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SUGGESTIONS TOWARD A GENEALOGY OF THE “MAN OF FEELING”¹

By R. S. CRANE

We may take, as a convenient starting-point for our inquiry, two passages from works published respectively in 1754 and 1755. In the first of these the Scottish moralist David Fordyce is attempting to enumerate the emotional satisfactions peculiar to the benevolent man:

His Enjoyments [he writes] are more numerous, or, if less numerous, yet more intense than those of bad Men; for he shares in the Joys of others by Rebound; and every Increase of *general* or *particular* Happiness is a real Addition to his own. It is true, his friendly *Sympathy* with others subjects him to some Pains which the hard-hearted Wretch does not feel; yet to give a loose to it is a kind of agreeable Discharge. It is such a Sorrow as he loves to indulge; a sort of pleasing Anguish, that sweetly melts the Mind, and terminates in a Self-approving Joy. Though the good Man may want Means to execute, or be disappointed in the Success of his benevolent Purposes, yet . . . he is still conscious of good Affections, and that Consciousness is an Enjoyment of a more delightful Savour than the greatest Triumphs of successful Vice.²

In the other passage an anonymous essayist writes in a somewhat similar vein on the subject of “moral weeping”:

¹ This paper was prepared for presentation before the Language and Literature Club of the University of Wisconsin in April, 1934. I have inserted many additional references, but have not otherwise greatly altered the exposition. It goes without saying that I have not attempted an exhaustive study of any aspect of the subject.

² *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 1754, pp. 263-4.

1. 2. 170: sleep with. (For: lie with.) 2. 1. 60: She's your—. (For: She is your Strumpet.) 2. 2. 62: were she *my Mistress*. (For: a whore of mine.) 2. 1. 73: Vice. (For: Lust.) 3. 1. 67: the Proofs, / *Will put a better Face on our Proceedings*. (For: Of her black lust, shall make her infamous.)

Correction of textual errors. 1. 2. 178: so. (For: say.)

Accuracy. 1. 2. 145: Brother-in-Law. (For: brother.)

Clearness of exposition. 2. 1. 5: Such Poul-Cats as Brachiano. (For: The Pole-cats that haunt to't.) 2. 1. 212, 213: I shall take care of him. (This replaces, by a specific indication that Flamineo is to kill Camillo, the original hint respecting the attempt to make the death seem accidental.)

Clearness and simplicity of style. 1. 1. 44: Come, bear a Manly Patience. (For: Have a full man within you.) 1. 2. 2: The best of Rest t' ye. (For: Your best of rest.)

Avoidance of repetition. 3. 2. 77: sundry. (For: *several*, which occurs two lines before.)

Modernization of usage, idiom, and allusion. 1. 2. 8: Chariot. (For: caroch.) 1. 2. 76: Fare you well. (For: God boy you.) 3. 2. 110: has. (For: hath.) 5. 3. 187: (The reference to the New River is excised.)

Modernization or correction of grammar. 1. 2. 22: Who. (For: Which.) 2. 1. 136: fall. (For: falls.)

Condensation. (Many lines and passages are excised, no other reason being apparent.)

Correction of metre. (Webster's hypermetricality goes far beyond Shakespeare. Tate tries hard to regularize. Words here bracketed are omitted in *I. L.*; words italicized are introduced by *I. L.*) 1. 2. 262: Never dropt Mildew on [a] Flow'r here till now. 2. 1. 28: That you having nobly entred *on* the World. (*Entred* was no longer trisyllabic.) 2. 1. 375: Count *Lod'wick*, who was rumour'd for a Pyrate." (For: Lodowick.) 3. 2. 165: [Why] Charity, my Charity, which should flow. (This looks as if Tate merely ticked off ten syllables on his fingers.)

Refinement. 1. 2. 127: Paltry. (For: *lousie*, though this word, said to be popular in refined circles today, is allowed in 3. 3. 76, in one of Flamineo's pseudo-mad speeches.) 1. 2. 306: That I may bear my *State above* the Level. (For: beard out of.) 2. 1. 54, 55: (*I. L.* omits "You shift your shirt there

to them, by representatives of every school of ethical or religious thought. Neither in antiquity, nor in the Middle Ages, nor in the sixteenth century, nor in the England of the Puritans and Cavaliers had the "man of feeling" ever been a popular type.

It is true that a solution of the problem has been offered us—a solution which in recent years has won wide acceptance among students of English literature. It has been observed that most if not all of the distinctive elements of the sentimental benevolism of the mid-eighteenth century already existed at the beginning of the century in the writings of the third Earl of Shaftesbury, and it has been noted that the aristocratic author of the *Characteristics*, for all the suspicions which could be cast on his religious orthodoxy, enjoyed a very considerable vogue in intellectual circles during the four or five decades following his death; from these facts the conclusion has been drawn that it was mainly from Shaftesbury and his immediate disciples that the impulses came which affected both the literary creators of the "man of feeling" and his admirers among the public.⁴

The chief difficulty with this explanation is that it begins too late. If we wish to understand the origins and the widespread diffusion in the eighteenth century of the ideas which issued in the cult of sensibility, we must look, I believe, to a period considerably earlier than that in which Shaftesbury wrote and take into account the propaganda of a group of persons whose opportunities for moulding the thoughts of ordinary Englishmen were much greater than those of even the most aristocratic of deists. What I would suggest, in short, is that the key to the popular triumph of "sentimentalism" toward 1750 is to be sought, not so much in the teaching of individual lay moralists after 1700, as in the combined influence of numerous Anglican divines of the Latitudinarian tradition who from the Restoration onward into the eighteenth century had preached to their congregations and, through their books, to the larger public essentially the same ethics of benevolence, "good nature," and

⁴ The best statement of the case for Shaftesbury is still that of C. A. Moore in *PMLA* 31 (1916). 264-325. Cf. also W. E. Alderman, *ibid.* 46 (1931). 1087-94, and *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters* 26 (1931). 137-59.

"tender sentimental feeling" as was expressed in the passages from Fordyce and his anonymous contemporary quoted at the beginning of this paper.⁵

In order to make this clear it will be necessary to consider somewhat at length four principal aspects of the ethical and psychological propaganda of these divines during the period from about 1660 to about 1725.

1. *Virtue as universal benevolence.*—That the teaching of the Latitudinarian clergy should have assumed from the first a strongly humanitarian bent is not surprizing in the light of the purposes which animated the earliest leaders of the movement. Along with other aims which need not concern us here, it was the fervent hope of the "Latitude-men" that they might succeed in freeing the religion of the English people from those errors concerning the nature of God and the value of human works which had been spread by the Puritans. Their characteristic views on both these questions were clearly summarized by Joseph Glanvill, himself an adherent of the party, in an essay published in 1676.

They took notice [he wrote], what *unworthy* and *dishonourable Opinions* were publish'd abroad concerning *God*, to the disparagement of all his Attributes, and discouragement of vertuous Endeavours, and great trouble and dejection of many pious Minds; and therefore here they appear'd also to *assert* and *vindicate* the Divine Goodness and *love of Men* in its *freedom* and *extent*, against those Doctrines, that made his *Love, Fondness*; and his *Justice, Cruelty*, and represented God, as the Eternal Hater of the far greatest part of his reasonable Creatures, and the designer of their Ruine, for the exaltation of *meer Power*, and *arbitrary Will*: Against these sower and dismal Opinions They stood up stoutly, in a time when the Assertors of the Divine Purity and Goodness, were persecuted bitterly with nicknames of Reproach, and popular Hatred. . . . They shew'd continually how impossible it was that *Infinite Goodness* should *design* or delight in the misery of his *Creatures*: . . . That

⁵ I have brought together some of the evidence in the *Philological Quarterly* 11 (1932). 204-06. See also Rae Blanchard, *The Christian Hero*, by Richard Steele, Oxford, 1932, pp. xvii-xxv, and Lois Whitney, *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress in English Popular Literature of the Eighteenth Century*, Baltimore, 1934, pp. 21-6. Shortly before his death my friend, the late F. B. Kaye, had projected a study of the question which, had he lived to complete it, would have made the present essay superfluous. Though my own conclusions differ in some particulars from his, I am heavily indebted to him both for interpretative suggestions and for materials.

Goodness is the Fountain of all his Communications and Actions *ad extra*: That to *glorifie* God, is rightly to apprehend and celebrate his Perfections, by our Words, and by our Actions: That *Goodness* is the *chief* moral Perfection: That *Power* without *Goodness* is *Tyranny*; and *Wisdom* without it, is but *Craft* and *Subtilty*; and *Justice*, *Cruelty*, when *destitute* of *Goodness*: . . .

By *such* Principles as *These*, which are wonderfully fertile, and big of many great Truths, they undermined, and from the bottom overthrew the fierce and churlish *Reprobatarian Doctrines*. . . .⁶

Nor were they any less hostile, Glanvill goes on to say, to the Puritan dogma of justification solely by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, with its corollary of the worthlessness of "our *Good Works* and *Christian Vertues*":

And because *Morality* was despised by those elevated Fantasicks, that talked so much of *Imputed Righteousness*, in the false sense; and accounted by them, as a *dull*, and *low* thing; therefore those Divines labour'd in the asserting and vindicating of this: Teaching the *necessity* of *Moral Vertues*; That *Christianity* is the *highest improvement* of them; . . . That the *power* of it consists in subduing *self-will*, and ruling our *passions*, and moderating our *appetites*, and *doing* the *works* of real *Righteousness* towards God, and our Neighbour.⁷

For this reason, Glanvill further tells us, what chiefly distinguished their teaching was its practical temper and aim. Vigorous upholders of the rights of human reason in matters of religion, they nevertheless attached much more importance to the moral ends of Christianity than to the speculative content of its theology. "Their main Design was, to make Men *good*, not *notional*, and knowing; and therefore, though they *conceal'd* no *practical* Verities that were proper and seasonable, yet they were sparing in their *Speculations*, except where they tended to the necessary vindication of the *Honour* of *God*, or the directing the Lives of Men. . . ." ⁸ "They cared for no mans *wit*, that wanted *goodness*; and despis'd no mans *weakness*, that had it."⁹

And finally, as a consequence both of their faith in God's impartial benevolence toward all men and of their belief in the primacy of practice over doctrine, they set themselves to break

⁶ *Essays on Several Important Subjects in Philosophy and Religion*, 1676, Essay 7, pp. 21-2. The essay purports to be a continuation of Bacon's *New Atlantis*.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15. Cf. pp. 26, 30, 45.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

down sectarian prejudices and to proclaim the Catholic principle of "universal Charity, and Union," holding, as Glanvill again expressed it, that "the Church consists of all those that agree in the profession, and acknowledgment of the Scripture, and the *first* comprehensive, *plain Creeds*, however scatter'd through the World, and distinguish'd by names of Nations and Parties, under various degrees of light, and divers particular models, and forms of Worship, as to circumstance, and order: That every lover of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, who lives according to the few, great acknowledg'd Doctrines, and Rules of a vertuous and holy life, is a *true Christian*, and will be happy; though he be ignorant of many points that some reckon for Articles of Faith, and err in *some*, which others account *sacred*, and *fundamental*. . . ." ¹⁰

The purposes and doctrines which Glanvill here attributes to the original "Latitude-men" met with increasingly wide acceptance, in the years following the Restoration, among the more influential clergy of the Establishment, especially, it would seem, among those who had been educated at Cambridge. We may trace them in the sermons and other writings of prominent divines like Isaac Barrow, Robert South, John Tillotson, Richard Cumberland, Samuel Parker, Hezekiah Burton, Richard Kidder, John Scott, Edward Pelling, William Sherlock, Gilbert Burnet, Richard Bentley, Samuel Clarke, as well as in the discourses of many lesser men who yet occupied important livings in the days of the later Stuarts and the early Hanoverians. Whatever differences there may have been among these clergymen, they were all united in their detestation of the darker aspects of the Puritan creed, in their insistence on the religious value of human works, in their exaltation of "goodness" over doctrine, in their zeal for "universal Charity and Union." ¹¹

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 31. A characterization of the Latitudinarians similar on most points to Glanvill's is given in Edward Fowler's *The Principles and Practices of Certain Moderate Divines of the Church of England Abusively Called Latitudinarians*, 1670. See the 2d ed., 1671, pp. 18, 115, 117, 120, 126, 129, 194, 199, 228, 234-7, 347.

¹¹ Cf., e. g., Isaac Barrow, *Theological Works*, 1830, 6. 541: "It is a peculiar excellency of our religion, that it doth not much employ men's care, pains, and time about matters of ceremonial observance; but doth chiefly (and in a manner wholly) exercise them in the works of substantial duty, agreeable to reason, perfective of man's nature, productive of true glory to God, and solid benefit to men"; Robert South, *Sermons*, Philadelphia, 1844, 1. 462: "Believing without doing good

With this general outlook, it was natural that they should become great preachers of the social virtues. And few things, indeed, were more characteristic of these Latitudinarian divines than the assiduity with which they exhorted their hearers and readers to benevolent feelings and acts as the best means at once of actualizing the beneficent designs of God for man and of realizing the aim of religion to perfect human nature. Charity was one of their favorite themes: not the charity which was primarily love of God; not charity merely to the parish poor or to fellow Christians, but a "general kindness" to all men because they are men, an active desire to relieve their sufferings, if not to alter the social conditions in which they live; the kind of charity best described by the words—more common in the eighteenth century, but already coming into use—"humanity," "good nature," "universal benevolence."

Of this strain in their preaching numerous illustrations could be given from the Restoration onward. The sermons of Isaac Barrow (d. 1677) were particularly rich in expressions of the theme, and his discourse on *The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor* (1671) remained a classic with readers of humanitarian sympathies for nearly a hundred years.¹² To Tillotson likewise the subject had a strong appeal: "How much better it is," he wrote in a typical passage, "to do good, to be really useful and beneficial to others, and how much more clearly and certainly our Duty, than to quarrel about doubtful and uncertain Opinions."¹³ For Samuel Parker, as for his master Cumberland, the principle to which all the laws of nature could be reduced was "universal Justice or Humanity, or so much love and good-will to all Mankind, as obliges every man to seek the welfare and happiness of the whole Community and every Member of it, as well as his own private and particular Interest."¹⁴ For William Clagett, writing in 1686 *Of the Humanity*

is a very cheap and easy, but withal a very worthless way of being religious"; John Tillotson, *Works*, 4th ed., 1728, 2. 167: "When we come to die we can call nothing our own but the good works which by the grace of God we have been enabled to do in this life."

¹² See below, n. 56. The discourse is printed in *Theological Works*, 1830, 2. 169-258.

¹³ *Works*, 1728, 1. 155. Cf. also *ibid.* 1. 160-1, 169-71; 2. 513, 595.

¹⁴ *A Demonstration of the Divine Authority of the Law of Nature*, 1681, pp. 17-18; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

and Charity of Christians, the obligation to do good to all men derives its force not merely from the fact that charity is enjoined upon us by Christ and his apostles; the obligation also has its basis in common humanity, since to "Man only of all Creatures under Heaven, God has given this quality, to be affected with the Grief and with the Joy of those of his own kind; and to feel the Evils which others feel, that we may be universally disposed to help and relieve one another."¹⁵

In the early eighteenth century the current of this humanitarian homiletic was flowing more strongly than ever. It was not necessary to read the works of the Earl of Shaftesbury to learn that "to love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine";¹⁶ the same lesson was being taught from hundreds of pulpits in London and the provinces by clergymen who had inherited the benevolistic spirit of their Latitudinarian predecessors of the generation before. Typical of these was Samuel Clarke, preaching in 1705 on *The Great Duty of Universal Love*:

The true End and Design of Religion, is manifestly this; to make Men wiser and better; to improve, exalt, and perfect their Nature; to teach them to obey, and love, and imitate God; to cause them to extend their Love and Goodness and Charity to all their Fellow-Creatures, each in their several Stations, and according to the measure of their several Abilities; in like manner as the universal Goodness of God, extends it self over all his Works through the whole Creation. . . .¹⁷

Typical also was Francis Squire, rector of Exford in Somerset and author in 1714 of a sermon on *Universal Benevolence: or, Charity in its Full Extent*, "humbly dedicated to Richard Steele," the climax of which was this rhapsody on the peculiar merits of the benevolent man:

Who can sufficiently express the *Dignity* of such a Person? What Trophies does he deserve? What endless Monuments of Praise and Glory belong unto him? He is in an implicit League of Philanthropy with the Guardian Angels, he carries on the great Cause of the Saviour of Mankind, he is the honourable Distributer of his

¹⁵ Ed. 1687, p. 4. Cf. also pp. 8-9, 14.

¹⁷ P. 2.

¹⁶ *Characteristics*, ed. Robertson, 1. 27.

Creator's Blessings, he wears more emphatically the *Image* of his God, and shares with him in an universal Reverence, and (I was going to say) Adoration. For indeed, there are few that can withhold a Veneration from such a one; and for those impious Wretches who offer Violence to their Nature and their Consciences to detract from him, we have the Pleasure to observe they are forc'd to belye him before they can dishonour him; they must first maliciously hide the Vertue, before they can obscure those Beams of Glory that arise from it.¹⁸

Of the same school, finally, was George Stephens, author of *The Amiable Quality of Goodness as Compared with Righteousness, Considered* (1731):

Compare [he exclaims] the Characters of the Just and Good Man as already drawn before you: Set them in Contrast one against the other. *That* indeed strikes us with Awe and Reverence: *This* attracts our Love and Admiration.

It may, I conceive, be of Service to Religion, if we pursue this Reflexion a little farther. Moral Writers have well observed, that Justice is a Virtue of the greatest Consequence to Society, the very Cement, that binds it firmly together. And is it not equally true, that Goodness is the Ornament and Pleasure of it? Do not the Comforts and mutual Endearments of Life all flow from Goodness? Will not he, that is only guided by Justice, be led to many hard and cruel Things? And is not Extremity of Justice proverbially call'd the utmost Injury? Let us then learn indeed, and study to be just; but let us at the same time *love Mercy*, and hearken to the softer Dictates and Whispers of Humanity.¹⁹

¹⁸ P. 25. Cf. pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ Pp. 13-14. In addition to the texts quoted or referred to above, see the following: Samuel Parker, *A Free and Impartial Censvre of the Platonick Philosophie*, 1666, pp. 23-7; Thomas Hodges, *The Creatures Goodness*, 1675, p. 43, and *passim*; William Gould, *The Generosity of Christian Love*, 1676, pp. 12-13; Richard Kidder, *Charity Directed*, 1676, pp. 4-13, 22-5; Thomas Willis, *The Excellency of Wisdom*, 1676, pp. 27-30; Adam Littleton, *A Sermon . . . June 24, 1680*, 1680, p. 29; John Scott, *The Christian Life*, 1681, pp. 178, 186-7; Joseph Glanvill, *Some Discourses, Sermons and Remains*, 1681, pp. 101-02, 125-8; Robert South, "Sermon Preached May 3, 1685," in *Twelve Sermons*, 5th ed., 1722, pp. 436-8; Hezekiah Burton, "Of Doing Good to All Men," in *A Second Volume of Discourses*, 1685, pp. 491-4, 498-500, 518-26, 546-52, 604; Thomas Wagstaffe, *A Sermon Preached . . . Novemb. 24, 1687*, 1688, pp. 20, 26, 28; John Norris, *The Theory and Regulation of Love*, 1688, pp. 85-6; Henry Waring, *The Rule of Charity*, 1690, pp. 4, 21-2; Edward Pelling, *A Practical Discourse upon Charity*, 1693, pp. 3-5; Francis Atterbury, *The Power of Charity to Cover Sin . . . Preach'd . . . August 16, 1694*, 1708, p. 13; Robert Grove, *Profitable Charity*, 1695, pp. 12-14; William Sherlock, "The Nature and Measure of Charity" (1697), in *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions*, 1719, pp. 211-12; Edward Synge, *A Gentleman's Religion*, Part 3 (1697), pp. 157-61; Benjamin Whichcote, *Select Sermons*, 1698, pp. 218-19, 272; John Smith, *An Essay*

2. *Benevolence as feeling.*—For most of the divines who were thus helping to set the tone of eighteenth-century humanitarian exhortation, the words "charity" and "benevolence" had a double sense, connoting not only the serviceable and philanthropic actions which the good man performs but still more the tender passions and affections which prompt to these actions and constitute their immediate reward. For this emphasis they had, it is true, an excellent warrant in various New Testament texts.²⁰ But there was more to their frequent statements of the idea than merely a development of I Corinthians 13, and an adequate explanation must also take into account the pronounced strain of anti-Stoicism which throughout the period characterized their ethical thought.

How consciously in revolt they were against the distrust of the passions and the exaggerated assumptions concerning man's rationality which they attributed to the Stoics can be seen in numerous places in their writings.²¹ The passions, they insisted with Aristotle, are neither good nor evil in themselves; they may, however, be ordered to virtue, and when so ordered they have a positive value, since they and not our weak reason are the forces which make it possible for us to act at all; to wish to eradicate them from our nature is not only a futile but a

on Universal Redemption, 1701, p. 5; Thomas Lynford, *The Charitable Man Bears Much Fruit*, 1712, p. 12; William Lupton, *The Necessity . . . of . . . Charity*, 1713, p. 10; Gilbert Burnet, *Some Sermons Preach'd on Several Occasions*, 1713, pp. 224-7; Richard Bentley, "A Sermon Preached before King George I on February the Third, 1716-17," in *Works*, ed. A. Dyce, 3 (1838). 266-7; William Beveridge, "The Chain of Evangelical Graces" (1720), in *Theological Works*, 1845, 6. 114; John Leng, *A Sermon Preach'd . . . April 6, 1724, 1724*, pp. 6-8, 11; Alured Clarke, *A Sermon Preached . . . January the 25th, 1725, 1726*, pp. 6-7; Samuel Wright, *Charity in All Its Branches*, 1732, pp. v-ix.

²⁰ Cf. Richard Kidder, *Charity Directed*, 1676, p. 19; Anthony Horneck, *The Nature of True Christian Righteousness*, 1689, p. 20; Charles Hickman, *Fourteen Sermons*, 1700, Sermon 11; Richard Crossing, *Practical Discourse Concerning the Great Duty of Charity*, 1722, p. 7.

²¹ See, in addition to the texts given above, Richard Baxter, *A Treatise of Self-Denyall*, 1660, p. 279; Henry More, *An Account of Virtue*, 1690, pp. 34-42 (originally published in Latin as *Enchiridion ethicum*, 1666); H. Lukin, *The Chief Interest of Man* (1670), 3d ed., 1718, pp. 55-69; Matthew Hale, *Contemplations Moral and Divine*, 1682, Part 1, pp. 104-06; Part 2, p. 71; John Hartcliffe, *A Treatise of Moral and Intellectual Virtues*, 1691, pp. 294-6; M. Burghope, *The Government of the Passions*, 1701, pp. 3-5; Francis Bragge, *A Practical Treatise on the Regulation of the Passions*, 1708, pp. 4-5, 6-7, 17-19; John Tottie, *A View of Reason and Passion*, 1736, pp. 6-8.

misguided desire. "The *Stoicks*," wrote James Lowde in 1694, "would make Man so wholly rational, that they will scarce allow him to be sensible, and would wholly exclude all natural affections and bodily passions out of humane Nature. . . . The Design . . . is, *First*, impossible; *Secondly*, it would be prejudicial thereunto, were it feisible; for these when duly regulated, become the subject matter of moral Vertue, and also add Vigour and Wings to the Soul in its pursuits of Vertue."²² George Stanhope, in translating Epictetus in 1694, made the same point: "I think it cannot fairly be denied," he remarked, "that in their Way of Treating the Passions and Powers of the Soul, they [the Stoics] much overshot the Mark, and have quite mistaken the Case. . . . These are indeed the secret Springs that move and actuate us; and all the Care incumbent upon the Governing Part of the Mind, is to set them right. . . . So that in truth, the main, I might say the whole of our Duty and Happiness, consists, not in stifling these Affections, and condemning them to a State of utter Inactivity, but in moderating and regulating them."²³ And Charles Hickman, who became Bishop of Derry under Queen Anne, devoted some fifteen pages in one of his sermons (1700) to a formal refutation of the Stoic notion that because the passions lead us into dangers and betray us into sin, "'tis fit they should be rooted out."

'Tis certain [he concluded] that when our passions are well regulated and reformed, they are great assistances and encouragements to Vertue. Our Reason is a cold and heavy principle, that moves us but slowly to our Work; but Passion puts an eagerness into our Desires, and a warmth into our Prosecutions, and makes the work go chearfully and vigorously on. . . .

Our Reason has but little to do in the forming of our minds, and bringing us to a Vertuous Religious Life; 'tis our Passions and Affections that must do the work, for till they begin to move, our Reason is but like a Chariot when the Wheels are off, that is never like to perform the Journey.²⁴

So widely prevalent, indeed, were views like these in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that it is difficult to understand how it could ever have been supposed by modern

²² *A Discourse Concerning the Nature of Man . . . with An Examination of Some of Mr. Hobbs's Opinions*, 1694, p. 24.

²³ *Epictetus His Morals*, 2d ed., 1700, Preface, sigs. [A 5]-[A 6].

²⁴ *Fourteen Sermons*, 1700, pp. 271-2.

students that the moral ideal of that age was one of "cold intellectuality."²⁵

Such in any case was not the ideal preached by these Latitudinarian divines. And in nothing was their revolt against "the Stoic's pride" more evident than in their repudiation of the notion that though the good man must relieve the distresses of others he must not allow himself to be emotionally affected by the misfortunes he sees.

The doctrine against which they protested was familiar to the seventeenth century in the pages of Seneca²⁶ and of his various modern disciples.²⁷ It was stated with unusual explicitness by the Frenchman Antoine Le Grand, whose compendium of Stoic teaching was translated into English in 1675 under the revealing title of *Man without Passion: or, The Wise Stoick, According to the Sentiments of Seneca*:

For as these generous Philosophers [Le Grand wrote] strip their wise man of all the maladies of his Soul, they allow not that other mens misfortunes should be his miseries: they will have him as little concerned for his Neighbours afflictions as for his own disasters: They will have him to be fortune proof; and that that which discomposeth others, should teach him Constancy, and an even temper, What, say they, doth Vertue consist in infirmity? Must we be guilty of effeminacy, to perform Acts of Generosity? Can we not be charitable without being afflicted? And can we not relieve those that are in misery, unless we mingle our Sighs with their Sobs and Groans, and our Cries with their Tears? A wise man ought to consider the Poor for their Relief, and not himself to share in their Calamities; he ought to protect them from oppressions, and not to

²⁵ Many similar statements could of course be collected from the secular writers of the period. See, e. g., Meric Casaubon, *Marcus Aurelius . . . His Meditations*, 4th ed., 1673, Preface; Sir William Temple, "Of Gardening" (1685), in *Works*, 1814, 3. 208-10; Sir Thomas Pope Blount, *Essays on Several Subjects*, 3d ed., 1697, pp. 195-200; Tim. Nourse, *A Discourse upon the Nature and Faculties of Man*, 1697, pp. 104-09; Richard Steele, *The Christian Hero* (1701), ed. Blanchard, 1932, p. 74; Charles Gildon, *The Deist's Manual*, 1705, pp. 120-30; *Spectator*, No. 408, June 18, 1712; *Lover*, No. 32, May 8, 1714; Pope, *Essay on Man*, 1733, 2. 101-22.

²⁶ Cf., e. g., *The Workes of . . . Seneca*, trans. by Thomas Lodge, 1620, pp. 608, 609, in "Of Clemencie," Book 2, chap. 5, 6: "For it is nought else but a basenes of the heart which melteth in beholding another mans miseries. . . . He [the wise man] will assist his Neighbour that weepeth, without weeping himself. . . . He will not . . . be moued, but will helpe, will profit, as being borne for the common good and the seruice of the Commonweale."

²⁷ E. g., Justus Lipsius. See *A Discourse of Constancy*, trans. by Nathaniel Wanley, 1670, 1. 12, pp. 67-70.

be inwardly disturbed for them; he ought to endeavour their comfort, and not to be a Partner in their misfortunes.²⁸

To this creed of "stoical insensibility" our divines opposed what they insisted was the true Christian idea of a charity which derives both its force and value from the fact that the good man does permit himself to be "inwardly disturbed." There can be no effective benevolence, they declared again and again, that does not spring from the tender emotions of pity and compassion, and so far from suppressing these emotions we ought rather to look upon them as the marks which distinguish men of genuine goodness from those who are merely righteous or just. Not the Senecan wise man, relieving but not pitying, but the tenderhearted Christian, pitying before he relieves, was the ideal which they preached to their generation; and as time went on their emphasis tended more and more to dwell on those elements of "softness" and quick emotional response to the spectacle of human misery which were to constitute for the eighteenth century the peculiar traits of the "man of feeling." Of the many clergymen of the half century following the Restoration who helped to disseminate this kind of "sentimentalism"—a "sentimentalism" still distinctively Christian in its background and expression—it is possible to consider only a few. Let us begin with Robert South, commenting in a sermon of 1662 on the difference between the moral teaching of Christians and that of the Stoics:

Sorrow in their esteem was a sin scarce to be expiated by another; to pity, was a fault; to rejoice, an extravagance. . . . To us let this be sufficient, that our Saviour Christ, who took upon him all our natural infirmities, but none of our sinful, has been seen to weep, to be sorrowful, to pity, and to be angry: which shows that there might be gall in a dove, passion without sin, fire without smoke, and motion without disturbance.²⁹

The essential doctrine is here, but the tone and emphasis are still those of the seventeenth century rather than the eighteenth. This can also be said of a development on the same theme in Richard Kidder's *Charity Directed* (1676):

²⁸ Pp. 277-8.

²⁹ "Of the Creation of Man in the Image of God," in *Sermons*, Philadelphia, 1844, 1. 28. Cf. also 1. 431.

The Doctrine of the *Stoicks* allowed the good man to *help*, but forbad him to *Pity* and *Compassionate* the *Needy*. [A note here refers to "Senec. de Clement. l. 2. c. 5."] But we learn to do both from the Example and the Precepts of our Lord. Our Alms must be the Off-spring of our Charity and Kindness: and if we were allowed to be void of Pity and Compassion, 'tis to be feared our Relief would be but small. He is most likely to help his Neighbour that hath a great sense of his Misery. And Christianity hath provided better for the Poor than the Philosophy of the *Stoicks*. . . .³⁰

From the middle of the next decade a change in tone becomes perceptible, manifesting itself, for example, in this passage on the duty of tenderheartedness in a sermon of Gregory Hascard (1685) :

[Tenderheartedness consists in] being extremely sensible of the common troubles and miseries of our Christian Brethren; this is the spring and original, the proper Source and cause of our Charity and Meekness, our Love and Relief of our fellow Beings. When our tempers are soft and sensible, and easily receive impressions from the Sufferings of others, we are pain'd within, and to ease our selves, we are ready to succour them, and then Nature discharging her Burthen and Oppression, creates both her own pleasure and satisfaction, and performs her Duty. The multitude of miserable Persons will not upon this account produce a continued trouble in your breast, for if the generality of mankind had this fellow-feeling, it would lessen the number; and as it is, the pleasure of doing good far surpasseth the pain in pitying. . . .³¹

The same note is sounded in a sermon preached in 1697 by William Sherlock, Dean of St. Paul's:

A Charitable Mind is very easy to receive the Impressions of Charity; and the more charitably it is disposed, still the more easy. Every pitiable Object moves and affects such Men; and they are no more able to resist the silent Oratory of meagre Looks, naked Backs, and hungry Bellies . . . than to deny themselves what is necessary to Life. . . . A soft and tender Mind, which feels the Sufferings of others, and suffers with them, is the true Temper and Spirit of Charity; and Nature prompts us to ease those Sufferings which we feel. . . . An inward Principle is more powerful than all external Arguments; and Sense and Feeling is this Principle, and Charity is this Sense.³²

³⁰ P. 19.

³¹ *A Sermon*, 1685, pp. 7-8.

³² "The Nature and Measure of Charity" (April 6, 1697), in *Sermons*, 3d ed., 1719, I. 214-15. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 206-08.

In much the same vein, again, were the reflections of Charles Hickman in his sermon, already quoted, against the Stoic distrust of the passions (1700) :

It is not a sign of *Goodness* in Man, to have no Passion in him, for such a Man is apparently Good for nothing at all. He does not hate his Brother, 'tis true: But then he does not love him neither. He does not oppress his Neighbour perhaps; but withal, he neither pities, nor relieves him. . . .

[In the character of the "good" man there is a certain] softening quality. 'Tis that which our Language very happily expresses by Good Nature. . . .

Indeed, goodness is the only excellence in Man, that deserves to be belov'd or priz'd. Good nature is all that a Man is good for in the World; without which, his riches only make him insolent, and his knowledge will but make him vain, and all his other admired qualities, render him the more dangerous, and suspected, and unfit for humane conversation. Nay, without this Goodness, and benignity of Mind, Righteousness is nothing else but Interest, and Vertue nothing but design, and Religion it self will dwindle either into frowardness, or formality.³³

The word "sensibility," when these passages were written, had not yet come into fashion in the sense in which it was chiefly to be used by the writers and public of the mid-eighteenth century. It is clear, however, that the quality of mind later eulogized under the name of "sensibility" or "moral weeping" by the sentimentalists of the 1740's and 1750's was no other than the quality which was already being recommended so warmly as the distinguishing sign of the benevolent man by these anti-Stoic preachers of the later 1600's. "Humanity, in its first and general Acceptation," wrote an essayist of 1735 in what was certainly one of the earliest formal definitions of "sensibility" in its new sense, "is call'd by Holy Writers, *Good-will towards Men*; by Heathens, *Philanthropy*, or *Love*

³³ *Fourteen Sermons*, pp. 265, 321, 328-9. For other texts on the same theme see: Thomas Watson, *A Plea for Almes*, 1658, pp. 14-15; John Tillotson, *Works*, 1728, 1. 170 (preached December 3, 1678); John Scott, *The Christian Life*, 1681, pp. 184-5; Anthony Horneck, *The Nature of True Christian Righteousness*, 1689, p. 20; Edward Pelling, *A Practical Discourse upon Charity*, 1693, pp. 6-8; George Stanhope, *Epictetus His Morals* (1694), 2d ed., 1700, Preface, sig. [A 6^r]; E. Young, *Sermons on Several Occasions*, 1703, 2. 365-6; Richard Crossing, *Practical Discourse Concerning the Great Duty of Charity*, 1722, p. 7; R. Skerret, *Alms-giving without Charity Unprofitable*, 1723; Alured Clarke, *A Sermon Preached . . . January the 25th, 1725*, 1726, p. 16.

of our *Fellow Creatures*. It sometimes takes the Name of *Good-nature*, and *delights* in *Actions* that have an *obliging* Tendency in them: When strongly *impress'd* on the *Mind*, it assumes a *higher* and nobler Character, and is not satisfy'd with *good-natured* Actions alone, but *feels* the *Misery* of others with *inward Pain*. It is then deservedly named *Sensibility*, and is considerably increased in its intrinsick Worth. . . ." ³⁴ What was this but the doctrine of the "soft and tender mind" made widely familiar over a generation before by our divines?

3. *Benevolent feelings as "natural" to man.*—When Shaftesbury in 1698 praised Benjamin Whichcote for his defence of "Natural Goodness" and bestowed on him the title of "Preacher of Good-nature," ³⁵ he was using phrases which might have been applied, with little qualification, to most of the leading divines and many of their followers in the movement of which Whichcote had been an early pioneer. Without shutting their eyes to the great amount of actual selfishness and inhumanity in the world, they devoted much effort, nevertheless, to picturing the heart of man as "naturally" good in the sense that when left to its own native impulses it tends invariably to humane and sociable feelings—and this "without the Discipline of Reason, or the Precepts of Religion." ³⁶

There can be little question that this optimistic appraisal of human nature was in part a manifestation of the revolt against Puritanism which we have already observed in the early leaders of the Latitudinarian group. It would hardly have been possible had it not been for their vigorous insistence, against the one-sided Augustinianism of the Lutheran and Calvinistic traditions, that man was not completely depraved as a result of the Fall, that he has still some natural power of doing good, that "nature" can cooperate with "grace" to the end of his salva-

³⁴ *Prompter*, No. 63, June 17, 1735.

³⁵ Preface to *Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcot*.

³⁶ The phrase occurs in *A Sermon*, 1739, by Thomas Herring, Bishop of Bangor. See pp. 5-6: "It is the Property of Mercy to pity the Infirmities of other Men; . . . to cultivate a Tenderness and Humanity of Temper, a quick and ready Feeling of each others Wants and Pains. . . . And this is what indeed we are naturally carried to without the Discipline of Reason, or the Precepts of Religion.—There is something in the Human Constitution that naturally melts at Human Misfortunes. . . ."

tion.³⁷ But this is only part of the story; and what chiefly provoked them to their frequent declarations of man's "natural goodness" was undoubtedly not so much their enmity to the Puritans as their zeal for combatting the dangerous political and moral doctrines of Thomas Hobbes.

Of the many important issues raised for them by the publication of the *Leviathan* in 1651 we need concern ourselves with only one: the issue involved in Hobbes' contention, which was indeed central to his whole political theory, that without a government possessed of complete power the natural passions of man would lead to a state of constant social war. The "Lawes of Nature," he had written, "(as *Justice, Equity, Modesty, Mercy*, and (in summe) *doing to others, as wee would be done to,*) of themselves, without the terrour of some Power, to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our naturall Passions, that carry us to Partiality, Pride, Revenge, and the like."³⁸ And the reason is, as he said in another passage, that "men have no pleasure, (but on the contrary a great deale of griefe) in keeping company, where there is no power able to overawe them all. For every man looketh that his companion should value him, at the same rate he sets upon himselfe: And upon all signes of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavours, as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other,) to extort a greater value from his contemners, by dommage; and from others, by the example." So that it is manifest, Hobbes concluded, "that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man."³⁹

It is easy to understand why this doctrine should have aroused the opposition of our divines. By reducing all human motivation to egoistic passions of pride and self-esteem, Hobbes,

³⁷ Cf., e. g., Isaac Barrow, "Sermon XXVI," in *Theological Works*, 1830, 2. 36; 3. 533; Joseph Glanvill, *Some Discourses*, 1681, pp. 6-7, 29, 55-6; Sir Matthew Hale, *A Discourse of the Knowledge of God, and of Our Selves*, 1688, pp. 54, 276; Edward Synge, *A Gentleman's Religion*, Part 2 (1697), pp. 54-5, 62. See E. Gilson, "Le Moyen Age et le naturalisme antique," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 7 (1932). 5-37.

³⁸ Chap. 17.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, chap. 13. Cf. also chap. 11, beginning.

it seemed clear to them, had gone far toward making not only political justice but morality itself a purely arbitrary thing, dependent wholly upon the will of those in power. To offset so distasteful a conclusion it was obviously necessary to show the falsity of the conception of human nature upon which it rested. They devoted themselves, therefore, with much energy, to maintaining, against the *Leviathan*, that the nature of men is such that even without government they can be trusted to live together peacefully in sympathetic and helpful mutual relations. Our divines were not the first, of course, to uphold this thesis, and they made much of the fact that in Aristotle, in Cicero, in Juvenal, to say nothing of other classical and patristic authors, the capacity of human beings for amicable social living had been set in a much fairer light than in the writings of the cynical philosopher of Malmsbury.⁴⁰ But this did not prevent them from frequently giving to the old commonplaces a new turn and force or from developing them in some directions far beyond anything contained in the ancient texts.

From the point of view of the present study the most significant result of their efforts was the dissemination of the idea that man is essentially a gentle and sympathetic creature, naturally inclined to society not merely by his intellect, which tells him that kindness to others is the best means to the end of his own private happiness, but still more by "those passions and inclinations that are common to him with other Creatures" and which, like everything in his nature, have "a vehement tendency to acts of love and good-will."⁴¹

Among the anti-Hobbesist preachers of "natural goodness" in the years immediately following the Restoration, one of the most important was Isaac Barrow. In a number of sermons on the theme of charity delivered in the 1660's and early 1670's he protested vigorously against the "monstrous paradox, cross-

⁴⁰ For Aristotle see, e. g., Barrow, *Theological Works* 2. 37, 80; Tillotson, *Works*, 1728, 1. 305; Samuel Parker, *A Demonstration of the Divine Authority of the Law of Nature*, 1681, p. viii; for Cicero, *ibid.*; for Juvenal, Barrow, *Theological Works*, 2. 141, 224. Many of the most important classical and patristic texts had been assembled by Grotius in his *De jure belli ac pacis*, 1625, Prolegomena, sects. 6-7, and Book 1, chap. 1.

⁴¹ The phrase is Samuel Parker's in *A Demonstration of the Divine Authority of the Law of Nature*, p. 29.

ing the common sense of men, which in this loose and vain world hath lately got such vogue, that all men naturally are enemies one to another.”⁴² The truth is, he insisted, that if the practice of benevolent acts is our duty it is in part because such acts are in accord with, and not, as Hobbes had said, contrary to, our natural passions.

We are indispensably obliged to these duties, because the best of our natural inclinations prompt us to the performance of them, especially those of pity and benignity, which are manifestly discernible in all, but most powerful and vigorous in the best natures; and which, questionless, by the most wise and good Author of our beings were implanted therein both as monitors to direct, and as spurs to incite us to the performance of our duty. For the same bowels, that, in our want of necessary sustenance, do by a lively sense of pain inform us thereof, and instigate us to provide against it, do in like manner grievously resent the distresses of another, and thereby admonish us of our duty, and provoke us to relieve them. Even the stories of calamities, that in ages long since past have happened to persons nowise related to us, yea, the fabulous reports of tragical events, do (even against the bent of our wills, and all resistance of reason) melt our hearts with compassion, and draw tears from our eyes; and thereby evidently signify that general sympathy which naturally intercedes between all men, since we can neither see, nor hear of, nor imagine another’s grief, without being afflicted ourselves. Antipathies may be natural to wild beasts [here he refers in a note to a well-known passage in Juvenal’s fifteenth satire]; but to rational creatures they are wholly unnatural.⁴³

Another expounder of the same doctrine was Samuel Parker, whose *Demonstration of the Divine Authority of the Law of Nature* (1681) was designed in the main as a reply to Hobbes. All our “natural desires,” he wrote, “are not only just and reasonable in themselves, but they incline us to such designs and actions, as naturally tend to the good and welfare of mankind.”⁴⁴ To this end in particular we have been endowed by the Creator with the passions of “Natural Pity and Compassion,” the operation of which, when they have not been overlaid by contrary habits, is almost mechanical:

⁴² *Theological Works*, 1830, 2. 79.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 2. 140-1. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 36-7, 78-80, 224-5. The theme is present in Barrow’s “First Sermon” (preached at Cambridge, June 30, 1661); see *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions*, 1678, pp. 24-5.

⁴⁴ P. 50.

. . . as for the generality of Men their hearts are so tender and their natural affections so humane, that they cannot but pity and commiserate the afflicted with a kind of fatal and mechanical Sympathy; their groans force tears and sighs from the unafflicted, and 'tis a pain to them not to be able to relieve their miseries. . . .⁴⁵

Tillotson, likewise, among the divines of this generation, was given to frequent pronouncements of the same anti-Hobbesist sort. "So far is it," he wrote in one of his sermons, "from being true, which Mr. *Hobbes* asserts as the fundamental *Principle* of his *Politicks*, *That Men are naturally in a State of War and Enmity with one another*; that the contrary *Principle*, laid down by a much deeper and wiser Man, I mean *Aristotle*, is most certainly true, *That Men are naturally a-kin and Friends to each other*."⁴⁶ And the basis of this kinship, he explained elsewhere, is to be found in "the mere propensions and inclinations of their nature"—propensions comparable to "those instincts, which are in brute creatures, of natural affection and care toward their young ones."⁴⁷

From the middle of the 1680's the number of such declarations would seem to have perceptibly increased; it had now become part of the recognized duty of the preacher of a charity sermon to picture human beings in an amiable light as creatures naturally disposed to impulses of pity and benevolence. The result was a long series of amplifications on the theme of man's essential "good nature," of which the following may serve as representative samples. From a sermon of 1686:

The *Nature* inclines us to Humanity, yet *Custom* and *bad Principles* may give us another *Bias*, and make us unconcern'd what others feel. But Nature, without Art and Force used upon it, seldom proves cruel; and we see that they which have the least of that we call *Breeding*, are prone to Pity and Commiseration. Men of a simple and rustick Education, and of mean Professions, easily fall into Compassion; and seldom fail of relieving one another, if the consideration of their own Interest does not prevail against it.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ P. 55. Cf. pp. 21-2, 25-6, 29-30.

⁴⁶ *Works*, 1728, I. 305. The date of the sermon was March 8, 1689.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 2. 298-9.

⁴⁸ William Clagett, *Of the Humanity and Charity of Christians, A Sermon Preached . . . Nov. 30, 1686, 1687*, p. 5. Cf. the same author's *A Paraphrase, with Notes . . . upon the Sixth Chapter of St. John . . .*, 1693, p. 76.

From one of 1700:

For our Incitement [to benevolence] . . . there are natural Motions wrought within us, and moulded into our very Frame: For when we see a miserable Object, Nature it self moves our Bowels to Compassion, and our Hands to give; and those of the finest Temper are soonest affected with the Distresses of other Men.⁴⁹

From one of 1701:

Nature has implanted in us a most tender and compassionate Sense and Fellow-feeling of one anothers Miseries, a most ready and prevailing propension and inclination to assist and relieve them; insomuch that pity and kindness towards our Brethren have a long time, passed under the name of Humanity, as properties essential to and not without Violence to be separated from humane Nature. . . .⁵⁰

From another of 1708:

But if we are thus slenderly furnish'd for Speculative Knowledge, we are manifestly framed and fashion'd for Acts of divine *Worship*, and the Practise of *social* Vertues. Nature has endu'd us with the tenderest Passions: We are all Counterparts one of another: The Instruments *tun'd* Unison: the doleful Cry of one in extreme Distress, makes the Strings to tremble at our very Hearts. . . .

You have an Instance of this in the most Ancient History, *Gen.* 44 and 45. when Men follow'd closer the unsophisticated Dictates of Nature. [Then follows the story of Joseph and his brethren, after which the preacher concludes:] This is not alledg'd as an Instance of his Vertue, it was the Voice of Nature, *charity of the Machine*, and Formation. A Man must be disciplin'd into hardness of Heart, and neild into Cruelty. . . .⁵¹

From one, finally, preached some time before 1720:

God has implanted in our very Frame and Make, a compassionate Sense of the Sufferings and Misfortunes of other People, which disposes us to contribute to their Relief; so that when we see any of our Fellow-Creatures in Circumstances of Distress, we are naturally, I had almost said, mechanically inclined to be helpful to them . . . [And] as all the Actions of Nature are sweet and pleasant, so there is none which gives a good Man a greater, or more solid, or lasting Pleasure than this of *doing Good*. . . . Where Men follow Nature in those tender Motions of it, which incline them to

⁴⁹ Z. Isham, *A Sermon*, 1700, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁰ Sir William Dawes, *Self-love the Great Cause of Bad Times*, 1701, p. 9.

⁵¹ Knightly Chetwood, *A Sermon Preach'd before the . . . Lord Mayor . . . , April 5, 1708*, 1708, pp. 8-9.

Acts of Kindness and Charity, they will not be easy, except they lay hold of the proper Occasions of exerting them. . . .

So strongly is this natural Tenderness, where Nature is not one Way or another corrupted, apt to operate in us; and which therefore, from the *Greeks*, we very significantly render *Philanthropy*; from the *Latins*, *Humanity*; and which in the Language of our own Nation, and with a particular respect to the Genius of it, we express by *good Nature*. . . .⁵²

It is no wonder that the deist Tindal in 1730, in referring to the doctrine that man is "a social creature, who naturally loves his own species, and is full of pity, tenderness & benevolence," should have prefaced his statement of it by the phrase "as our Divines maintain against *Hobbs*."⁵³

The significance of their assiduous preaching of this doctrine for the problem with which we are here concerned scarcely needs to be pointed out. For clearly if a capacity for "pity, tenderness & benevolence" is what principally distinguishes man from other creatures, and if, as was generally assumed in

⁵² Richard Fiddes, *Fifty-Two Practical Discourses on Several Subjects*, 1720, pp. 112-13.

I append here references to other texts of the period in which similar ideas are expressed: William Pike, *Observations, Censures and Confutations of Divers Errors . . . of Mr. Hobs*, 1657, pp. 91-2; Thomas Tenison, *The Creed of Mr. Hobbes Examined*, 2d ed., 1671, pp. 140-1; Robert South, "Of the Origin, Nature, and Baseness of the Sin of Ingratitude" (1675), in *Sermons*, 1844, 1. 179; Richard Cumberland, *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature*, trans. 1727, p. 164 (the Latin original appeared in 1672); John Scott, *The Christian Life*, 1681, pp. 175-6; Thomas Mannyngham, *A Sermon Preached at the Hampshire Feast*, 1686, pp. 16 ff.; J. Lowde, *A Discourse Concerning the Nature of Man*, 1694, sigs. A4-A4^v, pp. 164-6; Jeremy Collier, "Of General Kindness," in *Miscellanies*, 1694; H. Downes, *The Excellency of Publick Charity*, 1697, p. 3; Benjamin Whichcote, *Select Sermons*, 1698, pp. 92-3, 181-2, 217, 381-2, and *Works*, Aberdeen, 1751, 4. 257-8; Edmund Calamy, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, 1699, pp. 12-13; W. Sherlock, "The Nature and Evils of a Vicious Self-love" (c. 1700), in *Sermons*, 3d ed., 1719, 1. 368-70, 379; Stephen Chapman, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Free-born Citizens of Bristol*, 1703, pp. 1-2; Samuel Clarke, *The Great Duty of Universal Love*, 1705, pp. 4-5; Andrew Snape, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Princess Sophia*, 1706, pp. 19-22; Benjamin Loveling, *The Best Use of Riches, A Sermon*, 1706, p. 14; William Colnett, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, 1711, pp. 5-6; Gilbert Burnet, *Some Sermons*, 1713, pp. 232-3; Henry Grove, *Spectator*, Nos. 588, 601, Sept. 1, Oct. 1, 1714; Richard Bentley, *A Sermon Preach'd . . . Feb. 3, 1716-17* (1717), in *Works*, ed. Dyce, 3 (1838). 269; George Smalridge, *Twelve Sermons*, 1717, p. 199; Alured Clarke, *A Sermon Preached . . . January the 25th, 1725, 1726*, pp. 4-10; Samuel Wright, *Charity in All Its Branches*, 1732, pp. 2-3; T. Rundle, *A Sermon Preached . . . Feb. 17, 1733-34, 1734*, pp. 5-6.

⁵³ *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, 8vo ed., 1731, p. 49.

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is man's duty to live in conformity with his nature, then it follows that he does this most completely who not only practices an active benevolence toward all men but cultivates and makes manifest the "good Affections" of his heart. In a striking sentence by Isaac Barrow, written as early as the 1670's, this association between the psychology of "natural goodness" and the ethics of "sensitivity" was already clearly expressed. "Since nature," wrote Barrow, ". . . hath made our neighbour's misery our pain, and his content our pleasure; since with indissoluble bands of mutual sympathy she hath concatenated our fortunes and affections together; since by the discipline of our sense she instructs us, and by the importunity thereof solicits us to the observance of our duty, let us follow her wise directions, and conspire with her kindly motions; let us not stifle or weaken by disuse, or contrary practice, but by conformable action cherish and confirm the good inclinations of nature."⁵⁴

4. *The "Self-approving Joy."*—In still another way, finally, the preaching of the Latitudinarian clergy contributed to the formation of the state of mind which was later to be reflected in the popular conception of the "man of feeling." This was through their frequent exhortations to their hearers and readers to consider how enjoyable the benevolent emotions may be to the individual who allows himself to feel them. From the Restoration into the eighteenth century there came from Anglican pulpits a steady stream of such exhortations, varying in tone from simple developments on the Aristotelian topic of the inherent pleasantness of virtue to eloquent reminders of the "pleasing Anguish, that sweetly melts the Mind, and terminates in a Self-approving Joy"⁵⁵ which is the chief earthly reward of persons who indulge their naturally good inclinations.

The theme, as we might expect, was a favorite one with Barrow. "As nature," he wrote in 1671, in a passage which was long after to be quoted with approval by Fielding,⁵⁶ "as nature, to the acts requisite toward preservation of our life, hath annexed a sensible pleasure, forcibly enticing us to the

⁵⁴ *Theological Works* 2. 142.

⁵⁵ See above, p. 205.

⁵⁶ *Covent Garden Journal*, No. 29, April 11, 1752, ed. Jensen, 1. 308.

performance of them: so hath she made the communication of benefits to others to be accompanied with a very delicious relish upon the mind of him that practises it; nothing indeed carrying with it a more pure and savoury delight than beneficence. A man may be virtuously voluptuous, and a laudable epicure by doing much good; for to receive good, even in the judgment of Epicurus himself (the great patron of pleasure), is nowise so pleasant as to do it. . . ."⁵⁷

Many others in the seventeenth century wrote in a similar strain. "There is no sensual Pleasure in the World," said Tillotson, "comparable to the Delight and Satisfaction that a good Man takes in doing good."⁵⁸ "He that shews Mercy to a Man in his misery," remarked Richard Kidder, "does a double kindness at once (and 'tis hard to say which is the greater) one to his Brother, and another to himself. There is a Delight and Joy that Accompanies doing good, there is a kind of sensuality in it."⁵⁹ "The first Reward of Vertue," Samuel Parker wrote, "is its own natural and intrinsick Pleasure," and he proceeded to bring out with remarkable frankness the strain of egoistic hedonism which the conception involved:

Acts of Love and Kindness are in themselves gratefull and agreeable to the temper of humane Nature; and all Men feel a natural Deliciousness consequent upon every Exercise of their good-natur'd Passions; And nothing affects the Mind with greater Complacency, than to reflect upon its own inward Joy and Contentment. So that the Delight of every vertuous Resolution doubles upon it self; in that first it strikes our Minds with a direct Pleasure by its suitability to our Natures, and then our Minds entertain themselves with pleasant Reflections upon their own Worth and Tranquility.⁶⁰

Here, in 1681, was the whole philosophy of the "man of feeling"! By the beginning of the eighteenth century the theme had become a commonplace of nearly every charity sermon, and preachers exhausted the resources of their rhetoric in depicting the exquisite pleasure which the good man feels in contemplating his own benevolent deeds. One example will suffice—a particularly illuminating one. The rewards of benev-

⁵⁷ *Theological Works* 2. 225. Cf. also 2. 141-2.

⁵⁸ *Works*, 1728, 1. 156. Cf. also 2. 599.

⁵⁹ *Charity Directed*, 1676, p. 12.

⁶⁰ *A Demonstration of the Divine Authority of the Law of Nature*, p. 64.

olence, Charles Brent told his congregation at Bristol in 1704, are not to be looked for merely in the life to come.

There is for certain, even now, a most Divine and Heavenly Pleasure in doing Good; a Pleasure that is suited to the truest Movings of Humanity, that gratifies the purest of all our natural Inclinations, that Delights and Comforts even to the cherishing of our own Flesh, that runs along with our Affections and our Bowels so very sympathetically, that some good Men have indulged and epicuriz'd in it, till they have been tempted to call it downright *Sensuality*: And yet a Pleasure without the least Abatement or Allay. A Pleasure too, that doth not lye lingering in the Futurities of a World to come, but commences with our very Act, nay before it; beginning even with our very Intensions: For we are no sooner entring upon a Design of serving Mankind, but we take up great Sums of Delight and Alacrity upon it, before-hand; and one Advantage here is, that the Pleasure does not leave us as soon as the Work is done, but lasts as long and lively upon our Minds, as our Memories will serve us to recollect it. . . .⁶¹

In these passages—and many more like them could be quoted from the sermon literature of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries⁶²—one can see a clear foreshadowing of that curious type of hedonism—the often frankly avowed pursuit of altruistic emotions for egoistic ends—which was to characterize most of the representative “men of feeling” of the next two generations. Sir Charles Grandison might have been a parishioner of Parker or Brent, and Parson Yorick their successor.

The hypothesis I have tried to suggest in this paper is not intended to be taken as an adequate or in any way exclusive explanation of the rise of the mid-eighteenth-century mode of sensibility in England. There is always the influence of Shaftes-

⁶¹ *Persuasions to a Publick Spirit*, 1704, pp. 15-16.

⁶² See, e. g., H. Lukin, *The Chief Interest of Man* (1670), 3d ed., 1718, pp. 46-50; Hezekiah Burton, *Several Discourses*, 1684, p. 80, and *A Second Volume of Discourses*, 1685, pp. 564-72; Gregory Hascard, *A Sermon*, 1685, p. 5; Edward Pelling, *A Practical Discourse upon Charity*, 1693, p. 25; Edmund Calamy, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, 1699, p. 18; E. Young, *Sermons on Several Occasions*, 1702, 1. 391-2; Samuel Clarke, *The Great Duty of Universal Love*, 1705, p. 4; Daniel Waterland, “The Duty of Doing Good” (1712), in *Works*, 1823, 8. 372; Gilbert Burnet, *Some Sermons*, 1713, pp. 246-8; Francis Squire, *Universal Benevolence: or, Charity in its Full Extent*, 1714, pp. 12-13; Henry Grove, *Spectator*, No. 588, Sept. 1, 1714; Alured Clarke, *A Sermon Preached . . . January the 25th, 1725, 1726*, p. 5.

bury to be considered—a very real and important influence especially after 1725 when it was reinforced by that of his disciple Hutcheson. Even in the later seventeenth century, moreover, the ideas we have been discussing were not the exclusive property of writers of sermons. Mr. Ustick has recently called attention to their appearance in certain courtesy books of the 1680's,⁶⁸ and to the examples he gives others could doubtless be added. By 1714, as every one knows, they had begun to find their way into the popular literature of essays and plays.

My intention has not been to minimize these other factors in the preparation for sentimentalism, but merely to consider whether the whole movement does not become somewhat more intelligible historically than it has hitherto seemed when we bring into the picture, also, the propaganda of benevolence and tender feeling carried on with increasing intensity since the Restoration by the anti-Puritan, anti-Stoic, and anti-Hobbesian divines of the Latitudinarian school.

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⁶⁸ *Modern Philology* 30 (1932). 161-6.