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Value theory in contemporary British philosophy

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VALUE THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH PHILOSOPHY
by
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CHAPTER I
THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of the metaphysical status of value has been prominent in philosophical thought since the turn of the present century. It has been inherent in philosophy since man first reasoned, but its peculiar importance has only recently become explicit. The question of whether value is objective or subjective is the center of the problem, which has many ramifications such as the nature of God, for instance. However, the main discussion concerns subjectivity and objectivity. Those who insist upon the objectivity of value say that it is metaphysically objective in the universe, and we simply recognize it and use it. For example, a beautiful oil painting expresses a standard of beauty quite independent of any person’s judgment. Thus the picture is beautiful whether or not the unskilled eye recognizes it as such. Beauty is beauty even when it is concealed. Furthermore, if the standards of beauty are subjective, as may be claimed, then there should be no agreement as to what is beautiful such as we find among present-day critics. If beauty is objective, any dissent from its standards by individuals would not affect its status, either. So far we have discussed only beauty, but what is true of beauty, usually considered the stronghold of
subjectivism, is also true of goodness and truth, and whatever other values there may be. There are few thinkers who would make truth subjective as they do in the case of beauty and goodness. Those who believe in the objectivity of value make goodness and beauty as objective as truth.

In contrast to these objectivists are those who hold a subjective theory of value. Basing their claims upon the fact that value never seems to exist apart from interest, they say that value rests upon our individual interpretation of it. Beauty is that which appeals to us individually. Goodness is not objective but is only that which has been recognized throughout the years as the common good. The case for the subjectivity of value is vulnerable at one point, as we have already seen. Those who support it are unwilling to make truth also subjective, for to do so would be to affirm solipsism. Accordingly, those philosophers who take the view that value is objective criticize the subjective view for resting its claims on an objective theory of truth when the distinction between truth on one hand and beauty and goodness on the other seems as unfounded as the distinction between primary and secondary qualities which Locke defended and which Berkeley completely overthrew. Nevertheless, the case for subjectivity is still strong. The solution to the problem once and for all is impossible, yet every person must act as
though his mind was made up for all time. Like the problem of God, the problem of value is one in which truth keeps on growing.

The problem of the nature of value takes us further than a discussion of subjectivity and objectivity, however. There is a certain sense in which the problem of value underlies the whole of philosophy. If value is understood to be equivalent to meaning, and this observation seems valid, then we have to ask the meaning of philosophy itself. We have already indicated the relation between value and truth, truth being made a value by almost every philosopher. There is much less agreement in the other fields, however. In the field of aesthetics there occurs the sharpest break between the subjectivists and the objectivists. Likewise, in the field of morals the lack of agreement is evident today in the opposition between good as a common projection and good as a standard binding upon the individual, the categorical 'ought'. The problem of value, therefore, deserves a place as one of the problems which all philosophy must face.

The problem of value runs throughout the history of philosophy, but it did not become explicit as a separate problem until Münsterberg, in Germany, gave it a new interpretation. With the publication of his Eternal Values in 1909 in English,
the importance of this problem made itself felt in England and the United States, the latter country furnishing most of the discussion at the present time. W. M. Urban, an American idealistic philosopher who studied in Germany under Münsterberg, published his *Valuation* in the same year as his teacher published his *Eternal Values*, and this was the first American book on the subject of value. His whole development was derived largely from the Vienna school, led by Meinong and his fellow-worker Ehrenfels. Since that time, axiology has constantly been before the minds of all thinkers. The development of pragmatism in the United States by William James served to make that country the leader in the philosophy of value, because value became a term which the average man could use and understand, thus keeping the problem constantly before men's minds. Thus the recent trend towards a theory of value had its origin in Germany and Austria and its main development in the United States.

However, next to the United States, England has produced the most influential theories of value. British philosophy did not need to be stimulated solely by German philosophy because it had a tradition of its own. The problem of value was clearly set forth in the ethical philosophy of T. H. Green. He gave a basis for much British philosophy which was to follow him, so it is almost impossible to read and understand any
British philosophy without first having read and understood the philosophy of Green. Accordingly, when Münsterberg and his school brought forth their new emphasis, the revival in British philosophy was not nearly so extensive as in American philosophy, because in England men had already been thinking about the problem whereas it was new to American thinkers. Therefore, although value theory has a longer tradition in England, the importance of the problem is felt keenly in the United States.

Having the history of the problem before us, we now turn our attention to the sources from which this and the following material has been taken. These sources are many and varied. The basic source is the two volume edition of Contemporary British Philosophy edited by J. H. Muirhead. These two volumes served the purpose of limiting the field. Starting with the articles in this two volume work, we turned to other primary sources written by the men who had discussed the problem of value. These primary sources consist not only of books but also of articles in current journals of philosophy. To these were added many secondary sources, used as commentaries on the men studied. As will be seen, the field has been limited to those philosophers who are directly concerned with the problem of value, especially the following: G. E. Moore, Laird, Alexander, Boanquet, Sorley, and
Mackenzie. It is impossible in a study of this type to go into
detail about all the men, so we must confine our attention to
these few who are outstanding and typical.

The method followed in this thesis is that of comparison
and contrast of individual theories. Each chapter of this dis­
cussion deals with a special problem of the whole. In each
chapter the representative theories of outstanding men will be
discussed and criticized. The selection of men depends on
whether or not they are typical of the group. Moreover, the
men discussed in each chapter will vary according to whether
or not they treat with that special phase of the problem.
Within each chapter we shall point out the relationships and
contrasts of each theory with the others, and at the same time
try to discover some conclusions for our own use.

The thesis is divided into nine sections, eight chapters
and a summary. The first chapter has been concerned with the
nature of the problem. The second chapter deals with the
"Definability of Value". This problem of definition comes
first, both logically and chronologically. Following from the
problem of definition is the interpretation of value as
consisting of the 'ought', so our third chapter deals with the
"Normative Character of Value". Having settled some of the
problems as to what value is, we next turn our attention to
the implications of that theory. This means that we must elucidate the importance of the problem as felt by philosophers and illustrated by their "Approaches to Value Theory", which constitutes the fourth chapter. In the fifth chapter, we discuss what each thinker considers the highest good to be, or, as it is called, "The Summum Bonum". The sixth chapter deals with the important subject of "Subjective and Objective Value". The seventh chapter, "Value and Evil", deals with that part of experience which reveals both value and disvalue to us. The final chapter serves as a climax because it treats the important problem of "Value and Existence". The Summary at the end consists of conclusions reached.
CHAPTER II
THE DEFINABILITY OF VALUE

In undertaking a study of any subject, the first thing to be done is to arrive at a definition of terms to be used in the study. Judging by this standard, one might expect our first step to be a definition of the term value. However, this problem of value drives home a point which some investigators are prone to overlook. When we start with a definition, we too often are assuming the very thing the study is designed to prove. Then the study itself is useless because we have made up our minds before we began. The proper use of any definition is for a point of departure. Nothing should prevent us from pursuing our study with an open mind.

In the field of the theory of value, however, there are some thinkers who object even to beginning with a definition of value on the ground that any study of value has as its goal this very definition. To define value at the outset is to thereby assume the whole discussion which aims at the discovery of what value really is. Some even maintain that the nature of the problem of value is such that no one can define value, anyway, and to do so is to assume a false theory about value. Thus G. E. Moore says:
If I am asked 'What is good?' my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked 'How is good to be defined?' my answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it.¹

This statement is not so dogmatic as it sounds outside of its context, for Moore is asserting that the only method is that of analysis. "We cannot define anything except by analysis."²

Granting him this assumption, we must agree with his contention that value cannot be defined, when he says:

You can give a definition of a horse, because a horse has many different properties and qualities, all of which you can enumerate. But when you have enumerated them all, when you have reduced a horse to its simplest terms, then you can no longer define those terms.³

This assumption of Moore's rests entirely upon the fact that he limits himself to the analytic method, a limitation which seems entirely out of place in a study of value. Whenever we speak of an object as possessing value, we mean, at least, that it has meaning. The relation between meaning and the method of analysis certainly is not very close. For example, if we were to analyze the process of throwing a ball, we would find that the action consisted of a series of reflexes and muscular reactions. If we analyzed still further, we

¹ Moore, PE, 6. Note: The key to this and subsequent footnotes will be found in the Bibliography.
² Moore, PE, 10.
³ Moore, PE, 7.
might resolve the whole process into a movement of atoms. Such a procedure would have value for the scientist, but it would not bring us any nearer to a conception of what that value consisted than our conception when we started. If, on the other hand, we lay aside our method of analysis in favor of one of synthesis which analyzes but goes much further, we then ask what was the purpose or meaning behind the throwing of the ball. Immediately the problem assumes a new form. If the ball was thrown to strike out a batter, the action has meaning; but if all we see in the act is a surge of atoms, then we are unable to see any value in the act. In looking for meaning, we are no longer studying for the sake of studying, but we are studying so that we may understand. Therefore, we now discover that Moore's assertion that the method should be that of analysis is entirely unfounded, and a method which is barren for a search for value. If we grant him his premise that the only method is that of analysis, then we cannot define value. Neither can we define anything else by that method. Definition is more than mere enumeration of parts and implies a "for something or someone," so if we deny Moore's method, we deny his non-definability of value.

Laird agrees with Moore in so far as a definition of value by the method of analysis is impossible, but he does not make analysis the sole method. Therefore, in a footnote in
which he discusses Moore's concept, he says:

Personally I cannot but agree with him here (speaking of Moore's statement that the good cannot be defined because it is unanalyzable). . . . Again, "definable" may, logically and with full appropriateness, be conceived in many ways, and need not be taken to be the same as "analysable" at all. Many writers, indeed, appear to mean that to be "definable" is simply to-be-equivalent-to, and . . . in this sense, it may be argued that . . . any account of what value is-equivalent-to is therefore a definition. If, (sic) so every moral theory would "define" good.4

Moore says that only a complex thing can be analyzed, and so far we must agree. However, he presupposes his own arguments concerning value by not defining it, just as others presuppose their theories by defining it. Thus he gives his clear-cut example of value as a notion simple in the same sense as the notion of 'yellow' is simple:

. . . 'Good' is a simple notion, just as 'yellow' is a simple notion; that, just as you cannot, by any manner of means, explain to any one who does not already know it, what yellow is, so you cannot explain what good is.5

Nevertheless, our understanding of yellow does not depend upon the various sensory stimuli which arouse a sense of yellowness in our eye. In fact, yellow thus considered is not a simple notion at all, for what yellow really is when it is analyzed is a series of mental experiences which are our very own and

4 Laird, SMT, 95.
5 Moore, PE, 7.
which set up a reaction in the muscles of the eye. When Moore says that yellow is a simple, he is employing more than the method of analysis. He is treating the sensations which he has of yellow as a synthesis. Now if we translate Moore's statement in the light of this discussion, we discover him saying that it is impossible to pursue the method of analysis and the method of synthesis at one and the same time. Therefore, his view of value as indefinable becomes a tautology. The contradiction involved here is further illustrated by Moore's statement that the good can be defined, but good cannot. He says, "I believe the good to be definable; and yet I still say that good itself is indefinable." The question whether or not he is justified in drawing such a distinction between good and goodness must be reserved for a later chapter.

The importance of this problem of definition, which Moore feels, is not shared by Laird. Moore wished to make sure that no one would think his theory of value was subjective by thinking that he made value to depend upon feeling. Good for him is not the same as the good. On the other hand, Laird's practical ethical interest leads him to deny the importance of knowing what values are and to take the problem

6 Moore, PE, 9.
7 Moore, PE, 7.
of definition much more lightly, when he says:

I should like to explain, however, that the definability of the concept "good" seems to me to be seldom a problem of major importance, and usually to be definitely of very minor moment. . . . The essential point is the irreducibility of values to non-values.8

However, the definition of value cannot be tossed off so lightly. Certainly the history of thought shows that every person holds some definition of value, even if it be that value is indefinable. Plato understood value in terms of his Ideas, Hobbes the State, Spinoza in terms of God, and in like manner every philosopher. Values are those things for which we strive and seek, and if we do not know at all what they are, how can we search for them, let alone comprehend and understand them? We often think of an invention as a creation of something out of nothing. This is not the case, however, for every inventor starts with some hypothesis which he tests. He does not go into his laboratory and simply jumble together whatever his hand may chance upon. He has an idea as to what he is going to do and what he is going to use to achieve that goal. When Thomas A. Edison was testing different materials for the filament in his electric light bulb, he had to try many materials, but each material had a characteristic which recommended it to him as a possible medium which would heat

8 Laird, SMT, 95.
without being consumed. Likewise, you must know what you are doing in regard to values. If you do not know what values are, how can you be sure that they are not what Laird calls non-values? We must have some definition, especially in a science as exacting as philosophy.

Bosanquet not only takes the problem of definition seriously, but he also thinks that a definition is possible. Since he is an absolute idealist, he defines value in terms of the whole of reality. The problem of whether or not he has the right to identify value with reality arises here, but since we are now discussing strictly the definition of value, the problem of value and reality will be reserved for the final chapter which deals with value and existence. However, Bosanquet does define value in terms of the whole, as he says, "... Logic, or the spirit of totality, is the clue to reality, value, and freedom."9 He finds in his thought that it is impossible to explain anything without reference to the complete situation in which that event occurs. This is in direct contrast with the method pursued by Moore. Moore reduced value to its simplest, whereas Bosanquet interprets value in its most complex and highest form. "The 'good' of the universe must be such as belongs to a world and not to the

9 Bosanquet, P IV, 23.
The logic of Bosanquet's system equates value with the Absolute. Since the Absolute is the ultimate reality, value depends thereon, upon the nearness to the Whole.

The question may arise as to the validity of Bosanquet's argument that value can be understood only when interpreted in the light of the whole. There are those who deny that the whole has any meaning apart from the meaning of its parts. The outcome of the argument involved here must determine whether we are to define by analyzing or by synthesizing, or by both. Already we have seen that a complex object lends itself to definition more readily than does a simple object if we define its meaning. The problem as to whether or not the whole has values of its own is an extension of the problem of definition. Let us take water as an example of something to be defined. Are we to define water in terms of its component parts, \( H_2O \), or by what it is used for? In other words, does water possess properties of its own apart from the combined properties of the two parts of hydrogen and one part oxygen? The first thing to be noted is that hydrogen and oxygen assume different forms in water than when they are free, but the proof that the whole has its own values need not rest upon

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10 Bosanquet, PIV, 24.
this fact. However, anyone given the proper mixture of hydrogen and oxygen would never be able to predict just what the results would be. None of the uses of water such as for drinking, washing, et cetera, are even implied in the formula \( \text{H}_2\text{O} \). Therefore, if value is to be defined by giving its meaning, it must be defined in relation to the whole. Value is to be measured by metaphysical perfection.

There are two objections which may be raised at this point against Bosanquet's definition. The first is that value loses all its meaning when identified with the whole of reality. If it means everything, then there is nothing distinctive about it. Nor is there any reason why we should speak of value at all. It simply becomes another name for reality and its use serves only to confuse the issue. However, Bosanquet attempts to meet this objection, when he says, "... In our attitude to experience ... we are ... to take for our standard what man recognizes as value when his life is fullest and his soul at its highest stretch."\(^{11}\) By this he means that value is a quality rather than a quantity of a certain thing. The quality of value should belong to reality, and this does not mean the whole, or value, includes everything. Value is the highest quality in reality.

\(^{11}\) Bosanquet, PIV, 3.
A second objection seems more pressing than does the first. Bosanquet emphasizes the necessity for appealing to the whole of reality, and we saw that the whole may have value not included in the sum of all its parts. Now, however, we must recognize the fact that the parts have values which the whole does not have. Thus if we take the formula for water again, the hydrogen and oxygen as parts may be combined in various proportions or under different conditions, and the resulting product will not be water. Thus those parts have a certain flexibility and freedom which water as a whole does not have. Therefore, we must be fair and state that value depends upon the whole only when the whole takes into account the values of its parts. Bosanquet seems to forget that the parts have values when he says that finite persons are not ultimate values,¹² and that finite consciousness is an inadequate basis for a theory of value.¹³ On the other hand, he is eager to show that the Absolute does not stand unrelated to life, as he says, "... Repudiate this ultimate abnegation which treats the great philosophies as abstractions alien to life."¹⁴ He makes another significant statement when he says, "The great enemy of all sane idealism is the notion that the

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¹² Bosanquet, PIV, 20.
¹³ Bosanquet, PIV, 123.
¹⁴ Bosanquet, PIV, 13.
ideal belongs to the future." When we take Bosanquet's system as a whole, however, his emphasis upon the Absolute tends to obscure the distinctive qualities of value and to disregard the importance of the parts which compose the Absolute. Of course, to say that the parts of the Absolute have value not contained in the Absolute is a contradiction of Bosanquet's contention, but the fault lies with the Absolute and not with the value of the parts.

A few words should be said concerning the criterion of value, for that is implied in any definition. The only one possible is that of coherence, the same as for truth. When we perceive a new truth, we are unable to tell whether or not it is true until we have fitted it into the body of truth we already possess. Every fact comes to us with the claim to being true, so we have to judge each one. This we can do only by seeing whether or not they cohere with other facts we know are true. Values work the same way. Every value-judgment claims to be true, yet conflicting judgments show us that some are wrong. This leads Alexander to say that "what we apprehend in objects of value is their coherence." Further proof that coherence is the only criterion is not and cannot be given here and is assumed.

15 Bosanquet, PIV, 136.
CHAPTER III
THE NORMATIVE CHARACTER OF VALUE

Passing from the problem of the definability of value, we face another problem concerning it, namely, that of its normative character. We mean by normative character that values have a compelling force about them in the sense that they ought to be achieved. Thus the problem becomes whether or not we can say that value ought to be followed. Is there something about values which attract our attention? These are the problems which this chapter aims to solve in so far as they are answered by British philosophers. Both affirmative and negative answers have been given to the problems, and the answers have been important. The problem of whether or not value is normative concerns our everyday life. If we deny the ought, then we are not compelled to follow our values; but if we affirm the ought, then our values are the controls in our life. Values, without this compulsion about them, might be guides but they would be devoid of all right to guide. They would then lose their emotional warmth as values and become merely things. It is very difficult to work up much enthusiasm over a mere fact. The problem of this chapter, therefore, is practical in the sense that we either accept or reject values as the guiding factors in our life.
There are contrary and confusing currents at work in this problem of the ought. These cross-currents are the result of drawing too sharp distinctions between objective and subjective value. Those who hold an objective theory of value set values over against our recognition of them. Having done this, they then face the problem of how to recover the normative character of value. If an ideal is too far away and cut off completely from us, we feel no compulsion to follow it. Thus an extreme emphasis upon the objectivity of value, upon which its normative character depends, tends to destroy that normative character. On the other hand, subjective theories of value stimulate this feeling of oughtness because they make value arise from within us and a part of us which we should develop. Yet this subjective interpretation of value is not an adequate basis for the normative character. There must be an objective reference if the oughtness is justified. Since the result of this conflict is confusion in the minds of many, it indicates the importance of the problem as to whether value is subjective or objective.

Laird is one of those who affirm value to be normative. He says:

A reason which shows that a given action ought to be performed is a reason in terms of value. ... Duties are unconditional demands, categorical imperatives, self-satisfying injunctions. To suppose that these injunctions are justified only because they are good
for something else, is to smirch and to flout them; for they are sovereign in their own right.¹

In other words, value, which Laird interprets as goodness, is the ought and the ought is value. The thing that ought to be done is the best thing that can be done. Laird is careful to draw the distinction between the ought character and the moral character. Morals must not be confused with the good because they concern our response to the ought and not the ought itself:

Values and excellent pursuits, in short, may be, and very often are, entirely non-moral, and these non-moral excellences become relevant to morals only when we raise the question of promoting or renouncing them.²

Laird here shows an insight into the problem which many have missed. Morals are our own activities toward the normative character of value. They cannot be divorced from value, but neither are they value itself. They are our subjective relation to the good.

Laird thus draws a difference between the knowledge of and the response to good and evil. Knowledge is the prerequisite to doing good, and so, in a sense, Laird agrees with the Socratic teaching concerning knowledge as the basis for all ethics, when he says, "... It is clear that no one can

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¹ Laird, SMT, 20.
² Laird, SMT, xi.
be commanded to do anything unless he can understand the
command." Even before the time of Socrates, this was placed
in maxim form by Thales and was carved on the Temple of Apollo
at Delphi and which read "Know Thyself." The interpretation
of Socrates as meaning knowledge is a prerequisite to ethics
seems sounder to me than the interpretation that everyone
who knows the good will do it. Socrates was too much a
student of human nature to believe anything like that. Like
him, Laird insists that knowledge of value is something which
stands by itself and which precedes morals both logically and
chronologically, and which keeps duty from becoming a blind
force:

> What is relevant to the 'ought' is not a mere human
characteristic, peculiar to the species like leprosy
or nakedness, but the intrinsic appropriateness of a
certain response to the knowledge of good and evil.4

Moreover, Laird does not allow the break between theory and
practice which his theory might be subject to. His position
is what we might style the synthetic view, for he says, "The
relation between value and obligation is precisely that
synthetic connection . . . whereby a principle applicable to
practice also becomes a practical principle."5 Therefore,
Laird makes the normative character the link between the

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4 Laird, SMT, 24–25.
5 Laird, SMT, 35.
metaphysically objective values such as truth, beauty, and goodness and our subjective response to these. The ought is the link between values and morals.

The reason why Laird confines himself chiefly to a discussion of the relation between the normative character of value and morals is that he confines the ought category to morals alone. The normative character of value is ethics:

Pure axiology (or the science of all values) cannot be the same thing as ethics. In the first place it is far too wide. The values of truth, beauty, and happiness would be included in this science, each on its own merits; and these taken simpliciter (or without addition and qualification) are not what we mean by morals. These values are relevant to morality only when they carry with them a certain authority for action and direct or prescribe what ought to come about.6

It is true that we most often think of duty in terms of morals, but there is no metaphysical basis for this. Truth and beauty contain an imperative just as much as does goodness.7 However, truth and beauty are subordinate to goodness in the sense that morals are concerned with the application of every imperative. ". . . The justification of every imperative is entirely a moral question."8 But Laird goes even further than this and says that the imperative of the

6 Laird, SMT, 196.
7 See The Ultimate Belief by A. Clutton-Brock.
8 Laird, SMT, 28.
truth conscience and of the beauty conscience is moral in character. In other words, every imperative of value is moral. As he says:

In short, we are bound to maintain that every imperative, every normative injunction, is in reality moral. The artistic or the scientific conscience, as we call them, really are instances of conscience in a literal, straightforward, and therefore in an entirely moral sense.  

It is from this reasoning that Laird draws his conclusion that goodness is the *sumnum bonum*, but that is a subject for a later chapter. We now see that the normative character of value means for Laird the moral character of value, although it is "not the whole of morals." It is for that reason that he discusses morals as the justification of imperatives.

There is a serious difficulty involved here as to whether or not Laird is justified in making all normative character moral. He states the problem squarely, but his answer to the problem is an assumption rather than a solution, when he says:

There is a suspicion, indeed, in many quarters that intellectual and moral excellences very seldom go together, and that artistry and morality touch very shyly if at all. This may, or may not, be a prejudice. What is important for our purposes is to notice (despite the paradox) that this rejoinder, even if it were true, may nevertheless be irrelevant.

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9 Laird, SMT, 31.
10 Loc. cit.
What beauty decrees for its own sake it decrees morally, and the behests of truth are moral behests. They are moral although they are not the whole of morals.\textsuperscript{11}

This abrupt assumption concerning moral imperatives certainly does not prove the point under debate. In fact, the contrary point of view that there is a truth and aesthetic as well as a moral conscience can be asserted with more force. In the first place, there is no empirical evidence that man is more moral than he is truthful or appreciative of the beautiful. Rather, the prejudice seems to lie at Laird's door. The moral imperative seems more significant because it is social, while the truth imperative and the aesthetic imperative concern primarily the individual. Secondly, to reduce truth and beauty to sub-heads under goodness destroys them. Goodness must meet the standards of truth and beauty in exactly the same degree as truth and beauty must meet the standards of goodness. Each is valid in its own right. Notice that this statement does not commit us as to whether or not we can measure one by the other. Nevertheless, the value-ought is wider than the moral-ought. The artist should paint for art's sake alone, for to do otherwise would lessen the quality of his work. Even if he painted for morality's sake, it would be in the same sense as though he painted for the sake of the profit to be derived from the sale of the picture, and it

\textsuperscript{11} Laird, SMT, 31.
would not be a masterpiece. The artist must be free to create if he is to produce the finest of which he is capable. The same holds true for logic. The laws of reason stand in their own right and we experience their compulsion without any reference to morals. It is difficult to see how anyone can say that the law of mathematics which compels us to say that two times two equals four has any moral quality about it. We may conclude, therefore, that Laird has falsely construed the normative character of value when he subordinates truth and beauty to morals. Truth and beauty, as qualifiers of reality, must stand in the same relationship as goodness. To do otherwise is to affirm the untenable distinction between primary and secondary qualities. Laird recognizes the fact of interpenetration of values, but he errs in his explanation. It must be noted, however, that this weakness in his theory does not destroy the normative character of value.

G. E. Moore's treatment of the problem of the normative character of value is more logical than Laird's. Moore recognizes the fact that what is often meant by objective is this very normative character, or what he calls the intrinsic character:

In the case, therefore, of ethical and aesthetic "goodness", I think that what those who contend for the "objectivity" of these conceptions really wish to contend for is not mere "objectivity" at all,
but principally and essentially that they are *intrinsick* kinds of value.¹²

Thus Moore identifies the normative character with the intrinsic character of value. He thereby avoids the fallacy into which Laird fell by narrowing the normative down to the moral. In fact, Moore is more interested in the universality of the intrinsic quality than in the problem of subjectivity and objectivity, as he says:

> For the difference that must be made to our view of the Universe, according as we hold that some kinds of value are "intrinsick" or that none are, is much greater than any which follows from a mere difference of opinion as to whether some are "non-subjective," or all without exception "subjective."¹³

Moore gives his definition of the normative character of value, therefore, in terms of intrinsic value:

> To say that a kind of value is "intrinsick" means merely that the question whether a thing possesses it, and in what degree it possesses it, depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in question.¹⁴

He goes on to point out that he means two things when he says it depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in

> . . . It is impossible for what is strictly one and the same thing to possess that kind of value at one time, or in one set of circumstances, and not to

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¹² Moore, PS, 257.
¹³ Moore, PS, 259.
¹⁴ Moore, PS, 260.
possess it at another; and equally impossible for it to possess it in one degree at one time, or in one set of circumstances, and to possess it in a different degree at another, or in a different set. . . . It is impossible that of two exactly similar things one should possess it and the other not, or that one should possess it in one degree, and the other in a different one.15

For Moore, then, the normative value has a stability about it upon which we can always depend. Mere feeling about value does not determine its intrinsic nature, but rather, we select true values because of their normative character. Laird failed to note this distinction which Moore makes. Laird based normative character upon goodness, whereas Moore reverses the process and makes goodness depend upon intrinsic value. He says:

And though what is meant by "objectivity" in this case, is not that "right" and "wrong" are themselves intrinsic, what is, I think, meant here too is that they have a fixed relation to a kind of value which is "intrinsic." It is this fixed relation to an intrinsic kind of value, so far as I can see, which gives to right and wrong that kind and degree of fixity and impartiality which they actually are felt to possess.16

Moore makes goodness the supreme value but not in the narrow sense of morality as Laird used it. Rather, Moore uses goodness to mean that quality composed of morality, logic, and aesthetics. He speaks of formal truth and beauty as being

15 Moore, PS, 260-261.
16 Moore, PS, 257.
intrinsic in the same sense as goodness, when he says, "... Though I think it is true that beauty, for instance, is "intrinsic," I do not see how it can be deduced from any logical law..."17 Moore is consistent throughout in maintaining that value is a quality. However, he gets into difficulty when he tries to distinguish between the intrinsic quality of yellow and the intrinsic quality of goodness and beauty. He points out that the intrinsic nature of yellow, goodness, and beauty differs from pleasure in kind, but to differentiate between the former two he admits he is unable to do. He only suggests "that intrinsic properties seem to describe the intrinsic nature of what possesses them in a sense in which predicates of value never do."18 There seems to be a better reason for saying that value predicates differ from property predicates. As we saw in the previous chapter, Moore is unjustified in confining himself to the method of analysis and saying that value is a simple in the same sense as yellow is a simple. In speaking of the normative character of value, he is still pursued by the idea that value and yellow are like simples. Yet he also feels that their intrinsic natures are different. As long as he is consistent with his definition of value as a simple, he cannot solve the problem.

17 Moore, PS, 272.
18 Moore, PS, 274.
That is why he admits his failure to do so. However, when he is less concerned with the idea of value as a simple, he gives the right answer when he says, "What is asserted to have intrinsic value is the existence of the whole; and the existence of the whole includes the existence of its part."\(^{19}\) He even deviates further from his conception of value as a simple when he says, "The value of such a whole bears no regular proportion to the sum of the values of its parts."\(^{20}\) We thus find Moore facing this dilemma. If he is consistent with his basic conception of value, he cannot answer why value in its intrinsic nature differs from yellowness; if he takes value as being different from yellow, then he must regard value as a whole instead of as a simple. When Moore squarely faces the problem of the normative character of value, he prefers to remain consistent and be unable to give an answer to the problem of the intrinsic difference between value and yellowness. It is evident from this discussion that Moore is correct only when he affirms the intrinsic value to be the whole. He is unable to be consistent with his notion of value as a simple because value is not a simple. His whole difficulty thus lies in the position with which he began; viz., that value is indefinable and is a simple notion.

\(^{19}\) Moore, PE, 29.

\(^{20}\) Moore, PE, 27.
The denial of the normative character of value is implicit rather than explicit, evidenced by the absence of any treatment of the ought. Thus to omit the ought is to deny it. Alexander holds this position. He does not mention value as being normative, but rather finds two substitutes for it. The first of these is externality which he deduces from a study of individual experience. Since the world is external to us, it seems to be normative. "This distinctness of external objects from ourselves gives to our experience of non-mental reality the consciousness we have of being controlled from without or objectively." The second substitute is derived from social experience. For individual minds value seems to be normative because it is external, but for the social mind there must be another criterion — universality. Therefore, Alexander says, "This is the true universality of moral requirements, that they would be binding on any individual under such conditions." Thus in place of a normative character of value, he substitutes externality and universality.

However, these two substitutes cannot take the place of the oughtness associated with value. In the first place, they are as much a part of normative value as of any other type, and

therefore do not negate the normative character. In the second place, experience shows us that values are normative. By this we mean that Alexander's theory omits the warmth of a theory of value which includes the normative. We speak of physical facts as being cold and hard, and we are free to choose between them at will. Values, however, imply a prejudice which always enters into our choice. We never speak of values as we do of scientific, physical facts. Then there is the further consideration that if values do not compel us, why is it that we follow them? Why not place the scientific fact that the earth is round at the center of our ethical system? It is as much a fact as what we call values. We see the impossibility of this because values attract us and call out a response from us. The evidence of experience offers a further proof of the ought category. When we examine the course of evolution, we find that in the long run it is always upward. Unless there are objective values which have the power to draw us upward, then evolution should remain on the same level because the laws of chance are even. However, evolution does have a course which is always toward something higher and finer, and this fact is an excellent reason for affirming the normative character of value. Therefore, not only is it impossible to find an adequate substitute for this character, but the facts of experience support it.
CHAPTER IV
APPROACHES TO VALUE THEORY

By far the most common approach to the problem of value is through a study of morals and ethics. In the history of philosophy, the study of value has been confined chiefly to this field of investigation. This is due for the most part to the fact that when we speak of value in ordinary speech, we almost always mean that the object is good. This prejudice in favor of goodness is also characteristic of philosophy, especially that type which tries to rely on common sense. Its result is to identify value with theories of morality and goodness, although goodness is sometimes interpreted in a much broader sense than the non-philosophical use (G. E. Moore).

There is also the further reason for this limitation of value that goodness alone has been thought to concern our actions, and, therefore, the only part of values which pertains to our practical life is ethics, which is the science of our moral actions. It is only in recent philosophic thought that value has been perceived to be a problem apart from and more inclusive than that of goodness. Value is now receiving separate treatment and emphasis. In some minds it is the central problem of philosophy and the structure of reality may be constructed from a study of value (W. R. Sorley).
We have already seen that Moore defines value in terms of goodness:

Whenever he thinks of 'intrinsic value', or 'intrinsic worth', or says that a thing 'ought to exist', he has before his mind the unique object - the unique property of things - which I mean by 'good'.

For him the real and true value is goodness, because value concerns our actions and our actions are the content for ethics. It is one of the duties of ethics to compare relative values of various goods. The values, therefore, are something attached to reality. Moore thinks that by a study of ethics we are able to arrive at a conception of the whole of value. In this sense his approach is from the empirical side, because he relies upon common sense, although what he really means by common sense is intuition. Whatever his method, however, he does approach value from the moral side and his theory is dominated by the ethical point of view.

Laird does not set goodness up as the supreme approach to value in the same sense as does Moore, but rather his emphasis is broader. We saw in the preceding chapter that Laird identifies the normative character of value with goodness. Since the ought is concerned with our actions, and our actions are the basis for any empirical study, the study of ethics is the best approach to value as a whole. Moore's reason for

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1 Moore, PE, 17.
using this approach was that he identified value and goodness, while Laird's approach is motivated by the fact that he tries to interpret all of value through our actions. Moore, for all practical purposes, identified goodness and value, but Laird is careful to point out that "pure axiology (or the science of all values) cannot be the same thing as ethics."² Truth, beauty, and goodness are ultimate values and are all on the same plane. The reason why goodness is preferred to the others as an approach to value is that it is more closely related to life. If we were to grant Laird his assumption that the ought is moral in character, an assumption which we found it necessary to challenge in the preceding chapter, then goodness would be the best approach to value.

Goodness, however, is not the only approach to value, although in many respects as we have already seen it is the most popular. In fact, one might say that there are as many approaches as there are values. The correspondence between what a man conceives to be the *summum bonum* and his approach to that value is so close that it is only by analyzing that we can consider one apart from the other. They are very closely related and to take one apart from the other is an abstraction. This will become more apparent in the next chapter when we

² Laird, SMT, 196.
discuss the goals of these approaches. However, in addition to the moral approach there is the one through epistemology. It is not strange that knowledge and value should be closely related, for there are many similarities to be found in the problems concerning each. In the first place, value is meaningless unless it is connected up with knowledge. If value is to enter our consciousness, it must do so through the medium of knowledge, for that is the medium through which all experience becomes our own. Thus we speak of true value, meaning that value must be measured by truth (coherence) but also that value stands in its own right. The second point of correspondence is the fact that both deal with reality. It is true that value applies only to a certain type of facts, while knowledge treats with all facts, but both are attempts to relate reality to ourselves. A third characteristic which links knowledge and value together is that truth (the object of knowledge) is itself an intrinsic value. Not only does value receive its validity from truth, but truth receives its importance and worth from being a value. It is only in abstract thought that knowledge and value exist apart, not in concrete experience.

Boasanquet is an excellent example of this epistemological approach which seeks to discover value through a study of knowledge. He says, "... Logic, or the spirit of totality,
is the clue to reality, value, and freedom.° As he works out his system and arrives at his conception of the Absolute, he employs the principle of inner non-contradiction which is purely logical in form. Anything which has any relations must be dependent upon something else and therefore cannot be a logical whole. Thus only the Absolute can possess logical reality. This is what he means by "the spirit of totality" rather than a coherent interpretation of all experience.

Bosanquet is consistent in his epistemological approach, but it has its weaknesses. All experience must be interpreted by reason, but life is broader than logic, recognizing, of course, that life cannot be less than logic. A purely logical interpretation of experience neglects other values such as goodness, beauty, and religious values. However, Bosanquet does emphasize the importance of logic consistently, and we must have logic, although he overlooks some valid parts of experience. The fact that his Absolute turns out to be an external form of experience and abstract proves that his approach is too narrow.

A third approach to value is through an evolutionary theory. This is one of the most interesting methods of approach, even though it too becomes one-sided because it

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3 Bosanquet, PIV, 23.
overlooks some vital elements of experience. S. Alexander, an emergent evolutionist, is the best example of this type of approach. He sees in the evolutionary process the origin of values just as of various other adaptations. "Value depends upon adaptation and adaptation assumes the character of value through the rejection of the unadapted unvalues." This application of evolution to values is unique since it is used as the sole approach. Other theories may use the evidence of evolution, but they do not make it the sole criterion of metaphysical reality. According to Alexander, values are nothing more than the products of collective society. Even God is only that phase of development which lies just ahead and constantly recedes before our advance. Enough has been said now to show how Alexander's approach is naturalistic in its evolutionary theory. It cancels out many valid objective experiences (prayer, worship, etc.) and inadequately explains others (beauty, truth, etc.). Its limitation of value to instrumental values is a violation of the facts of experience.

So far we have not discussed any theory which adequately takes into account all the facts of experience. We now come to such a one which differs from the others in this respect. Whereas the others started with a particular or singular

method, W. R. Sorley begins with a comprehensive approach, that of ontology interpreted through moral values. He feels that the previous theories we have mentioned have unjustifiably narrowed experience and excluded facts of value. He does not make cognition the control as does Bosanquet,\(^5\) but rather reality itself which he seeks to interpret without prejudice. He finds three parts to reality: things and their relations, persons, and values. Values are a part of being just as much as sense-objects. 

"... The notion of value always implies a relation to existence - though a relation to which the natural sciences are indifferent."\(^6\) Thus Sorley reverses the usual process in philosophy of value and establishes reality by the fact of value in the universe. His whole approach, then, is centered around the ontological problem. He uses this approach exclusively, but its very nature is inclusive. In this way he is using all the previously mentioned theories, and is not limiting experience. When he commits himself to the ontological approach, he pledges himself to take into consideration all the facts of experience. Whether or not he does this is a problem for later discussion, but his approach is much superior because of its inclusiveness than those of goodness, beauty, epistemology, or evolution.

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\(^5\) Sorley, MVG, 25.  
\(^6\) Sorley, MVG, 78.
CHAPTER V
THE SUMMUM BONUM

In the preceding chapter we saw how some of the British philosophers approached the theory of value, and we discovered that there are many ways. Now our purpose is to complete that process and study the goals up to which those approaches lead. It is dangerous to draw a sharp distinction between the approach and the goal because neither can stand alone in its own right. Neither can we say which definitely controls which. Does the method control the result, or do the ends, speaking through the facts of experience, determine our course? Probably both answers are as much right as they are wrong, for they are complementary. Form and content are hopeless abstractions when taken individually. Therefore, it is not surprising that philosophers conceive the summum bonum in terms of their methods and approaches. Recognizing the danger of abstracting this summum bonum, let us now see in what terms some British philosophers conceive it.

The most common classification of values is the Platonic which classifies values under three heads: truth, beauty, and goodness. John Laird is one of those who conceives the summum bonum in terms of this threefold classification. His approach
is through one value, goodness, but this is only because he thinks the normative character of value is limited to this one value, and he does make room for the other two. "The bonum, in certain respects, need not define the same field as the faciendum." The imperative concerns only goodness and does not control the highest good. He says further that values very often are entirely non-moral and "become relevant to morals only when we raise the question of promoting or renouncing them." The assumption that value exists apart from our actions is very doubtful, but whether or not we grant him this assumption, he does make the highest good more inclusive than moral goodness.

He makes the highest value broad enough not only to include goodness but also truth and beauty, and in a special sense, pleasure:

Pure axiology (or the science of all values) cannot be the same thing as ethics. In the first place it is far too wide. The values of truth, beauty, and happiness would be included in this science, each on its own merits; and these taken simpliciter (or without addition and qualification) are not what we mean by morals.

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1 Laird, SMT, x.
2 Laird, SMT, xi.
3 Laird feels this objection when he says, "While value and obligation may indeed be ultimates, they should at least be capable of vindicating and exhibiting their ultimacy in the panoply and panorama of all existence." SMT, 268.
4 Laird, SMT, 196.
The manner in which he interprets happiness as an ultimate value is not in the hedonistic sense. He recognizes the fallacies involved in making pleasure the sole criterion of value, but he also perceives that values must contain an element of satisfaction. If we are to interpret life as a whole, then our values must satisfy our highest desires, once we have determined what those highest desires are. It is for this reason that Laird includes pleasure as a highest good. However, if pleasure is to be defined in such a limited sense, it would be better to omit it as a highest good and simply allow the term value to express that qualified satisfaction. Moreover, happiness is more directly related to our subjective state of response than it is to objective value.

Laird does not make any one value supreme but places truth, beauty, and goodness (if we omit happiness) each in its own right. "These divisions of value, in short, do not only differ in kind, but legislate unconditionally within their kinds." In other words, one value cannot be the judge of another. "To say that a truth is ugly or noxious... cannot affect the truth of it." By thus neglecting the facts of interpenetration among these ultimate values, he denies that

5 Laird, SMT, 53.
6 Laird, SMT, 54.
there is any single unity which comprehends them all. "The view that there is but one supreme end, a perfect union of all these divisions of excellence, cannot, I think, be sustained." This automatically rules out God as the preserver of values, or even as possessing value, and thereby denies his existence. Laird is correct in denying God if there is no interpenetration or unity of these ultimate values, but other interpreters of experience do find grounds for believing in God, as we shall see later.

There are various other treatments of truth, beauty, and goodness. Among them is Alexander's theory which treats these three ultimate values as tertiary qualities. "The tertiary qualities are not the only kind of values, though it is they which in the strictest sense have the right to the name." Although truth, beauty, and goodness are all realities, truth possesses a characteristic of inclusiveness. Thus he says, "Now truth we have seen is reality as possessed by mind, and hence in this sense the other values are parts of truth and truth is all-inclusive, because its object is reality." Although truth plays a very important role, Alexander rightly

7 Laird, SMT, 59.
keeps it on the same plane with beauty and goodness. Reason's function is to interpret the whole of experience, but beauty and goodness also have functions, which, although they interpenetrate, stand in their own right. The *sumnum bonum* for Alexander, then, follows the traditional threefold classification. He makes two variations, however. The first is his doctrine of tertiary qualities. In this he emphasizes the union between mind and object, but he abstracts the relation. His second variation is his emphasis upon the character of these ultimate values as consisting of coherence. "We cannot regard value then as a *quality* of things. . . . What we apprehend in objects of value is their coherence."\(^\text{10}\)

A word must be said concerning Alexander's view of deity and why it is not the *sumnum bonum*. In the first place, he makes deity to mean nothing more than what always lies beyond the present level. In the second place, "deity is not itself a value, for values are human inventions and deity is ultra-human."\(^\text{11}\) He then goes on to say, "God is for us the highest being in the universe, but he cannot be called the highest value, for there is no unvalue with which he can be contrasted."\(^\text{12}\) God conserves values but is not himself one.

\(^{10}\) Alexander, STD, Vol. II, 243.


Thus Alexander makes the three tertiary qualities—truth, beauty, and goodness—his *summum bonum*.

Another variation of the *summum bonum* in relation to truth, beauty, and goodness is made by G. E. Moore who makes goodness the supreme value in life. His ethical approach to value dominates his system and makes the goal of life goodness. This *summum bonum* he speaks of as an "Universal Good". He says, "That a thing should be an ultimate rational end means, then, that it is truly good in itself; and that it is truly good in itself means that it is a part of Universal Good."\textsuperscript{13} He states that the good is definable although good is not.\textsuperscript{14} However, just what the good is he does not clearly say although he gives us some suggestions as to what it may be.

There are two things which Moore says the good is not. In the first place, it is not pleasurable feeling. He does not admit even the degree of pleasure that Laird does. Feelings, according to Moore, are inadequate as criteria for value, and to assert them as ultimate values is to fall into the naturalistic fallacy. The good must be something objective. Secondly, the Universal Good is not deity. In speaking of Kant's use of

\textsuperscript{13} Moore, PE, 100.
\textsuperscript{14} Moore, PE, 9.
Practical Reason, he says, "... There is no such being—neither a God, nor any being such as philosophers have called by the names I have mentioned."15 Thus the *summum bonum* must be something objective, yet not unitary like God.

Now let us see what affirmations Moore makes about the Universal Good. Firstly, about his conception of universal. To put it briefly, he means by this that good is good under every condition. If value is true, then it is true universally, for that is what intrinsic means. Secondly, the Universal Good is a whole. However, ultimate reality is not to be interpreted as a single whole, as we saw above, but rather as a series of wholes. Each value is a completed whole having parts. "What is asserted to have intrinsic value is the existence of the whole; and the existence of the whole includes the existence of its part."16 The third characteristic of the Universal Good is what Moore means by good. He is not very explicit on this point when he says:

Indeed, so far as I can see, there is no characteristic whatever which always distinguishes every whole which has greater intrinsic value from every whole which has less, except the fundamental one that it would always be the duty of every agent to prefer the better to the worse, if he had to choose between a pair of actions, of which they would be the sole effects. And similarly, so far as I can see, there is no characteristic whatever which belongs to all things that are intrinsically

15 Moore, ETH, 151.
16 Moore, PE, 29.
good and only to them—except simply the one that they all are intrinsically good and ought always to be preferred to nothing at all, if we had to choose between an action whose sole effect would be one of them and one which would have no effects whatever. As can be seen, this is not a very clear statement of what is meant by the highest good. Certainly we ought to prefer the better to the worse, because that is what the term value means. And surely something is better than nothing. Even nature abhors a vacuum. Therefore, Moore has not given us much light on the problem of what he means by the summmum bonum. His use of the universal we can understand, but when he defines the good, he goes off into hopeless abstraction and his terms become merely a tautology. The obvious cause for this is the fact that he thinks no definition of good is possible. In the second chapter we suggested that unless you are able to give some definition of good (value), you cannot know where you are going. Moore illustrates this perfectly. When he tries to arrive at a definition of the good, he finds that he cannot unless he also defines good. The result is that his theory becomes unrelated to life and abstract, and in so doing, he fails to assign proper respect to truth and beauty which also are ultimate values, and perhaps there may be others also, as we shall see when we discuss later some other theories.

In conclusion, Moore makes goodness the summmum bonum, but his

17 Moore, ETH, 247-248.
definition of this highest good is a failure because of his refusal to define good. The good can never be defined without some reference to what we mean by good.

A further variation of the Platonic classification of values is made by Bosanquet who elevates truth (reason) to the position of the *summum bonum* above goodness and beauty. The embodiment of truth he finds in the Absolute:

What we mean by it is in each case the same; we mean that which must stand; that which has nothing without to set against it, and which is pure self-maintenance within. . . . In the ultimate sense . . . it is common ground that there can only be one individual, and that, the individual, the Absolute.18

The character of this Absolute is strictly logical, as free from all inner contradiction:

. . . Positive pleasure and all satisfaction, as distinct from an intensity of feeling which there is reason to suspect of being illusory, depends on the character of logical stability of the whole inherent in the objects of desire, and that what in this sense is more real, that is, more at one with itself and the whole (e. g. free from contradiction) is also the experience in which the mind obtains the more durable and coherent satisfaction, and more completely realizes itself. This consideration prescribes the nature of the ultimate good or end, which is the supreme standard of value, and cannot itself be measured by anything else.19

Thus, although Bosanquet says that value includes truth, beauty, and goodness, only the first characterizes the Absolute which is the *summum bonum*. The difficulty with this view is

18 Bosanquet, PIV, 68.
19 Bosanquet, PIV, 298–299.
the same as with Moore's. It overlooks the significance of other values. Perhaps truth deserves a higher place extrinsically because it interpenetrates more than other values, but the *summum bonum* is intrinsic and must therefore include beauty and goodness as well as truth.

Mackenzie has given us a fourth variation of the Platonic trilogy when he makes beauty the highest good. He says:

> But is beauty thus understood, the only ultimate value? In a large sense of the term, I think this may fairly be maintained. Beauty is the only thing that is 'its own excuse for being.'

Nothing is beautiful that is not in some way apprehended as real; and in this sense, truth is necessarily included in beauty. Apart from this, truth can hardly be regarded as having value in itself.21

This emphasis upon beauty as the *summum bonum* is not as common as the theories above, although Croce and Gentile in Italy have had a wide influence, because beauty is most often regarded as being subjective. However, there are just as valid reasons for maintaining beauty is the supreme end as for truth or goodness. In fact, the principle of harmony which beauty embodies is almost the same thing as the criterion of coherence. The ugly (disvalue) is that which does not fit

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20 Mackenzie, UV, 141.
21 Mackenzie, UV, 146.
harmoniously in with the other parts. Yet this theory too fails because it neglects the facts which indicate that truth and goodness are autonomous.

We come now to a consideration of a theory propounded by Sorley which differs radically from the previous ones in having a distinctly religious touch. The *summun bonum* is found in God in whom all values are conserved:

Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth — as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake.\(^2\)

The affirmation of God Sorley finds by treating experience as a whole and not neglecting any of the facts. He places truth, beauty, and goodness on a par and then adds a fourth which is the crowning factor to his whole theory. This fourth value is what is commonly called religious value. The reason why much philosophy omits this value is that it treats religion too lightly. Sorley, however, perceives that there are values such as prayer, worship, and others which cannot be classified under any other head. They stand in their own right as valid parts of experience. Thus he says, "Only ideal objects, conceived as independent of time, can be called permanent in the

\(^{22}\) Sorley, MVG, 467.
strict sense. Such are the 'eternal values' of truth, beauty, and goodness; such also is the love of God.²³ It is through the inclusion of these religious values that Sorley makes a significant contribution to philosophy. It is evident that philosophy must now recognize them, and so religion receives a new support. It is important to note that only by an empirical, coherent view of experience such a theory is possible. Philosophy is thus driven to a consideration of the problem of God, for he is the sumnum bonum of all logical and consistent philosophy.

²³ Sorley, MVG, 43.
CHAPTER VI

SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE VALUE

One of the most important problems in any theory of value is whether value is objective or subjective. Upon the answer to this depends our allegiance to many values. Take prayer for instance. Is there an objective reality to whom we pray? If there is not, then we have to ask ourselves why should we pray. In like manner many of our values depend upon an objective reference. Therefore, our first step must be to define the difference between subjective and objective value. All theories of value fall under one of these two heads, although there are common factors in both. When we speak of subjective value, we mean that value is the product of a human attitude or judgment, and by objective value we mean that it is independent of human attitudes or judgments.\(^1\) This is the problem which we saw first when we discussed the definability of value.

There are both mentalistic and extra-mental theories of value, the latter being objective by definition. The mentalistic theories are classified as either subjective or objec-

\(^1\) Brogan, Art. 1, 127.
tive. Under each of these heads there are two types, personal and impersonal.2 We shall deal at length with only three of these types. G. E. Moore and Laird are realists who represent the extra-mental group. Alexander is the most eminent representative of the impersonal subjective type. Schiller, a distinguished humanist, makes value personal and subjective. However, we shall let Alexander represent the subjective type because he treats value more completely. Examples of the other types are Bosanquet whose logical system represents the impersonal objective thought and Sorley who makes value objective and personal.

First let us take the subjective position represented by Alexander. It must be said that Alexander claims at times that his theory of value is objective, but taken as a whole we shall see that it is really subjective. He sets up a double criterion of value, one which is individual and one which is social. In the individual criterion he introduces his theory of tertiary qualities. These qualities are the product of a subject-object determination. "Values then are unlike the empirical qualities of external things, shape, or fragrance, or life; they imply the amalgamation of the object

2 See Brightman's article on this subject in Wilm, Studies in Philosophy and Theology.
with the human appreciation of it.\footnote{Alexander, STD, Vol. II, 238.} Value under this theory depends upon both a mind and an object. It is something which such a combination creates. If we adhere strictly to our definition, Alexander must be classed as subjective because value for him cannot exist apart from the human attitude, even though it also depends on an objective reference.

However, Alexander is clearly subjective when he comes to his second criterion of value - the social mind. In fact, if it were not for society, we would not be aware of values at all, because it is only through conflicts in society that our values are formed. He says:

\begin{quote}
It is social intercourse, therefore, which makes us aware that there is a reality compounded of ourselves and the object, and that in that relation the object has a character which it would not have except for that relation.\footnote{Alexander, STD, Vol. II, 240.}
\end{quote}

By collective mind he does not mean that society really has a mind, nor "a new mind, which is the mind of a group."\footnote{Alexander, STD, Vol. II, 241.} What he does mean by the social mind is a standard mind. Society sets up standards and these constitute the collective mind. The intercourse among minds results in conflicts, and these conflicts produce standards which we call values. Nor does
Alexander confine value to human beings. "Value does not begin at the human level, but exists in its appropriate form at an earlier level." The process by which evolution produces values he calls adaptation. "Value depends upon adaptation and adaptation assumes the character of value through the rejection of the unadapted values." Values thus become a social enterprise and possess no other objectivity. The emphasis upon the individual, even in society, labels Alexander's theory as subjective.

The fundamental weakness of this theory is its doctrine of tertiary qualities. Alexander still insists on the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, as well as his tertiary qualities, which Berkeley completely overthrew. Any such distinction results in vagueness and abstractness, which is true in Alexander's case. It is much easier to argue for tertiary qualities than to describe what they are other than being subject-object determinations. They are not concrete experiences but rather the product of theory. Therefore, Alexander's subjective view is not based on empirical proof, and coherent experience is the only measuring stick which we have.

A further objection to his subjective view is that any subjective theory always rests upon an assumption of an objective validity. Subjectivists insist that there are values to be gained as products of our own personality rather than from any objective reality. However, J. S. Mill, himself a hedonist, claimed that if we seek these subjective states, we never attain them. Thus to pursue happiness is never to be happy. Even to say that we should believe in objective forces although they do not exist is begging the question. Subjectivity cannot produce the desired results so always assumes objectivity.

Furthermore, the subjective theory of value fails to account for the presence of permanence or standards in values. Thus when I judge a thing beautiful, I do not mean simply that I think it is beautiful but that the object possesses a standard of beauty. If this were not the case, our only criterion could be a majority vote, and that is not what we mean by truth, beauty, and goodness. In fact, we often say that the majority is wrong. We also choose among our desires, which are values in their simplest form. We even say that some of our desires may be wrong, or some desires are better than others. The standard for any such judgment must be an objective reality independent of our desire. Thus any subjective theory of value fails to explain the whole of experience.
Now let us examine the objective theories of value. The philosophers who comprise this class may be subdivided into three groups: realists, absolutists, and personalists. All three groups agree in making values independent of human feeling or interest, but as to the exact place of objective reference they disagree. In the location of this value, they roughly follow the general outlines of realism, absolute idealism, and personalistic idealism. The realists make value extra-mental and deny the relation to any mind, whereas the absolutists insist on the mental relation. The personalists are still a third variation. They are a middle position between the extremes of realism and absolute idealism. They hold that the interpretation of value must be in terms of mind, but they do not deny the reality of finite minds in order to affirm an absolute Mind, as Bosanquet does. For them the universe is a society of selves, and so values reside in individuals (Sorley).

Examining the claims of the realists to an objective theory of value, we shall begin with G. E. Moore. H. W. Wright in an article on the objectivity of value comments on the fact that Moore establishes his objectivity without reference to metaphysics. In this respect, Moore means that his

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8 Wright, Art. 1.
objectivity does not depend on any abstract metaphysics:

I define 'metaphysical', therefore, by a reference to super sensible reality; although I think that the only non-natural objects, about which it has succeeded in obtaining truth, are objects which do not exist at all. 9

Moore's view is based rather on common sense. Since he places secondary qualities in the same category with primary ones, he goes one step further and places value qualities on the same footing. Thus the idea of worth, of color, and of extension are all objectively real. His is the naive view but the philosophy in back of it is not as simple as it first sounds. It appears quite evident to the average mind, but philosophy was a long time in discovering that even secondary and primary qualities must all be treated alike. Now Moore says that tertiary qualities (values) are the same as primary and secondary qualities. Moore is correct in equating all three, and this is the basic philosophy behind his common sense view of value.

Thilly in his History of Philosophy says that Moore's theory is subjective because Moore does not assign values to reality. 10 However, the question of the relation of value to reality is not the same as the relation between value and

9 Moore, PE, 112.
10 Thilly, HOP, 581.
objectivity, although they are often associated with each other. It is possible for value to be subjective and still be a part of ultimate reality. What Moore means here is that value is a quality which individual minds recognize and which they do not create, it being extra-mental. As he says, "When we call a thing 'good' we never mean simply that somebody has some mental attitude towards it." Moore supports this statement by showing that we can desire a thing and still not know whether it is good or bad. In other words, we choose among our desires. According to our definition of subjective and objective, if a thing exists apart from our minds, then it is objective. Moore says:

> Whenever he thinks of 'intrinsic value', or 'intrinsic worth', or says that a thing 'ought to exist', he has before his mind the unique object - the unique property of things - which I mean by 'good'.

We now must ask how this value enters our minds so as to be known. Avoiding any epistemological argument, we shall simply say that Moore relies upon intuition to do this. Value is objective and independent as a set of ultimate essences to be known by intuition. However, intuition is not an adequate criterion for either truth or value. The only logical criterion is that of coherence.

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11 Moore, ETH, 161.
12 Moore, PE, 17.
13 Brogan, Art. 1, 128.
Laird, also realistic in his theory, likewise says that value is objective in the sense that it does not depend on human minds:

There is beauty, in sky and cloud and sea, in lilies and in sunsets, in the glow of the bracken in autumn and in the enticing greeness of a leafy spring. Nature, indeed, is infinitely beautiful, and she seems to wear her beauty as she wears colour or sound. Why then should her beauty belong to us rather than to her? Human character and human dispositions have value or worth, which belongs to them in the same sense as redness belongs to the cherry.14

Here we see that Laird goes so far in his objectivity as to base it on nature itself, which he believes contains value. Thus his is a type of objective naturalism.

The obstacle which these realists fail to surmount is that of linking value up with life. If the objectivity of value lies in the fact that it is extra-mental, then there remains no way by which value can enter our experience, because all our experience is mediated by our consciousness and knowledge. Moore relies upon intuition but this is not a solution. Neither can a realistic theory describe what value is. It is easy to postulate the objective value, but if that value lies beyond all reason, then it is a something-I-know-not-what. Moore thinks it is impossible even to define value partly because the method of analysis does not lead to definitions,

14 Laird, SR, 129, 144.
but also because value is something beyond our knowing process. However, such a theory does not satisfy us because we want to know both what value is and what its metaphysical status is.

The difference between the objective realists and the absolute idealists in addition to the mental relationship lies in the fact that the realists think there is no unity among values, while the absolute idealists interpret value in relation to the whole. Thus Laird, a realist, says, "The view that there is but one supreme end, a perfect union of all these divisions of excellence, cannot, I think, be sustained."15 Opposing this view, Bosanquet, an absolute idealist, says, "... Logic, or the spirit of totality, is the clue to reality, value, and freedom."16 The distinction between these two views is important. The realists tend to rely on the method of analysis, since reality is a society of individuals, while the idealists employ the method of synthesis as their test. This is true only of objective realists, as we shall see. Alexander is a naturalistic realist who holds a subjective theory of value, and he appeals to the criterion of coherence, which is synthesis taken in its final form, and does not make much use of the method of analysis.

15 Laird, SMT, 59.
16 Bosanquet, PIV, 23.
The criterion of coherence, as we saw when we were discussing the definability of value, is the only adequate and logical criterion we have, whether it be for truth or value. The realists for the most part affirm analysis as over against synthesis, and the absolute idealists use only synthesis. When we stack each of these two methods up against the ideal of coherence, we find that each falls short. Therefore, they must be used as complementary rather than self-sufficient methods. Thus absolute idealism is not the whole story any more than is realism. This must be kept in mind along with the above suggestion that most subjective theories of value appeal to coherence for their validity. If objectivism is the only logical position, how does it happen that the subjectivist employs the correct method? It certainly indicates that objective value in its extreme forms overlooks something, and this obscure something is what this chapter will try to discover.

Bosanquet, however, illustrates how ultimately we must accept value in relation to the whole. He points out that everything we are or know is in one way or another related to something else and dependent on it. Therefore, according to his definition of individuality as being that which is entirely self-sufficient, only the Absolute can be a true individual:
What we mean by it (individuality) is in each case the
same; we mean that which must stand; that which has
nothing without to set against it, and which is pure
self-maintenance within. . . . In the ultimate
sense . . . it is common ground that there can only
be one individual, and that, the individual, the
Absolute.17

It is thus that Bosanquet achieves his Absolute. There are two
objections to his view. In the first place, the Absolute is
alien to life and experience. Bosanquet denies this,18 but
nevertheless, he roots his philosophy in logic rather than in
experience as a whole. He moulds and selects the facts to fit
his theory. The second objection is to his denial of reality
to finite minds. If value is for the Absolute alone, why
should we even try to reason about life? The finite individual
is our only clue to reality. It is at this point that the
personalistic idealists break with Bosanquet. They recognize
that the starting place for every theory is with the individual.
Every experience is our experience.

So far we have been talking about Bosanquet's general
type theory rather than about his specific treatment of value.
Concerning this latter point, he says that his theory of value
is objective, while recognizing at the same time that there
are instrumental values. "Every purpose, no doubt, implies a

17 Bosanquet, PIV, 68.
18 Bosanquet, PIV, 13.
subjective value, but there is no reason why every true value should be a purpose." Bosanquet perceives that although there is a degree of subjectivity in every value-judgment, nevertheless there is also a recognition of something beyond ourselves:

Finite consciousness, whether animal or human, did not make its body, and does not set the greater purposes to its world. Something greater and more inclusive than itself both operates through it and reveals itself to it.20

This objective reference becomes dominant in Bosanquet's theory to the exclusion of the subjective. Thus it is that he can affirm reality only of the Absolute and deny the reality of finite minds and values. Furthermore, value is only a derivative of reality. He says:

Therefore we adhere to Plato's conclusion that objects of our likings possess as much of satisfactoriness — which we identify with value — as they possess of reality and trueness. And that is a logical standard, and a standard involving the whole.21

Hence value is dependent on logic. We now have to ask ourselves whether or not this is a true interpretation of experience. I think that we shall have to agree that it is not. Life is larger than logic in a certain sense. Logic attempts to relate every experience to ourselves, but the experience itself does not depend on logic. Experience is the content upon which

19 Bosanquet, PIV, 127.
20 Bosanquet, PIV, 221.
21 Bosanquet, PIV, 317.
logic works. This applies also to values. We speak of true values not in the sense that they depend on truth for their existence, but that their truth is measured by their coherence with life as a whole, and logic furnishes us with that criterion. Bosanquet is unjustified in limiting experience to "rational experience." His naturalistic theory of value is too one-sided, although at times he tries to give it an emotional touch.

We saw above that a subjective theory is unable to account for the objective standards which we recognize. An impersonal objective theory of value has the opposite weakness. Bosanquet is able to explain why his system hangs together, but he cannot adequately explain why individuals deviate from the coherent whole. He attempts to meet the difficulty by not assigning reality to finite individuals, but the only thing we ever know immediately is ourself and our own experiences. Therefore, an impersonal and objective theory of value negates a valid part of experience.

We now turn our attention to a representative of the personalistic school, W. R. Sorley, who in his Moral Values and the Idea of God has given one of the clearest and most comprehensive books on value. He differs from Bosanquet in two respects. First he refuses to deny reality to finite minds
as Bosanquet does. Rather, he makes his whole theory of value depend upon finite personality. The second point of difference is the fact that Sorley interprets experience in a broader light so as to include value on a par, at least, with scientific knowledge. We might summarize the difference between Sorley and Bosanquet by the distinction between two terms - God and the Absolute. Sorley conceives of ultimate reality in terms of a personal God, with all the religious flavor which accompanies such a belief. On the other hand, Bosanquet believes in the abstract conception of an Absolute which is devoid of all emotion and feeling:

... The selective conations of finite minds cannot claim a fundamental position as the source of order and value. And this applies to the mind of a finite god, if such a being is to be treated as conceivable.22

Whereas Bosanquet refines his philosophy until he has sifted out the personal and emotional elements, Sorley makes his philosophy an interpretation of the whole of experience, including values.

We shall examine Sorley's treatment of experience first because it furnishes the data of his theory. He attacks first of all those interpretations of experience which leave out the value side. In speaking of metaphysical ethics, of which

22 Bosanquet, PIV, 127.
Bosanquet is an example, he says:

The fault which is to be found with metaphysical ethics is, in the end, just this, that its data are insufficient. It tends to disregard that portion of experience which is of greatest importance for its purpose, namely, moral experience.23

We have notions of good and bad, and these notions are just as much a part of our actual, conscious experience as our sense-experience. All cognition is based on a hypothesis that our sense-experiences are rational, so it is not absurd to say that value-experience is also valid. If we are not allowed to have knowledge of value, then we have no knowledge of anything. Values and sense-experiences stand or fall together as far as their validity is concerned. Sorley's point is that our personality is of two parts: emotions and reason. One part is as valid as the other when it has been tested by the ideal of coherence. However, we must be careful not to draw too sharp a distinction between these two because they interpenetrate. They are distinguishable but not separable.

Having established values as a valid part of the data of experience, Sorley then proceeds to show the relation between value and human personality. He makes personality serve two purposes for his theory. First of all it illustrates how a philosophy of value differs from natural science. Science

23 Sorley, MVG, 20.
is concerned with the universal in things, while value exists only in particular individuals and the field of the sciences is not that of value. "Value lies outside their scope because they are concerned with the universal and not with the individual, and the latter is the home of value." Thus science and value theory deal with different aspects of reality.

The second use made of the appeal to personality is to establish the objectivity of value. This Sorley does by showing that if persons are objective, value, which is a valid part of personal experience, must also be objective. He logically overthrows the subjective view of value by showing that any subjective theory begs the question by assuming an objective world-view. In this respect, values are even more significant for personality than cognition, because cognition is a means for reaching these values. "The attitude of valuation, accordingly, may even be said to have priority in the development of mind over the attitude of cognition." But apart from the relation between value and cognition, there is a further reason for the objectivity of value. In Sorley's philosophy, the only existent is the concrete individual, and since value is meaningless apart from existence, he makes

24 Sorley, MVG, 111.
25 Sorley, MVG, 25.
value eternal only as persons are eternal. Reality is composed of relations, persons, and values. Just as relations apply to things, so values apply to persons. Things are neither good nor bad in themselves and so do not possess value. "Ethical principles are valid for persons; physical principles are valid for material things; and this difference is the ground of the different kinds of validity possessed by each."  

Both the logical and the empirical goal of his theory of value Sorley finds in God. The fact that values are conserved in the world and are objective points to someone beyond ourselves whom we call God. Thus he says:

Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth - as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatsoever else is of value for its own sake.

So Sorley climaxes his system with God, as contrasted with Bosanquet's Absolute.

Yet this distinction between Bosanquet and Sorley depends entirely upon what interpretation of experience we take. There are facts which point to the unreality of the human personality, and Sorley uses them to point us beyond to

26 Sorley, MVG, 190.
27 Sorley, MVG, 467.
God. However, when these isolated factors are placed in the whole, they are rather insignificant. We must justify our preference for Sorley's theory on the basis of his treatment of experience. We have already indicated above how Bosanquet selected his evidence on the basis of its rational content. Sorley uses a different method and appeals to the ideal criterion of coherence, which we have already assumed to be the only possible one. Ignoring extrinsic value and using only intrinsic value as true value, Sorley says, "If we are to compare values at all, it appears to me that we must give up the idea of a scale for that of a system." 28 This coherence is not always easy to apply, but it is the only criterion we have. "Freedom from contradiction, coherence, and thus possible systematisation are criteria by which the validity of any moral judgment may be tested." 29 On this basis, then, we must prefer Sorley's interpretation of experience because he has included more facts than Bosanquet.

There are two criticisms of Sorley's theory which do not destroy but enlarge upon it. The first is that he draws a too sharp distinction between things and values. There are not a world of science and a world of values but rather there is one

28 Sorley, MVG, 51.
29 Sorley, MVG, 97.
world which contains both things and values which are mutually related. Many of our values depend upon things for their realization, indicating that things and values interpenetrate. Nevertheless, Sorley is correct in affirming the fact that values do not receive their worth from objects.

A second criticism is that Sorley overlooks the subjective reference in every value-judgment. Metaphysically, values are objective, but they would be meaningless unless they were related to our own consciousness. All values as we experience them contain a subjective factor, some more so than others. We desire something and our desires are satisfied. It is the satisfaction which is objective, but it cannot be divorced from the desire. As Mackenzie says, "... The subjective and objective aspects of value are inseparably bound together."30 This point even personalistic value is apt to overlook. Our coherent theory of value, therefore, must recognize that value is objective in its validity, but its satisfaction is subjective.

We must note in passing that Sorley brings religion back within the realm of philosophy. Many thinkers would rule out the problem of God, but Sorley has carefully weighed

30 Mackenzie, UV, 141.
the evidence and found that there are religious values just as there are truth values and beauty values and moral values. It is true that he does not treat these religious values at length, but that would not be within his purpose. The distinctly religious philosophy at the end of his theory clearly indicates, however, that he considers religious values as empirical facts of experience. He is therefore unswayed by the popular prejudice against including God even in philosophy.
CHAPTER VII
VALUE AND EVIL

No coherent theory of value can be constructed by considering only the fact of value in the universe. The whole of experience furnishes us with more than that and shows that there is disvalue, or evil, in the world. The problem then arises as to how these facts should be treated. Is it possible to believe in value and disvalue at the same time? This problem is especially important for a theory of objective value which, as we saw in the preceding chapter, is the most coherent system. Thus Mackenzie says:

... The importance of a right understanding of the conception of Value, with the view of seeing whether the main difficulty in the way of an idealistic system can be removed. It is evident that that difficulty lies in what is known as the problem of evil.¹

Even apart from any theory of value, it is important that we explain the presence of evil. There are two ways of doing this. The first is to explain evil by reducing it to moral good. Thus value becomes a term which includes both good and evil. However, the facts of experience do not warrant this procedure. There are evils in the world - floods, fires, earthquakes, disease, etc. - which do not admit of this

¹ Mackenzie, UV, 86.
treatment. The second method of meeting this problem preserves the reality of evil while at the same time explaining it. To explain does not mean that evil has to be explained away. No effort is made to dilute the facts, but they are faced squarely as they present themselves. The presence of evil is no slight obstacle to value, and it is necessary to assign adequate importance to all the facts.

Yet there is much that can be said for a theory which can reduce evil to goodness. By such a method an almost logically water-tight theory may be obtained. A theory which does not have to account for evil is spared much embarrassment and difficulty. Bosanquet's is such a theory. He argues that the fact of evil is simply a fact which does not make it an absolute metaphysical reality:

It is a mistake to treat the finite world, or pain, or evil, as an illusion. To the question whether they are real or are not real, the answer must be, as to all questions of this type, that everything is real, so long as you do not take it for more than it is. On the view here accepted, finiteness, pain, and evil are essential features of Reality, and belong to an aspect of it which leaves its marks even on perfection.2

Taking this statement as the basis for his conception of evil, let us examine more closely just what he means. He says that evil must be regarded as real, but reality he uses in a

2 Bosanquet, PIV, 240-241.
qualified sense. When he says that it must not be taken for
more than it is, he indicates that it is not truly real - i.e.,
the Absolute could not be evil. But first let us see just
what he means by evil.

In the first place, evil possesses a character which is
partly the same as good in the sense that neither can stand
alone.

Again, both good and evil, like truth and error,
are made of the same stuff. . . . Neither has or
could have its character without the other; and if
you could wipe out the one you would annihilate the
other along with it.3

Good, then, is no more real than evil because, according to
Bosanquet's reasoning, the Absolute must be devoid of all inner
contradiction. The Absolute is beyond good and evil. It is
true that for us good and evil are relative terms, but so are
black and white. Of course Bosanquet would reply that black
or white can not be applied to the Absolute either, yet we
mean an actual color when we speak of an object possessing it.
Nor is it any more possible to speak of good and evil as
possessing the same character. Moral good and evil are alike
only in having a common content. Both depend upon what we
do with a certain thing, and the thing is neither good nor
bad in itself, but becomes good or bad only when our actions

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3 Bosanquet, VDI, 205.
make it such. But even this answer only shoves the problem one stage deeper. Our actions, then, possess a character of either goodness or badness, and that character is not the same in both instances. If we judge our actions by the criterion of coherence, a single action cannot be both good and bad at the same time. Moreover, the facts of natural evil do not in any sense allow of an interpretation in terms of ultimate good. There is no quality of goodness in a disastrous fire, although persons may achieve good results by transcending that particular event. For example, a fire in an unsafe tenement house might call attention of other similar buildings to the notice of city officials who would "clean them up." However, the concrete fact of the fire does not possess the same quality as goodness and becomes good only when personality achieves a transformation. Bosanquet should not, then, make the relativity of good and evil the explanation of their characters.

However, Bosanquet further reduces the reality from evil by making it an inner contradiction. Since he makes all reality dependent upon the absence of inner contradiction and relations, and evil is self-contradictory while good is not, good is more real than evil. It is true that both have the same composition, but the addition of inner contradiction to evil makes it less real. If Bosanquet had used the criterion of coherence rather than that of self-limitation, his results
would be quite different. As it is, logical non-contradiction does not treat evil in the concrete and this is a serious weakness. This weakness leads into great difficulty when it comes to a consideration of evil and the Absolute. Since the Absolute is the only logical reality and also all-inclusive, the problem arises as to what should be done with evil. The Absolute cannot logically contain any evil, yet evil is a fact in our experience. Bosanquet solves the puzzle by relying on logical abstractness:

There is evil, then, within the Absolute, but the Absolute is not characterized by evil. . . . It is true, good as good involves evil, but good as absorbed in perfection only involves evil as absorbed within good.  

It is only by denying the reality of evil that he avoids a logical contradiction, because the Absolute could not be both perfect and imperfect. Therefore, the distinction between good and evil is destroyed and evil is absorbed within the good.

The result of this method is to overlook the concrete facts of evil in the universe. Bosanquet's system is secure logically, but evil must be considered in actual experience and not in the abstract. It is a fact which must be dealt with fairly. It is true, as he says, "We feel, as we constantly admit, that our judgment of morality and of failure is

4 Bosanquet, VDI, 317.
not all there is to be said about a man. His value and his reality lie deeper than that. But even though evil may not be supreme, it is still a fact. Furthermore, the overcoming and transcendence of evil takes place in concrete experience and not in a logical dialectic. Bosanquet's dialectic needs to be filled with the stuff of experience which would make evil real. He feels, however, that if we only knew more, evil would in some way turn out to be good. Two replies should be made to this. Firstly, we do not know more. If we are to do any thinking at all, it must be done on this assumption. It is our task to work with what we have and not long for greater powers. Secondly, there are actual evils which are logical contradictions, and even though we knew infinitely more, they would still appear as such. If the laws of reality are rational laws, then what is irrational now must be irrational for all time and place. It is not true that "the critic who insists on the brute facts of suffering condemns himself and others to it." Unless we are conscious of the facts of evil, even though they may appear brutal to us, we cannot transcend them. Bosanquet, therefore, unempirically denies reality to evil. He makes all evil unreal because it involves logical contradiction, but he overlooks logical evil.

5 Bosanquet, PIV, 17.
6 Bosanquet, VDI, 219.
Thus it is necessary to affirm the reality of evil. W. R. Sorley says, "The facts of morality as they appear in the world, and the idea of good and evil found in man's consciousness, are among the data of experience." He takes the whole of experience and finds that it includes evil as well as good. Therefore, a theory of value must take into account the presence of disvalue in the world. Likewise, Alexander says, "Thus truth and error, goodness and badness, beauty and ugliness, are all realities among the sum total of reality." Whereas Bosanquet solves the problem by logically denying evil's reality, those who affirm the reality of evil like Sorley and Alexander accept the fact of evil and then construct their theories. We saw above that Bosanquet makes evil fit his theory, but such men as Sorley, Mackenzie, Alexander, and Laird try to make their theories fit the facts, the sharpest contrast being between Bosanquet and Alexander. Sorley and Mackenzie incorporate parts from both extreme. Now let us see just how these respective theories recognize disvalue in the universe.

The first point upon which they agree is that the nature of evil is that of incoherence. Bosanquet, in denying the reality of evil, appealed to the principle of inner coherence,

7 Sorley, MVG, 1.
but Alexander appeals to external coherence. We are unable to distinguish good and evil unless we take them in their complete setting. "Error we saw was a reality, but it was not true. Badness is more plainly a reality, just as much as goodness; but it is not good, and it is incoherent with what is good." It is this incoherence which sets evil off from good, because in other respects "the materials of virtue and vice are identical." The difference between Alexander and Bosanquet, then, is the manner in which they conceive the essential characteristic of evil and not in some substance which might be a substratum for evil. Alexander's appeal to the criterion of coherence is superior because it treats with the whole of reality. Bosanquet turned evil in upon itself and discovered that it involved an inner contradiction and therefore could not be real; but Alexander fits evil into experience as a whole. There are two ways by which evil may be interpreted. It may be taken in the narrow sense as the opposite of moral goodness, or it may be taken as disvalue which is the opposite of value. Whichever sense we may choose, the same criterion applies. Just as coherence is the criterion of truth and distinguishes the false from the true, so it tells us what is evil. Moralists have longed for a single, absolute method of telling the bad from the good by which we can take a single

action and tell whether it is good or bad, but such we do not have anymore than we can take a fact alone and tell whether it is true or false. Bosanquet tried to achieve the impossible and define evil in isolation, but his only answer was that evil was not real. Alexander keeps evil as a real experience by using coherence as his criterion. This is the essential contrast between the theories which make evil unreal and those who insist upon its reality.

This latter group also agrees that good and evil stand in a relative position to each other as far as our knowledge of them is concerned. We are unable to think of goodness without thinking of its opposite, evil. This fact Alexander recognizes when he says:

The so-called tertiary 'qualities' of things, truth, goodness, and beauty, are values (and for us are the most important of the values), and imply and are unintelligible without a contrast with their unvalues of error, evil, and ugliness.\(^{11}\)

Bosanquet used this fact to show that the Absolute transcends all good and evil. His view, however, is not in keeping with experience. It is much more valuable simply to recognize that good and evil must be relative for us. The world as we know it is the best that we can conceive, and is as Mackenzie says:

A world in which there was no aspect of evil at all would in truth be a world 'Beyond Good and Evil';

and such a world would, at any rate, not be a good world. It seems clear, therefore, that the world that is selected by rational choice is a world that contains some aspect of evil.12

These philosophers who affirm the reality of evil deal with its relativity in concrete instances, while Bosanquet treats its relativity in the abstract. It is as Laird says, that we could have no ethics without a knowledge of good and evil.13 Alexander brings evolution to bear upon this problem by pointing out that "the establishment of value and the extirpation of unvalue is the sign of adaptation." 14 It is only when the social mind makes a mistake that value is achieved. Thus development depends upon evil.

However realistic these theories of evil may sound, they must be measured in terms of the relation of evil to the highest value. For our present purposes let us speak of this highest value as God. If evil is truly real, then God must somehow encompass it; i.e., if he is to be active in our lives. We here find disagreement among those who affirm the reality of evil as to the status of evil in God. On one side, Alexander denies that God can be a value at all. "God is for us the highest being in the universe, but he cannot be called the

12 Mackenzie, Art. 2, 367.
13 Laird, SMT, 93.
highest value, for there is no unvalue with which he can be contrasted. Strange as it may seem, this is the very argument which Bosanquet uses to establish his Absolute. Nor can it be denied that Bosanquet has drawn the only logical conclusion. The reality of evil for Alexander, then, is no more metaphysical than it is for Bosanquet, but deity for Alexander is not metaphysical either.

It is possible, however, to make evil metaphysically real, and a part of God in the sense that he is limited. Whether this limitation is a self-limitation or is compelled by God's very nature as in the conception of the Finite God it is not our purpose to inquire. The fact of limitation is the essential thing. Sorley is an excellent example of this method of treating evil. He recognizes the need for making God vital and also the responsibility of doing justice to the facts of evil, so he makes evil the result of God's self-limitation:

If ethical theism is to stand, the evil in the world cannot be referred to God in the same way as the good is referred to him; and the only way to avoid this reference is by the postulate of human freedom. This freedom must be a real freedom, so that it may account for the actual choice of evil when good might have been chosen. We have therefore to face the inference that there is a limitation of the divine activity: that things occur

in the universe which are not due to God's will, though they must have happened with his permission, that is through his self-limitation.  

It is possible, therefore, not only to affirm the metaphysical reality of evil, but also to affirm that reality in relation to the *summum bonum*. The conflict between good and evil is transcended in actual, concrete experience. The danger involved here is that which results from the limitation of the power of value. Somehow the fact that value is not omnipotent goes against the common prejudice, but it should not. The facts of experience show us that value is limited by evil, but they also show us that value overcomes evil without disturbing the reality of the latter. This solution of the problem of value and evil depends upon our willingness to take all the facts into consideration and fit them into a coherent whole. To deny the reality of evil is to evade the problem, for evil must be real while at the same time responsible to the highest value.

16 Sorley, MVG, 461.
CHAPTER VIII
VALUE AND EXISTENCE

Passing now from the discussion of the reality of evil in relation to value, we shall consider the metaphysical existence of value. By metaphysical existence is meant being, or that which is. This is the broad definition of the term, but it is limited as far as human experience is concerned. Anything which exists for us must exist in our consciousness. Therefore, we must define existence as that which is in the space-time relation and a factor in our conscious experience. Does value possess a metaphysical existence of its own, and if it does, how is that existence conceived? Or if value does not exist, what is its relation to reality? This is the problem which underlies all the others we have been discussing. It is strictly metaphysical in nature and concerns the validity of including values in experience. We have been going further and further behind the experience of value until now we have reached the final question - do values exist? British philosophers have given both affirmative and negative answers. These answers correspond closely to the division between subjective and objective theories of value, although this need not be the case in every instance since reality may be construed in subjective terms.
Alexander has given us one of the most consistent and rational theories which deny the existence of value. Instead of making value exist, he makes it subsist. By subsistence he means that value is neither mental nor physical, but is a new relation which arises out of the combination of these two factors. This relation he calls neutral being. It is true he speaks of values as real, but for him subsistence is a part of reality. Speaking of values as tertiary qualities, he says:

The tertiary qualities are not objective like the secondary ones, nor peculiar to mind and thus subjective like consciousness, nor are they like the primary qualities common both to subjects and objects. They are subject-object determinations.

In other words, they subsist. Existence is composed, for Alexander, of minds and objects. Values are a third category which arises out of the combination of the parts of existence. "Values then are unlike the empirical qualities of external things, shape, or fragrance, or life; they imply the amalgamation of the object with the human appreciation of it."

Although Alexander denies the existence of values, he nevertheless makes them real. This he is able to do because he construes reality in such terms as to include subsistence

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3 Loc. cit.
as well as existence. "The tertiary qualities, truth and
goodness and beauty, though they differ from the secondary and
primary ones in being creations of mind, are not the less real." The objection to this point of view is that what he calls real
is what other philosophers mean by existence. At least the
idealists do not separate existence from reality as do such
realists as Alexander, Holt, and Montague. What can be meant
by reality other than existence it is impossible to say, and
this leads us to the consideration of what Alexander means by
tertiary qualities.

We have already seen that they grow out of the union of
mind with object. There are no values apart from this relation-
ship, but values are not merely this relationship. They are
something beyond. It is our task to discover if we can what
this subsistence really means. The task is impossible, however,
because if these realists do mean something beyond a subject-
object determination, they do not tell us what it is. We
experience values as concrete and capable of definition and
description, so when Alexander makes value an essence apart
from existence, we have the right to demand that he explain
what that essence is. The most that he can say about the
character of value is the condition under which it arises.

4 Alexander, STD, Vol. II, 244.
"In every value there are two sides, the subject of valuation and the object of value, and the value resides in the relation between the two, and does not exist apart from them. Yet the causes of a thing do not tell us much about the thing itself. Nor does the fact that value differs from all other external things help us very much. We must conclude, therefore, that if value does subsist, it is a meaningless abstraction as such and quite beyond any of our purposes. This objection is fatal.

The fallacy in Alexander's system lies in his postulating a separate existence out of a subject-object relationship. It is true, as we have previously noted, that all values are realized through a subject-object determination, and by this we mean that for us we are able to achieve value only in relation to an objective event, but this is no reason for taking that relation for more than it is. Alexander elevates it and says that it produces value. As soon as he does that, value becomes an essence with all of life strained out of it. To avoid this fallacy, we must simply accept the subject-object relation as a condition for the realization of value as we experience it. It is a fact and not a cause. The truth in Alexander's system is just this. All of our conscious experience, whether

it be value or sense-experience, contains two factors, our consciousness and its content. This is as far as the facts will let us go, and there is no need for postulating a separate essence. Such an abstract essence as Alexander constructs is no aid in understanding value. Value must exist if it is to have any meaning for us.

The philosopher who has given the clearest account of how he conceives value to exist is W. R. Sorley. The basis for his assertion he finds in an examination of experience. He discovers the fact that moral (value) experience is just as valid as sense-experience. Therefore, he takes this as his start towards discovering the relation between value and reality. It must be noted that he identifies reality and existence and thus avoids the danger into which Alexander fell. In the first place, he says that value has no meaning unless we mean that it exists. "Thus, when we predicate value of anything, we pass from the mere concept of essence of the thing, with its qualities, to a bearing which this essence has upon existence: it is worth existing or ought to be."\(^6\) The distinction is here drawn between value and qualities. Qualities may be predicated about something which does not exist, but that can never be done with values.

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\(^6\) Sorley, MVG, 77.
Sorley recognizes that this value which he is talking about is outside the scope of the natural sciences. Value is not a sense-experience, but is a real experience in another sense. Value is related to persons and thereby becomes real in the same sense as material facts are real. Therefore, "the notion of value always implies a relation to existence—though a relation to which the natural sciences are indifferent." Not content with this proof, Sorley pushes his argument still further and makes value even more real than sense experience. The natural sciences are concerned only with the laws of causation, while value takes the whole of existence for its content. Thus value must exist if it is to be value at all. However, Sorley is careful to point out that all existence is not value, because if this were the case, there would be no sense in using the term value at all. It would be a tautology to say that reality had value. On the contrary, we always mean by such a statement that there is something distinctive about that part of reality which possesses value. Therefore, value and reality are not identical.

Another reason why the natural sciences are unable to perceive value is the fact that they deal only with the universals in experience, while value depends on the concrete

7 Sorley, MVG, 78.
particular. There is no conflict, then, between natural science and a theory of value; the respective fields simply are not the same. In regard to this problem, Sorley says, "Value lies outside their scope because they are concerned with the universal and not with the individual, and the latter is the home of value." However, this does not mean that in values there are no universal elements. Universals are necessary for the understanding of the particulars. This might be expressed differently by saying that no part can be understood apart from its context. Nevertheless, Sorley makes value the unique property of the individual. He does this in order to conform to the fact that value is a definite part of our experience and is not an abstraction as some charge. His view of reality, therefore, is in terms of a personalistic idealism. However, if universals are necessary, does not this indicate that the particulars are the content out of which the form of the universal is made? If this is the case, it is an error to say that value resides only in the particular; but form and content go together, and so value is an element in both the universal and the particular taken together. Since existence is both form and content, value, to conform to it, must be universal in form and particular in content. Sorley overlooks the important fact that personality itself is a

8 Sorley, MVG, 111.
unitas multiplex, and if value depends on personality, it must also contain the universal as well as the particular, for that is the structure of life.

A third distinction between the reality of the facts of natural science and the values is that natural science deals with the realm of things while value is found only in persons. Intrinsic value belongs to persons, and extrinsic value belongs to things. Since Sorley decides that only intrinsic value can truly be called value inasmuch as extrinsic values only point the way towards intrinsic values, value is limited to the realm of conscious persons. He carefully avoids the pitfall of saying whether or not animals are conscious of value. He thinks that perhaps some of them are, but we do not know, and that is as far as anyone can go at present. He meets a further objection to limiting value to personality which states that society is the home of some values by saying that there is no such thing as a community mind. Therefore, the only sense in which value is social is in the case of personal, individual values attainable only through society. Thus personality may be social, but only in this limited sense. . . . There are human values which can be realized only in and by the society: which in this sense — if in this sense

9 Stern, OP, 73.
only - must be regarded as a person and a bearer of value."\(^{10}\)

The only meaning which we can assign to society is a group of individuals.

Sorley grounds his whole theory of value in his emphasis upon the personal element involved. If persons are real, value is real because it is a part of personal experience. "We must take into account what we appreciate as well as what we apprehend - values as well as facts."\(^{11}\) Having once established this point, Sorley proceeds to link value with the whole of reality. The manner in which he does this is what we mean by his philosophical theory. His theory is called theism in religion and personalistic idealism in philosophy. The awareness of value in our personal experience means that personality is basic in the universe, and value must be included in any coherent system. He therefore erects his system upon the fact of value in the universe, a fact which has been commonly overlooked in the past. He thus makes reality consist of three distinct parts: persons, relations, and values. The latter is what receives special emphasis in his system because it has been disregarded so often. As regards the character of relations and values, he says, "Values are indeed similar to relations: as the latter are found in rebus, so the former are

\(^{10}\) Sorley, MVG, 131.

\(^{11}\) Sorley, Art. 1, 248.
always manifested in personis." The fact that values apply only to persons and relations to things means that each has its own method of validity, but they are both united by the criterion of coherence. Sorley does not try to make values apply to the whole of reality, which would result only in confusion as we saw above, so he limits value to personality. Things are neither good nor bad in themselves. Goodness (value) enters in only when the things are part of an action. Values are never static and are always in relation to a purpose. "They reveal purpose as well as order, and make possible a view of reality of the kind which has been described as an interpretation."13

The cleavage which Sorley makes between things and values tends to ignore the importance of things to values. No matter what our conscious experience is, there must always be a subject-object relation. Alexander perceived this, but he distorted the facts by rearing his theory of the tertiary qualities upon them. Sorley goes to the other extreme and separates values and things. This is unjustified because value does not have any content unless it is expressed in an action towards an object. Whenever we speak of value, we

12 Sorley, MVG, 231.
13 Sorley, MVG, 289.
always include a concrete something. Unexpressed value is not value. Even purposive value must have an object. We do not mean simply that values interpenetrate, but they have a character which requires an object, and that object is often a thing. Any value taken alone is meaningless, and an object without value is worthless. When we place the two together, however, we have a filled value experience. Truth, beauty, and goodness are terms for concrete experiences which we have, and every one of those experiences consists of a subject and an object. The tendency for idealism is to ignore the object since all reality is mental, but aside from the question of whether an object is mental or non-mental, it certainly is other than my own evaluation. This is the point which Sorley fails to stress.

According to Sorley, the logical end of value is God. The fact that values are conserved in the universe points to the fact that they must be preserved in God. Thus theism becomes the proper approach to any study of reality which is to include all the factors of experience. Sorley says:

Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the formal home of values, the Supreme Worth - as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake.\[14\]

\[14\] Sorley, MVG, 467.
We have here stated the best argument there is for God. Most philosophers have either overlooked the evidence for value or else have been unwilling to concede so much to religion, but Sorley faces the whole of experience squarely and perceives that if we follow the method of coherence, we are led to the theistic position.

The only way to deny Sorley's conclusion is to deny the reality of value. It is for this reason that the problem of the relation of value to reality is so important. On it must hinge our whole metaphysical theory. To deny logically and coherently the theistic position, one must deny that values are facts of our experience and possess true existence. However, this is impossible to do because, as Sorley says:

At the same time the ethical idea is never without existential connections; and such connections have been already discovered to be of two kinds. In the first place, ethical ideas are facts of the personal consciousness, and they are realized through the will and in the character of persons. They have therefore a place in existent reality; they belong to that portion of the universe which we call persons; and a theory of the universe cannot be complete which ignores their existence as facts and forces. In the second place, they claim objective validity; and this claim is not invalidated by their being conscious ideas, any more than the objective validity of any other kind of knowledge is affected by the fact that the process of knowing is a process in some one's mind.15

To oppose Sorley's argument is to fall into two errors. The

15 Sorley, MVG, 184.
first is that if you deny the validity of value, you must also deny personality, since value is a part of it. No one wants to do this, however. The second error is that if you deny the validity of value, you must deny the validity of all knowledge, and then you have nothing left but solipsism. Accordingly, if there is any meaning to life whatsoever, Sorley must be right in his affirmation that if we begin with the definition of value, we are led logically and empirically to the assertion of God's existence.
SUMMARY

The problem of value has been inherent in philosophy from the very beginning, but only recently has it received separate treatment. The British and American schools of philosophy are now bringing out all the implications of the problem, especially as regards the objective status of value. This renewed interest in value received its impetus from such men as Münsterberg in Germany, and Meinong and Ehrenfels in Austria. As the investigation into this problem progresses, it is bound to have an important effect upon both philosophy and religion.

There is no common agreement among British philosophers concerning the definability of value. Although it would seem essential to have a definition of value, there are those who like G. E. Moore and John Laird think value is indefinable. Moore takes this position because he thinks value is a simple and cannot be discovered through analysis. Laird treats the problem very superficially since he does not feel that it is important, and so he does not define value either. However, if we are to be able to recognize values, we must have some sort of a definition. Therefore, Bosanquet reverses Moore's method of analysis and by using synthesis defines value in terms of
the whole. In doing this, he fails to include in his definition the values of the parts of the Absolute. Definition must therefore be in terms of both the whole and its parts.

The problem of the normative character of value is not so much a question of whether or not there is such a character as what that character is. Values as we experience them seem to have a compelling force about them, and this oughtness is what must be explained. Laird confines the normative character to goodness, because as soon as we say we ought to pursue any value, the ought immediately makes it a matter of morals. This limitation of the ought category to goodness is arbitrary. We ought to seek truth, admire beauty, and worship God just as we ought to seek goodness. Moore treats this problem from the standpoint of logic and identifies the normative with the intrinsic character of value. However, when he tries to explain what he means by intrinsic, he admits the impossibility. He is forced to do this because of his conception of value as a simple notion. The denial of this normative character is implicit rather than explicit. Thus Alexander substitutes externality and universality in place of the ought category. However, these two factors neither exclude nor include all of what we experience as normative value. Therefore, it is valid to assert that value contains a normative reference, because experience shows it to us.
The approaches to a theory of value are many and varied. G. E. Moore and Laird both approach the problem from the standpoint of ethics, although Laird interprets goodness in a broader light. Bosanquet takes another approach and enters the problem through epistemology, while Alexander takes the evolutionary viewpoint. All of these approaches have the basic weakness of being too narrow and excluding valid parts of experience. Sorley, however, illustrates the satisfactory approach which is more comprehensive, moral values.

Closely associated with the approaches to value is the *summum bonum*. Here is the goal of each theory. Laird follows the traditional classification and makes truth, beauty, and goodness the supreme values. Alexander does the same but conceives them in the abstract as tertiary qualities. Moore takes only one of this trilogy, goodness, and Bosanquet makes truth the *summum bonum*, while Mackenzie does the same for beauty. Sorley incorporates all of these in his own theory and adds a fourth, religious values. He follows this to its logical conclusion and makes God the supreme value.

The problem of the objectivity of value is one of the central problems. Alexander and Schiller represent the subjective interpretation of value, but their position is untenable either logically or empirically. The facts of experience point
towards an objective value: either as mental or extra-mental. Laird and Moore represent the latter type. For them value is apart from all mind. Their theory breaks down, however, because if value is extra-mental, then it cannot come into our conscious experience. Therefore, value must not only be objective but it must also be mental. Bosanquet fulfills this requirement in his Absolute, but he makes value impersonal. This violates our experience of value as related directly to ourselves as persons. Sorley presents the most coherent theory when he argues for value as objective, mental, and personal. He uses the moral values as proof for the objective validity and reality of God in the universe. However, all value contains a subjective reference as well as an objective reality.

One of the most effective means of arguing against value as objective is by presenting the facts of disvalue in the universe. These facts of evil must be met if idealism and theism are to validate their claims. Bosanquet recognizes the presence of evil, but he denies it reality on the ground that logically it is self-contradictory. However, disvalue as we experience it is always in the concrete and cannot thus be explained away in the abstract. Laird, Moore, Alexander, and Sorley all recognize this fact and attempt to treat evil squarely and fairly. Sorley is especially firm on this point, for he carries disvalue up into the very nature of God himself.
by means of divine self-limitation. No theory which ignores
the presence of disvalue can be coherent and complete, nor
can it claim to be valid unless it takes these facts into
account.

British philosophers have both denied and affirmed the
existence of value. Alexander is one of those who deny it, for
he says that value subsists rather than exists. His theory
fails, however, because it cannot explain this subsistence as
postulated in the tertiary qualities. Sorley accepts the view
that value exists and proves it by showing that the facts of
value-experience are as valid, if not more so, as the facts
with which science treats. He thereby places value on a firm
footing, but in so doing he overlooks the relation between
values and things. However, he is correct in his conclusion
that any experience of value leads to an affirmation of God
as the Supreme Value and an objective reality. The dialectic
of desire always pushes our research higher and higher until
we reach God, the home of all values.
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