His wit and playful good humour, together with his access (3), make him a more amiable character than Allworthy. Unlike Parson Adams, he combines a good heart with a perspicacity that qualifies him as an effective counsellor. Unlike Heartfree, he combines a tender heart with a powerful sense of justice and a clear judgement that allows him to take care of his own practical affairs and those of his friends: thus he arrests with his own hands the attorney who had conspired to cheat Amelia of her inheritance, and he goes himself to the culprit's house in order to uncover the evidence of guilt. (4) He differs from Boncour in that he tempers his charity with prudence, for though he has

1) Ibid., III, xi; Henley ed., VI, 160.
2) Ibid., III, xii; Henley ed., VI, 165.
3) Ibid., IX, ii; Henley ed., VII, 128.
cheerfully and most charitably given away above half his fortune (1), he refuses to endanger seriously his own solvency to save Booth from his follies. And yet, for all his prudence and perspicacity, the Doctor is not immune against hypocrisy and deception. Like all Fielding's good-natured men he is imposed upon by those who are unscrupulous, and who take advantage of his good-nature. Thus he judges Booth harshly after being assured by"excellent witnesses" that Booth has been an extravagant wastrel, and after seeing for himself the costly gifts in Amelia's apartment. The Doctor's decision here, though the result of painstaking investigation, is decidedly harsh, for it drives Booth into the hands of the bailiff. But Fielding is careful to assure the reader that such a decision does not reflect upon Dr. Harrison's benevolence or good sense, as the latter's actions are "truly congruous with the most perfect prudence as well as with the most consummate goodness". (2)

Dr. Harrison, then, is the moral artist's mouthpiece, and his ideal embodiment of Christian benevolence. Like Adams and Allworthy, he is given the part of the mentor and Christian Censor, whose function it is to explode vice and hypocrisy, and vehemently attack such evils as adultery, the crime of duelling, the false conception of honour,

1) Ibid., IX, x; Henley ed., VII, 179.  
2) Ibid., III, iv; Henley ed., VI, 122.
and all forms of religious and social corruption. As the artistic representation of Fielding's mature faith in Christian benevolence and good-nature, Dr. Harrison is more satisfying than Boncour, Heartfree, and Allworthy. He best exemplifies the moral artist's increasingly effective depiction of the perfectly good man. Here, all the principal components of goodness and greatness are in focus: the earnest, almost militant, Christian disposition, the upright, sagacious, and perceptive mind, the tender, charitable, and sympathizing heart, the pleasing cheerfulness and good humour, in short, the ever vigorous, extensive benevolence and good nature.
V - CONCLUSION

The chief aims of this study have been to explore the concept of the good man in the prevalent religious and ethical thought of the late seventeenth-and early eighteenth-centuries, to examine Fielding's moral preoccupations in relation to those of his time, and show how his earnest faith in benevolence and good-nature determines his conception of the novel as a vehicle of pleasing instruction, and controls his idea and execution of character. The evidence presented so far re-affirms and documents the serious purpose of his comic art, a fact which has been repeatedly misunderstood, glossed over, toned down, or contradicted outright. (1) It also attests to his being a product of his age, another issue often asserted but rarely documented, and seeks to establish him as a primarily Christian artist, who is also an eclectic, and who combines moral commitment and forceful imaginative expression.

1) In a book recently published, for instance, a critic claims that "Fielding in his art was interested not in communicating in his fictional form a simple truth about human existence, he was not aiming to teach young men how to preserve their virtue. In fact, as I have been arguing all along, Fielding's interest as a novelist was in providing for a cultivated audience cultivated delight." Andrew Wright, Henry Fielding, Mask and Feast, (London, 1965), 175.
The focal point of Fielding's moral teaching is his conception of good-nature and benevolence. Indeed, his exquisite gift to the reader is an extensive understanding of what constitutes the good-natured man. For to him, good-nature is not simply a hackneyed, diluted term, a social platitude lacking in force and coherence; it is, more than to any of his fellow novelists, a real act of faith, a credo that informs his achievements as playwright, essayist, novelist, and magistrate. In effect, his own life is a unique exposition of the practice of good-nature. His view of this complex of virtues is far broader and more inclusive than that of his contemporaries. To him, it embraces much of the moral virtues of the ancients, and, more particularly, those Christian virtues embodied in the Cambridge Platonists' conception of charity as active, universal love. The pronounced emphasis on benevolence and good-nature by the host of theologians, philosophers, moral thinkers, essayists, and poets - whose representatives are discussed above - reinforced his convictions, and provided him with rich and varied material for both direct exposition and imaginative rendering. Thus, the great ethical discussions centering on such issues as self-love and benevolence, the nature of the ethical faculty and whether
it derives from reason or sentiment, the doctrine of the passions, Christian heroism, and the ethical value of literature. His position is in line with the Latitudinarian view of the good life. He will have no truck with Hobbists, Mandevillians, deists, Methodists, or 'fanaticks'. His attitude is one of deliberate moderation and considered balance. A healthy common-sense distinguishes him from either intellectualists or sentimentalists, and marks his eclecticism in matters of morality. For whatever he finds most conducive to the realization of benevolence, be it ancient or 'modern', be it expounded by a divine, a lay moralist, or a heathen, he culls and appropriates, demonstrating its efficacy in the terms of his comic art. Hence the richness and universal application of his ethical insights. Though he is aware of his age's increasing predilection for sentiment, he is usually persistent in distinguishing between prudent, mature good-nature and flaccid sentiment. His commitment to the goodness of the heart is conditioned by an affirmation of the primacy of reason. The ultimate purpose of his novels is inculcating the 'Art of Life' through perfecting both head and heart.

The examination of Fielding's ethical intentions in relation to his art of the novel reveals the shaping force
and control of his moral convictions. His pronouncements on the novel deserve more attention than is usually accorded them, for they show the moral artist at work, and contribute towards a better understanding of his achievements. Here, Fielding addresses novelists and readers alike: advising, admonishing, cajoling, angrily forbidding, intimately whispering - and all the time deeply involved. The principles he discusses are diligently applied in the novels, and display a carefully considered plan. Such, for instance, are his insistence on the novel as realistic 'history', and as an instrument of delight and instruction, his practice of narrator, stage-manager, and commentator, his emphasis on the efficacy of fictitious models of goodness, and his marked attention to the depiction of character. All this underlines his deep moral commitment as an artist who finds it incumbent upon him to propagate active benevolence and good-nature.

An analysis of his 'perfectly good' characters: Boncour, Parson, Adams, Squire Allworthy, and Dr. Harrison, indicates that he progressed towards a more realistic and thus more satisfactory depiction of the good man.

The theme of the good man is the great unifying factor in the novels. Here, the good characters dramatize the constituents of benevolence as Fielding understands the
term, i.e. the sum of true religion and morality; his bad characters, of hypocritical self-love. Like the Cambridge Platonists, the Latitudinarians, Addison, Steele, and several other moralists and artists, he conceives of the good man as a friend of mankind: cheerful, practical, social and sociable, and consumed with 'the lust of doing good'. The good man has a fair share of instinctive goodness of heart tempered with prudence and discretion. His benevolence coincides with a robust, happy constitution, and is motivated by Christian charity and fellow-feeling. Preoccupied with the public good, his predominant good passions impel him to alleviate the hardships of the poor and afflicted. His universal benevolence is reflected in his countenance, in his good breeding and pleasing demeanour, all of which makes him a loving and lovable humane being. He is an ardent lover, a devoted husband, an excellent father and mentor to his disciples. He crowns all his virtues with a deep belief in divine Providence. Reduced to mere citing in this way, the constituents of Fielding's benevolence may seem commonplace truisms of ethical thought, but his distinction lies in imaginatively rendering these qualities in such a way as to endow them with permanent and universal significance. His greatness lies in bringing his personality, his genius,
his good humour, and his sincerity to bear upon his vast knowledge and experience, transforming them into an artistic whole, a forceful and impressive criticism of life, not simply in England of the eighteenth-century, but everywhere, and for all time.
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Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>ELH</td>
<td><em>Journal of English Literary History</em>.</td>
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<td>MLQ</td>
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<td>PMLA</td>
<td><em>Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America</em>.</td>
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<td>PQ</td>
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