



# Unpublished Manuscripts in British Idealism

Political Philosophy, Theology and Social Thought

———— Volume 2 ————

Edited with an introduction by  
Colin Tyler

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## Volume 2

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Political Philosophy, Theology  
and Social Thought

Edited and Introduced by

Colin Tyler

Volume 2



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## Introduction

Excuse this scrawl. When I try to think as I write, I get too careless. I hope that you will be able to make me out.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of publishing more idealist texts occurred to me in 1998 while I was preparing *The Collected Works of Edward Caird*.<sup>2</sup> I was struck by the fact that while Caird himself published very little regarding his own positive theory of ethical and political philosophy, many manuscripts on these subjects were preserved in his archives at the University of Glasgow. Most notable in this regard were a series of professorial lectures on social ethics that Caird appeared to have given as part of his moral philosophy course, and a lecture on political economy. The archive also contained a number of unpublished but well-developed pieces on religion, metaphysics, and psychology. Two of the religious manuscripts are included here. Further research yielded two referee's reports at Trinity College Cambridge, one regarding GE Moore and the other JME McTaggart. Both are historically significant and philosophically developed, and so are included here as well.

Finding the texts was one thing, but turning them into a critical edition was another. Sir Henry Jones once described Caird's written comments on the essays of his undergraduates as 'for most part either illegible to the student or decipherable only by exhausting all the probabilities.'<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, most of Caird's manuscripts are in a similar condition. Nevertheless, one does get used to his hand, and I believe that a laborious process of checking and re-checking numerous times has produced texts for this volume that are at least as accurate as those found in the preceding one. I hope that you find them as interesting and revealing. The remainder of this introduction addresses the specific issues of the individual manuscripts.

1. Reform and Reformation.' [ca. 1866]

[Title and location of manuscript: 'Reform and Reformation.' MS Gen. 1294, Special Collections Library, University of Glasgow.]

This long essay survives in fair copy in Caird's papers. The manuscript appears to be complete, and may have been submitted by Caird early in 1866 as part of his application for the Chair in Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow.<sup>4</sup> Caird was successful against a large and strong field of candidates.<sup>5</sup>

2. Lectures on Moral Philosophy: Social Ethics. [1877-93?]

[Title and location of manuscripts: 'Social Ethics.' MS Gen. 1294, Special Collections Library, University of Glasgow.]

This piece consists of eight lectures from what appear to be the course on moral philosophy that Caird gave each year at Glasgow.<sup>6</sup> Lectures one and four, and all of lecture two except for four folios, are written on numbered pages ripped from notebooks, while the remainder are written on numbered pages taken from quarto volumes of a type commonly used by Caird.<sup>7</sup> No trace has been found of the missing text (lecture three, the bulk of the first two pages of lecture five, all of lecture seven, and the concluding pages of lecture six).

One might wonder whether Caird would have approved of the publication of these lectures. After all this was the man who sued a former student, WS Sime, for publishing notes made from his (Caird's) course, partly on the grounds that one's thought developed so quickly that any unauthorised set of notes was almost bound to misrepresent the lecturer's current position. Indeed, even his own lecture notes functioned more as a guide than a statement of principle. Jones described Caird's practice in the following terms.

He was in the habit of constantly recasting his lectures - even when the course as a whole followed the same main lines. And, further,...he by no means confined himself to his MS. when he was lecturing. He omitted and he amplified, interpreting at the moment as a great teacher must the degree in which his students were following his thoughts, and catching inspiration in their companionship. Of all Professors he was one of the least likely to find himself anticipated in his class by students possessing ancient manuscripts of his lectures.<sup>8</sup>

Jones' characterisation is supported at least in certain respects by the surviving sets of student notes, which show that the curriculum of Caird's moral philosophy lectures changed little throughout the 1870s and 1880s (see the appendices to volume for an indicative curriculum from the 1876-77 session).<sup>9</sup>

Yet, there is a significant justification for publishing Caird's own lecture notes on social ethics. Muirhead identified the key point, mentioned above, when he observed that, 'It may seem surprising that though engaged during a long life in teaching Moral Philosophy Caird left no systematic work upon Ethics.' He expanded on this point in the following terms,

Even his public class teaching in Glasgow was mainly historical, and consisted rather in a review of older theories than in an independent development of one of his own. This omission indeed towards the end of his life he intended to supply, but it is doubtful whether he would have added anything material to what may be read by the attentive student between his criticism of others. He believed in Jowett's dictum that 'moral philosophy should be largely historical,' and seemed always to find himself more at home in bringing out the essential truth that underlies the great classical writers than in developing his own ideas in detail.<sup>10</sup>

To some extent, a preference for the historical approach is evident in the lectures on moral philosophy that survive in his papers, both in his own manuscripts,<sup>11</sup> and in the surviving lecture notes of his Glasgow students.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Caird explicitly rejects the historical method in his 'Social Ethics', and it is indeed very easy indeed to draw out Caird's own positive position from these lectures. For example, in the discussion of marriage and the family, Caird traces a clear and independent path between the thought of Hegel and Comte (lecture two). Similarly he spends a long time on Montesquieu and JS Mill's writings on the constitution, but only as a means for developing his own theory (lectures nine and ten). There are some surprises in the positions Caird adopts. For example, while he emphasises gender equality to a far greater degree than Hegel and even Comte, he retains a belief in the natural spiritual differences of the sexes of a type that one may not expect from someone who worked so hard during his life for the opening up of university education and degrees to women, as well as for the strengthening of female employment rights.<sup>13</sup>



Nevertheless, these lectures on social ethics would need to be worked on before they would be in publishable form for a living author. Caird did plan to write a book on *The Theory of Ethics* for the third series of Muirhead's 'Library of Philosophy' (to be published by Swan Sonnenschein, and MacMillan). We know this because the book was advertised as being in preparation in the front matter of various books published between at least 1893 and 1906.<sup>14</sup> We know also that Caird agreed to write this book while Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, because the advertisement refers to him in that capacity rather than as Master of Balliol (which he became in November 1893). We know that the book was to be a statement of Caird's own position because the third series in Muirhead's 'Library' contained 'original contributions to philosophy'.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, what appears here are clearly identified as lecture notes rather than book chapters (p. 98). It may be that Caird shelved the book project when he was appointed as Master of Balliol in 1893 in spite of the fact that the work was still advertised as in preparation even after that date.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Lecture on Political Economy [ca. 1887-8?]

[Title and Location of Manuscript: Untitled. MS Gen. 1294, Special Collections, Glasgow University Library.]

Caird was Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow from spring 1866 until winter 1893, and we know that for 'a considerable part of this time', 'he taught Political Economy as well as Moral Philosophy'.<sup>17</sup> This manuscript is the text of the final lecture of the first series of lectures that he gave on political economy (see p. 162 below). I date its delivery tentatively to 1887 or 1888, primarily on the grounds that Caird refers to an address that he is hoping to write within the next year on questions arising out of the course (see p. 160 below). Assuming that Caird actually did go on to write the promise address, then the most likely candidate is *The Moral Aspects of the Economical Problem* which was delivered and published in 1888.<sup>18</sup> Caird's final lecture on political economy is useful in that, while it offers few substantive reflections on political economics, it does summarise the preceding course in some detail. It shows that Caird was developing some of the themes that he had introduced in his lectures on social ethics (see lecture four in particular).

#### 4. Essay on Mysticism.' [1890s]

[Title and location of manuscript: 'Essay on Mysticism.' MS Gen. 1294, Special Collections, Glasgow University Library.]

Caird's untidy handwriting and frequent deletions in this manuscript imply that he was thinking with his pen in his hand. Nevertheless, it is a wide-ranging and very detailed piece of historical scholarship, indicating that it comes from late in Caird's life.

#### 5. Report on Mr Moore's Essay.' [Late 1897]

[Title and location of manuscript: 'Report on Mr Moore's Essay': Add. Ms.a.247/2(1)-(13), Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge.]

Two versions survive of Caird's report on GE Moore's dissertation for the 1897 competition for a Fellowship at Trinity College Cambridge. The draft is preserved amongst Caird's papers at Glasgow. The version that is published here is the final, fair copy held at the Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge. Moore was unsuccessful this time, but was appointed in 1898. Bernard Bosanquet was one of his examiners on this second occasion, and Bosanquet's (highly critical) report is reproduced in the first volume of his edition (pp. 236–40).

#### 6. Reference for JME McTaggart's D.Litt [1902]

[Title and location of manuscript: Untitled. MS Gen. 1294, Special Collections, Glasgow University Library.]

This text appears to be the 'unprinted manuscript' mentioned by Muirhead in the biography of Caird.<sup>19</sup> It is almost certainly a draft, with terrible handwriting and many deletions. The fair copy has not been found.

Caird and John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart were on very friendly terms for many years. Mc Taggart lauded Caird's writings, and Caird commented on McTaggart's work and encouraged him to develop his thought further.<sup>20</sup> Despite certain philosophical reservations, Caird was certain of McTaggart's brilliance, and wrote to his friend Mary Sarah Talbot on 31 March 1902 in the following terms.

I have been looking over McTaggart's works, on the 'Dialectic' and 'Cosmology.' He has applied for Cambridge D.Litt. and I was asked to report on him. It was a good deal a matter of form,

I suppose, with a man of his standing, but I had some difficulty in doing justice to him, and yet pointing out his perversions of Hegel. He has very curiously turned Hegel upside down, and proved to his own satisfaction that Hegelian dialectic leads to a system of mysticism - in some points not unlike that of Plotinus. Of course, *that* also was in Hegel as an element, but McTaggart has curiously selected it out again.<sup>21</sup>

Caird was correct to see McTaggart's application as a mere formality.

## Conclusion

The works published in this edition cover a wide range of issues, and offer numerous insights into previously obscure areas of British idealist thought. Hopefully, scholars will find them of use.

Colin Tyler  
*University of Hull, 2005*

- <sup>1</sup> Letter to Mary Sarah Talbot, 3 June 1891, in Sir Henry Jones and John Henry Muirhead, *The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird* (Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson, 1921), p.170.
- <sup>2</sup> Edward Caird, *Collected Works*, 12 vols., ed. C Tyler (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999). There is a small amount of material at Balliol College, Oxford, mostly on administrative matters related to Caird's tenure as Master (1893-1907) and some correspondence of largely biographical interest.
- <sup>3</sup> Jones et al, *The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, pp.84-5.
- <sup>4</sup> For the background to this application and Caird's tenure, see Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, chap. 3. Cf. Amelia Hutchison Stirling, *James Hutchison Stirling. His life and work* (London: T Fischer, 1912), pp.177-9, and Green, *Works*, vol. 5, pp.454-5.
- <sup>5</sup> Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, p.47.
- <sup>6</sup> William Martin's list of Caird's lectures is reproduced below as Appendix A (pp. 209-13).
- <sup>7</sup> Similar quarto volumes survive as MS Gen. 1544 to 1554.
- <sup>8</sup> Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, pp.109-10.
- <sup>9</sup> A different set of student notes do survive from the 1893-94 with a markedly different curriculum ['Lectures on Moral Philosophy' [1893-94], notes taken by James Dick (MS Gen. 827)]. While these are still historical in a sense, nevertheless unlike the earlier 'thinker-based' approach, this later set of lectures are concerned far more with tracing the general sweep of History in a Hegelian sense. Extracts

- from these lectures appear in Caird, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, pp.ix-xi, and vol. 11, pp.xi-xii, xii-xv.
- <sup>10</sup> Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, p.304.
  - <sup>11</sup> Roughly two thousand pages of Caird's own notes for the historical portions of the lectures on moral philosophy survive in a series of hardbound notebooks (MS Gen. 1544, 1546-8, 1550-3). They cover various sessions during his tenure at Glasgow, including 1883-4, 1886-7, and 1887-8. Other lectures survive on psychology (MS Gen. 1549 (front) and 1554) and logic (MS Gen. 1545 and 1549 (back)). All appear to be superseded by the notes published in this volume.
  - <sup>12</sup> The following student notes of the either part or all of the course on moral philosophy survive in the Caird Papers: 1870-71 session, 3 vols., taken by James Bonar (MS Gen. 104); 1874-75, J.B. Douglas, 3 vols. (MS Gen. 478-9); 1876-77, 3 vols., William Martin (MS Gen. 278-80); 1879, John Lennox, (MS Gen. 498); 1881-82, 3 vols., Robert A. Moody (MS Gen. 105); 1881-82, Edward Henry Steel, with abstracts (MS Gen. 740-1).
  - <sup>13</sup> See lecture two below; and Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, pp.96-101, 118-25, 150-2.
  - <sup>14</sup> Otto Pfleiderer, *Development of Theology in Germany since Kant, and its Progress in Great Britain since 1825*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Swan Sonnenschein: 1893; New York: MacMillan, 1893), p.iii, where the front papers carried an advertisement of a 'work in preparation': *The Theory of Ethics*. By Edward Caird, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow., as part of the Third Series of 'The Library of Philosophy' (General Editor, J.H. Muirhead). The same details were repeated in the front matter of FH Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, second edition [fourth? impression] (London: Swan Sonnenschein: 1906; New York: MacMillan, 1906). The first volume in this series was Erdmann's *History of Philosophy* (1890).
  - <sup>15</sup> Pfleiderer, *Development of Theology in Germany*, p.ii. The first, second and fourth series dealt with 'the development of particular schools of Philosophy', 'the history of theory in particular departments', and 'translations of valuable foreign works', respectively.
  - <sup>16</sup> Aside from the collection of occasional lay sermons and addresses that was published shortly before his death, the only book that Caird wrote as Master was *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers* (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1904), which were the Gifford lectures for the 1900-1 and 1901-2 sessions..
  - <sup>17</sup> JS MacKenzie, 'Edward Caird as a Philosophical Teacher', *Mind*, vol. 18, no. 72 ns (October 1909), p.511n.
  - <sup>18</sup> Edward Caird, *The Moral Aspects of the Economical Problem. Presidential Address to the Ethical Society* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey, 1888), reprinted in Caird, *Collected Works*, vol. 11. See p. 163 for a further discussion of an alternative date.
  - <sup>19</sup> Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, p.298n.
  - <sup>20</sup> JME McTaggart, Review of *The Evolution of Religion*, *Mind*, vol. 2, no. 7 ns (July 1893), pp.376-83, G Lowes Dickinson, J. McT. E. McTaggart (Cambridge University Press, 1931), p.36-7.
  - <sup>21</sup> Jones et al, *Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, pp.237-8; also *ibid.*, pp.196-7, 297-8, 353.

Part 4

Edward Caird

# Reform and the Reformation

[ca. 1866]

## Contents

1. The nature of reform as carried out by *man* depends upon a progress carried out by God.
2. Is there such a progress? How did the fall affect it? How does it go on in spite of the fall. Two-fold aspect of history in consequence.
3. In what field is this progress? Not in the individuals but in humanity. A progress of the *race*.
4. How is it right that the individual should be sacrificed to the progress of the race?
5. How does his sacrifice help the race?—the *law of human progress*—action and reaction of the individual and the universal.
6. The function of men of action—and of men of thought in progress. The intuitional class in which the universal and the particular find their synthesis.
7. The Conservative and the Reformer—the rational basis of their respective creeds—their union and the origin of their separation. Progress only safe which it holds by the past.
8. Spiral course of human development.
9. Is there a moral progress of humanity? Buckle's false philosophy.
10. Religion the source and law of human development. Yet Religion must not interfere directly with politics. Church and State.
11. The hopes of Progress.

I shall divide this essay into two parts—considering in the first of these, the general principles of human progress, and reform: and in the second—some of the illustrations, which these principles receive from the History of the German Reformation.<sup>1</sup>

[§1 The nature of reform as carried out by *man* depends upon a progress carried out by God.]<sup>2</sup>

If we consider reform as comprehending all those agencies which man can use to improve the condition, or aid the advance of his race, our view of it will necessarily be dependent upon a deeper question. Man cannot create; all his success is dependent upon his striking in with mighty agencies already at work. His highest effort is to place himself directly in the path of some irresistible law, and then let himself be borne forward by it to the certain execution of his purpose. So here. Reform, the work of man, is dependent upon progress the work of God, and according to the view which we take of the design which He has been, and is accomplishing in the course of history, must necessarily be the nature of the efforts which *we* can make to further that design. Is there, then, a progression toward some higher state discernible in human history, or is it all the record of an ever-repeated struggle between the same forms of good and evil, with none but accidental variation. If we suppose any period in the past—be it the first Christian century, be it the Paradisal state,<sup>3</sup> which can be taken as the high water mark of the human soul—the standard by which all other periods can be judged—and conformity to which is in all points, the test of rightness and wrongness—then all that the most sanguine can hope for is simply *reformation* of the old in the strictest sense of the word:—all that the most zealous reformer could legitimately aim at, would be in some degree to correct the innovations of time, to force back the current of life, and bank it anew, so far as may be, into the channel from which it has diverged, and from which it is ever tending to diverge. Then be all history, except the record of that happy bygone time,<sup>4</sup> is deprived of its main interest, exhibiting but a series of repetitions of the same fact:—a weary succession of struggles of humanity to regain its lost level, with varied success at different times, but ever more or less foiled by the same corruptive tendencies. And for the future all that would be left for us, would be to repeat the same efforts, which our fathers had made, and which our descendants must make again in their turn—if indeed, we had still heart for the unending struggle, after the infinite hope, which is our spur and incitement, was taken away.

If on the other hand the past be the record of a never ceasing advance;—if the tread of an ever-growing purpose is heard through all the ages; if men's gradual loosening from the old forms of his life be not corruption, but the influence of a heavenly voice which is

ever calling him forward, and making him feel that all he has done is but the promise of what he yet will do—then there is for man a higher task than to ‘remodel moods’ that have spent their force: or to look back and long for the former days that were better than these. History, indeed, we will read with new eyes, because every page of it contains some new lineament of the purpose of God in man, which is yet proceeding towards its accomplishment. But we will not consider the best era it records as diviner than today: seeing that all that is good on the past is immortal, and still lives with and in us. Above all, we can then look round hopefully, and watch for the signs of the times that we may find the new element, which is seeking entrance into man’s life now—‘the spirit of the years to come striving to mix itself with life’.<sup>5</sup> and true reform will consist in uniting and submitting ourselves, as willing servants to a Higher Power, whose glorious purposes for humanity, it is the blessedness of man to further by his obedience, the curse of man to further by his rebellion and self-seeking.

[§2 Is there such a progress? How did the fall affect it? How does it go on in spite of the fall. Two-fold aspect of history in consequence.]

It is evident, then, that all special investigations into the nature of reform must be postponed till this deeper question has been answered. The former answer has often been given: and still oftener it has lain unconsciously at the root of many of those schemes of reaction, which have emerged from time to time both in politics and in religion. According to this view the unfallen state of man is the highest he has hitherto attained, and all history is little more than a struggle to regain the point then abandoned. The paradisaical state—the world’s baptismal purity—stands ever highest<sup>6</sup> above is, and our best virtue or holiness is some feeble analagon of it.

Now both from reason, and from the records which remain to us, it is evident that the primeval state of man can, at best, have been nothing higher than the negative purity of innocence that has never known temptation. And, putting as high a price, as is possible, upon such a state, we must still rate higher any goodness, however imperfect, that has borne the proof, and confirmed itself against every false allurements. The almost instinctive shrinking before evil, which characterizes the child, may be a tender and beautiful thing, but who would compare it, for worth or elevation, to the



tried manly resolve that can look evil in the face, yet hate it with a perfect hatred—that has sought and found the right through the stern paths of duty and self-sacrifice. And so, it would be absurd to think the state of God's church now, when it has passed through all the influences for good and evil that have come to these latter times—when it has been receiving into itself all the mighty inspirations of culture and religion for so many ages, and still brought them to bear in some measure upon all the widened problems of life—it would be absurd to think that such a disciplined goodness—even though it be stained with the long conflict—were inferior to, or even on a level with the childlike stainlessness of Eden.<sup>7</sup>

It is true, indeed, that the fall brought tremendous evil consequences upon man. Had man not fallen, his development might have proceeded peacefully according to its idea without the hard struggles and forcible breaks of continuity which it actually presents. Like a plant that advances silently according to the germinal idea of its nature—to unfold the lower form of seed—into the higher form of leaf and so on to the highest forms of flower and fruit so the development of humanity might have gone on in unbroken unity to the full cultivation of its powers. This possibility of undisturbed normal development was lost. And by this loss, labor [sic] and struggle and pain became the condition of man's advance. But though disturbed and retarded this advance was not stopt. The fall has not changed God's design for humanity. Man has only made the execution of that design hard and painful to himself. He has brought on himself many a scar and stain from which he would have been free, if innocence had passed with holiness, without succumbing to sin. Still amid all confusions and darkness, amid storm and struggle,<sup>8</sup> he is led onwards by the hand of God through the same path of development—to unfold the same capacities and enter into the same spiritual consciousness, which once might have been his by the calm and natural process of growing life. The way has become rough and stony: but the goal is that same everlasting blessedness in God which would have been the lot of man, had he never fallen.

The circumstances of the fall itself when we look closer afford a marked illustration of this principle. It was necessary that the consciousness of good and evil should be developed in man, if he were ever to rise to the dignity of his nature—and to this end it was necessary that temptation should be presented—that the possibility of a course in opposition to the Divine command should

be suggested to him. But it was not necessary that he should fall. If he had resisted, he would have received into himself the distinction which was to be taught him. The consciousness, which is at the foundations of man's moral nature might thus have been evolved, without the antithesis of good and evil being received into his character. And thus a commencement of an undisturbed normal development had been made.

On the other hand his fall did not altogether defeat the purpose of God in so tempting him. Man gained, after all, the first step in the development of his nature: and became conscious of moral distinctions. And though he suffered the fearful consequences which follow from disunion with his creator: though he ceased to be fellow worker with God for his own good: yet, in the plan of God, his rebellion was made to serve the same purpose which obedience might have done—and the advance of universal history was commenced.

In this first transaction therefore we perceive the twofold aspect which man's development every where presents: and at the same time we see how far the progress of humanity is dependent upon such reforms as man can work. God's design for man must be accomplished, and it will be accomplished whether by his resistance or by his obedience. But it lies in man's hand, whether that design shall be accomplished by his weal or his woe—by the quiet process of growth, or by division and strife and battle. History gives us examples of both. When men have discerned the signs of the times, and harkened to the still small voice<sup>9</sup> that is ever guiding them onward. When with silent constant energy they have modified and adapted the forms of their government, and worship, and dogma to the growing demands of the spirit within them, then the old passes into the new without convulsion or break of continuity. The principle of the future spreads gradually through the old frame of things, and lo! Ere we were aware, a new world hath formed itself around us. When on the other hand men do not obey the voice of the Divine Spirit, but linger clinging to the dead forms of custom, or rush along wildly in self-chosen paths, yet not the less must their acts contribute to the advance of the world's history. Even their fiercest opposition develops in them the consciousness of the principle they oppose. It arouses their own deepest nature against them, and will not let it rest in anything but itself. Surely and firmly it strengthens its hold upon mankind, sinking [?] deeper the longer it is resisted, and at last its compressed strength will burst

forth as a destroying force, and will write its name for ever on the page of history, if in no other way it may—by the black characters of ruin, and devastation and war.—

Sad it is that progress is so seldom effected by the former, so often by the latter path: so often by God's educing good out of evil, so seldom by the quiet development of good. Between man's intent for himself—and God's intent for man, there has generally been a wide and almost irreconcilable<sup>10</sup> division. History is the record of a progress of humanity, of which the men who carried it out often knew nothing. They went their own ways, sought their own selfish ends—and out of their falsity, out of their selfishness, beat out of their one-sided and partial endeavours, God made his mighty purpose to unfold itself. It is not thus in what the individual aims and does, so often as in the *result*, that God brings out of the isolated and partial aims and doings of all men, that we recognise an advance to a new stage of development. And though all true reform, all steady and uninterrupted development—must arise out of man's will uniting itself with the plan of God, yet too often that plan has been accomplished by God's making the wrath of man to praise him. And hence the strange twofold aspect of history. If we look at the expressed desires of men—for which they have striven, at the hopes which have led them even to their greatest works, and we can see little worthy of reverence: but contemplate the ultimate results of their acts, and they would seem to be guided by a superhuman sagacity. As in a grand chorus there may not be one voice which, if you heard it distinct and alone, you would pronounce perfect or well cultured. And yet when the tide of song bursts from the multitude, all these feeble individualities are lost, every discord is taken up [in] the harmony of the whole—and we feel as if one great singer were making them all his instruments. So it is with human history.—Go near enough to hear the separate human voices, and there will seem often to be nothing, but strife and confusion and discord—but go further off, and when the distance has lost all the discordant human voices in one, we hear only the full toned utterance of one divine speaker in it all.

[§3 In what field is this progress? Not in the individuals but in humanity. A progress of the *race*.]

But these views already suggest the inquiry what is the nature of this progress—and in what sphere of man's life are we to look for its traces?

Not it is obvious in those interests which specially concern the individual. An eye that looks upon life from the point of view which personal feeling takes, (as in novels usually)—interesting itself in the objects which individuals propose to themselves and reckoning the value of life by the measure in which it tends to secure these objects—such an eye must always find the world a profoundly sad spectacle. So seen all human story [sic] is one record of fruitless effort, or disappointment, of delusion. The brightest lot is crossed with some dark shadows, and if it were not, yet the final doom of every thing earthly were enough to sadden it. And accordingly we find the mournful refrain of Ecclesiastes, the *vanitas vanitatum*, running through every page of human experience.<sup>11</sup> The fugitiveness of all earthly beauty and strength, the weariness of all earthly delight and the sadness of decay have been sung by poets, and preached by moralists in all ages, so that the theme would long have been threadbare, if it did not receive ever new illustration from fact.

But even in relation to higher than these outward interests, the same tale has to be told, the capacity for all human joy and sorrow, the infinite spiritual want is in each human heart. No thought can move man, but my nature seems to have a right to it. No Power which has been exhibited on the stage of the world, but might in some measure be evolved in me. And when with this thought in our mind we look round and see the stunted development of most men—the feeble degree in which they are conscious of their own deepest nature: when we note the stern limits of space and time that are laid upon the culture of even the most favourably situated: the extent to which all are forced to sacrifice it to mere earthly needs—and to make themselves instruments toward ends in which they cannot partake—we seem at first to be looking on an even sadder spectacle than the former—inasmuch as a higher treasure is cast away or left unimproved.

But though men fail and vanish, *man* does not: though the individual is limited and sacrificed, it is to a spiritual consciousness of the race which is ever advancing. There is a common life of humanity to which all the lives of its members are but means and contributions and which grows on amid their decay. It is the strange problem of providence to which indeed almost all other speculative difficulties are reducible, that the Race of Man is treated as *the Personality*. And indeed, it would sometimes seem as the only Proper Person. The sins, the merits, the deeds and the sufferings of

men pass into a common stock, for which (it would seem) not the special doer, but the whole of which he is a part, is held responsible—and receives, as the case may be, the reward or the penalty. And all history would seem to teach that if this great consciousness of Humanity be preserved, and growing to maturity, it matters little what becomes of the tribes or nations of men, in whom for the time it resides. This must develop to ever higher and higher things whatever becomes of them. The individuals may be limited and sacrificed but by means of all their partial developments and perversions, a higher result is matured. A nation may waste itself on some low stage of development and pass away, but what matter, if by this spending of force, another step can be gained for the world's life.

Augescunt aliae gentes, aliae minuuntur,  
Inque brevi spatio mutantur saecula animantum  
Et quasi cursores vitae lampada tradunt<sup>12</sup>

The torch bearers weary and sink down one after another—but the torch of life is still held up and borne onward by other hands ever nearer and nearer to the goal. The generations like waves, roll upward, one after another, only to subside again spent and broken: yet still the advancing swells over the receding wave; and the tide of life has been heaved one step higher on the eternal shore!

[§4 How is it right that the individual should be sacrificed to the progress of the race?]

That this sacrifice of all particular existence to the universal—is the law of Providence is abundantly clear. Man's acceptance or rejection of it cannot alter the case. Willingly or unwillingly he is made the instrument of an end out of himself. No one can with impunity take himself as the centre, to which all things are to contribute—whether it be to his advantage to his enjoyment, or, in the highest and most dangerous form of this sin, to his culture. He will not even attain best in this manner the narrow aim, which he proposes to himself. The course of things rolls onward, subordinating and when they come in its way, sacrificing all particular interests. For a self-centred man is out of harmony with his own deepest nature as well as with the eternal laws of the universe. Man derives all his force from coincidence with higher universal agencies. He can do nothing alone. The conditions of his success must be furnished in similar lines of tendency coming from all quarters to

meet and help out his act. 'An individual avails not,' says Goethe, 'but only he who combines with many at the proper hours.'<sup>13</sup> The special interest of any one can therefore only prosper, so far as they fall in with the aims of that spirit which bears up the course of history, and which concentrates all the strivings of men to one goal. No doubt a measure of success has often been attained by selfish men. And it might be thought a conclusive answer to such reasonings as the above, to point to great conquerors and kings, such as Alexander, Caesar, or Napoleon, who were undoubtedly men, that prized their personal ambitions above every other interest however sacred.<sup>14</sup> But the exceptions are only apparent. The effect which such men produced is not to be attributed to their talents, nor to their steady pursuit of their objects—though these were instrumental, and enabled them better than others to use the favourable circumstances. But the reason why any [?] talents could be successful in attaining so prominent and powerful a position lay in the fact that the special desires and aims of the man prompted him to deeds that gave expression to some want of his time. And the proof of this lies in the fate of such characters when they are no longer necessary to the world. A time comes to them, as to all selfish men, when the ends of their ambition begin to diverge from the course demanded by the spirit of the time,—with which all along they have been only in *outward* harmony. And then they can no longer maintain themselves. The invisible force which bore them in irresistibly has deserted them, they have lost the charm-word with which they called forth the spiritual powers of the universe to do battle for them. They may try the old means, but somehow the old effect does not follow. Humanity has other work, which needs other agents, and they are cast aside like broken tools, no longer to be wielded by the Master's hand.

But if this be all true, it might be said, does it not need some explanation that man's individual nature should be sacrificed to any end lying out of itself? Do we not feel as if the life of human soul were something too precious to be used merely as a means? And do we not reduce man to a level inconsistent with his moral and spiritual elevation by demanding such a sacrifice?

Now I might answer this difficulty by saying that man best cultivates even his special talents, the gifts which distinguish him individually from other men, not when he makes it his aim to develop them, but when he strenuously uses them for the good of the whole. If a man's eye is fixed on himself—if his efforts are directed

immediately to the education and improvement of his own nature, he may certainly make some progress—and attain a certain useful command over all his faculties and attainments. But he will not thus draw out the deepest voices of his being, nor reveal to himself or others the full scope of his capacity. But if he lose thought of himself—devote himself to some higher object with all his heart and soul so that his own individuality shall seem a paltry thing compared with *that*—suddenly the fountains of his life are unlocked—and the dilettante<sup>15</sup> becomes a deep thinker or manful doer. To make one's special gifts an end in themselves is, therefore, to limit and dwarf them:—to spend them for general objects on the other hand is the best way to evolve, and elevate them to the highest pitch of perfection. Even in this lower sense it is true that he that loveth his life shall lose it, that he only that hateth his life shall in the end preserve it.<sup>16</sup>

But this argument is only partially satisfactory. To recommend self-sacrifice, because it is the dictate of enlighten[ed] self-interest is a suicidal proceeding. The motive destroys the virtue it was intended to prompt. If we had no better ground on which to call man to self-sacrifice than, that thus he will best consult the welfare of his own personal being: the self-reference would render true self-sacrifice impossible. A vicious moral circle would be generated as when some rationalist theologians have recommended prayers on the ground merely of its subjective influence.<sup>17</sup>

The deepest justification of the sacrifice demanded is to be found in the fact that it is not a foreign nature to which man is thus subordinating himself. He is only making his individuality an instrument to the higher universal nature [of] which he partakes with all men. He is sacrificing Himself to the purely Human: to the development of the image of God in man—the most precious element in all and in each. Man ever feels in noble moments that he has a deeper stake in the universal good—the prevalence of Human Love and Human Truth, than he has even in his own personality. This is his dearer Life of life, which gives him whatever value he has in his own eyes: and he is willing to live and die for its success: to be its organ while he may, to be swept away when his work is done. Can we not feel with John the Baptist, when he said, not with envy but with joy, 'He must increase, I must decrease' [John 3.30]? He had done his life-work manfully and truly. He had exercised a powerful influence on the Jewish nation, by the simplicity and grandeur of his character—and now his popularity gone, his voice quelled in prison,

and the doom of the tyrant visibly drawing near, he hears of the great new Teacher, who has taken up his work.<sup>18</sup> He feels that he is no longer needed; but must give place to a higher. 'Well then', he seems to say, 'my feeble individuality with its weak strivings—its darkness—its insufficiency is passing away. But what matters! The truth, which it represented, and in which lay its only value, has not gone with it. It has prepared the way for the world's Life that will not pass away. What though I depart, if he remain.—All that I struggled and hoped for is safe for ever for, though I must decrease, *He* must increase.' [John 3.30]

Thus limitation and sacrifice of the individual finds justification in the fact that by this he will best subserve the interests of universal humanity—the common self of all men, if we may so call it. Still there is a further truth. Sacrifice cannot be the last thing under God's government. 'He that hateth his life in this world, shall save it unto life eternal.' [John 12.25] Those universal realities, to which we are called to make ourselves subservient here, we shall enjoy in full measure hereafter. The limitations to which our culture, our knowledge, the development of our being, are subjected, must ultimately be done away with. If this were not so, the ends of life might as well have been fulfilled by beings who could not partake in them. Every capacity must find its due food: all the treasure of humanity must be opened to us. We must be no more narrow fractions of men, hedged in by the bounds of one nationality, one frame of life, one round of thought, but the full stature of man such as it is seen not in any one human figure, must be attained by each of us. Here we sacrifice our individuality to the whole: but there we must receive back the whole into our Individuality.

[§5 How does his sacrifice help the race?—the *law of human progress*—action and reaction of the individual and the universal.] But such reflexions would take us too far from our special subject—and I cannot dwell upon them further. The essential fact is that humanity progresses by the sacrifice of individuals. But, granted that this law is just and right, as I have attempted to show, how does it operate? How does individual life subserve the universal, or, in other words, how does man progress as a whole, by means of the stern limits set round the development of the separate parts of his race? How is it that the course of life has not to begin over again with every new generation, but can take its departure from the acquisitions of the past? This question brings



us to the kernel of the subject: and on the manner of its resolution will depend all our conclusions with regard to the nature of reform.

Now I find a solution of the problem in a fact of human experience—viz. that truth must be *particularized* in order afterwards to be *generalized*. This point will demand a little explication.

Truth must approach the human mind in the *first* instance, not in general but in particular form—not abstractly in a proposition, but concretely in a phenomenon. In other words the symbol must precede the thought, and evolve it. Abstractions mean literally nothing to a man, who has not some experience of his own or others, by which to interpret them. We have not the faculty, which Swift gives his Laputan projectors of building downwards from the air.<sup>19</sup> There must be a solid basis of fact for all our structures. Not that I mean by this, that spiritual truth is a mere induction from experience. Far otherwise. Experience, facts, only furnish the occasion for our spiritual intuitions. I only assert that the occasion is necessary: or in other words, an outward symbol, a body, is necessary for every human thought, and till the thought is, in some measure, embodied outwardly, it cannot be realized inwardly. But this point I have fully discussed in another Essay.<sup>20</sup>

Applying this to the subject, it is evident that the truth of humanity—the fullness of its power and meaning can only be evoked in all men, so far as it has been realized in history, so far, that is as each of its capacities of thought or feeling has found a particular *form* in which to clothe itself. A truth, therefore, never comes to humanity except as the kernel, the precious ideal contents of some individuality—whether the individuality of a person or of a race: incarnated in some series of facts, and by them manifested to the world.

On the other hand, the body, though necessary is never adequate to the spirit. It 'half reveals and half conceals it'.<sup>21</sup> Sensible form, however perfect it be, can never more than suggest the life beneath, which is struggling to speak through it. Turn it as you will, matter, which is under the law of space and time, will never be fully sufficient to manifest and express that which is above these limits. Hence, though the symbol is necessary to evolve, and suggest the truth, it is a hindrance to its *full* apprehension. The fact must come before the thought but if we rest in the fact, or if we set the fact as a limit to the thought, all progress is stopt. The fact must be removed, its accidents must be dropped, and the principle it contains must be liberated and generalized, that it may produce its

true effect. And if the spiritual essence be not thus freed, by the abstracting powers of the mind, from the fleshy<sup>22</sup> and corruptible garment which it wore, the mortal part would drag down the immortal and become its grave.

From this principle it follows that a symbolic fact, after it has served its purpose in evoking some thought or experience in humanity, is best withdrawn to allow such thought to develop its general meaning. Hence death is the great generalizer for by it the fact is removed to a sufficient distance to allow us to transmute it into thought. Ordinarily, e.g., we do not consciously recognise the value<sup>23</sup> we do not recognise the symbolic value of the human beings around us: their presence is too overpowering. The fact is too dominant for us to see the spiritual meaning which it contains in its true independence. Death cuts the tie and leaves us the spiritual presence alone. And then only do we come to feel that the human being we lookt [sic] on only represented something which exists also in us. Even Christ has declared, that his outward sensible presence if it had continued on earth, would not have been an open way to the Father but an obstruction. 'It is expedient for you, that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you, but if I go, I will send Him to you.' [John 16.7] And if this be true of Christ, how much more those earthly individualities which far less perfectly manifested in their outward life the ideal principle with which they were charged. How certain is it, that the many obscurations and perversions, which they mingle with their idea would altogether, or almost altogether, shut us from the knowledge of it—if they were not removed by their passing away from the living scene, to a distance where only the ideal features are clearly visible, while the disproportions of their actual life have been thrown into the shade?

A spiritual principle first enters into Humanity embodied in an individuality—in a single person or more generally in a race or nation: but when it has reached maturity—it is let loose, by the passing away of its earthly embodiment, from the confinement that was necessary to its early growth, that in free universality it may enter into combination with other elements of spirit, and germinate the nobler future. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' [John 12.24] Thus if we contrast the three most prominent nations from whom we have received our religious, and intellectual culture, and examine how they have produced such marked effects on mankind, we trace this principle very clearly.

Note how the Jews were separated from all other influences however good in themselves, in order that there might grow up in them that deep sense of moral distinction and of their religious root which is the characteristic feature embodied in their literature and history. While the empire of aspiration, of beauty, of the ideal, is just as decidedly and exclusively given to the Greek, and the empire of law, of government, of political rights to the Roman. Each was limited as it were to a part of our common nature that he might develop it better: that he might perfectly evolve it and bring it into consciousness—and might chronicle it in symbolic acts for all the world.<sup>24</sup> It would be difficult, or rather impossible to explain these things, if we looked at man as an isolated self-centred being, but, from the point of view of universal History, these limitations justify themselves as the means by which the good of the whole will ultimately be best answered. These consciousnesses of sin and holiness, of ideal beauty, of political right, would never have been so fully developed in Humanity—would never have been felt in their full import as universal elements of man's being, had they not first formed the distinctive aim of a particular nation. The national individual, if we may so express it, is elected for a special work; it is confined to him, and he is confined to it in the first instance, only with a view to the ultimate participation of all: only with a view to the better diffusion of that consciousness which he has acquired through the length and breadth of the race.

But in order to this spiritual influence, the nations themselves had to pass away, and affect man no longer in mere outward relations, but spiritualized and generalized through their literature and history. These nations themselves could never have combined to form a higher whole: where they *were* brought in contact, they exhibited themselves *only* as mutually destructive. But,<sup>25</sup> when the specialities, which in actual life mingled with, and obscured the idea that underlay them; when the earthen vessels which contained the heavenly nectar, were removed, then the universal principles which they represented, combined with perfect freedom, and from their union was generated the richer life of modern Europe, which comprehends all these separate principles acting in living union, and is thus a fuller representation of the idea of humanity than ever existed before.

Perhaps a still grander illustration of the principle is furnished by what Bunsen and others have seen remarked with regard to the relation of the Semitic and Japhetic mind.<sup>26</sup> All the great religions have arisen in the East, and have travelled westward.<sup>27</sup> The great