

**ETHICS: AN
EXPOSITION
OF PRINCIPLES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649577965

Ethics: An Exposition of Principles by Arthur Lynch

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ARTHUR LYNCH

**ETHICS: AN
EXPOSITION
OF PRINCIPLES**

ETHICS

ETHICS

AN EXPOSITION OF PRINCIPLES

By

ARTHUR LYNCH

Author of "Moods of Life," etc.



CASELL AND COMPANY, LTD
London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne

1922

PREFACE

THE greatest problem presented to the human mind, it seems to me, is that of ascertaining the ultimate purport of all problems. In this phrase we express the veritable meaning of Ethics.

To discover new things in the material world, to invent machines useful to mankind, to find means of counteracting or of preventing disease—these achievements are great; but of a higher cast is that of exploring in the unknown worlds of thought, of conquering new domains of intellectual interest, of increasing the power of the mind, and of standing upon some headland to obtain forward visions of life and clear illumination of the paths to tread.

* * * * *

From my earliest years questions of the sort have fascinated me, and at every period of my life they have appeared, sometimes in far-off allurements, sometimes in pressing insistence, before my mind, weaving together with the texture of my thoughts. To study in this field, to see the drift of things in an ethical sense, to throw a beam of light upon the sources and the goal of our acts—this became the dream of my inner life.

The first suggestion that offered was to seek the guidance of thinkers who had gone before; for the difficult nature of the problem has not prevented the appearance of a multitude of solutions, some possessing great authority in regard to social institutions and customs, others of high import in the famous universities of the world.

Had I found any of these solutions satisfactory I should

never have desired to write my own book; but one by one I saw that these previous works failed to answer certain tests which, once they had become formulated, seemed to me imperative. I demanded that the system of Ethics, however presented, should rest on a deep base, and that it should rise by reasonings, cogent and consecutive, to the conclusions it expressed. Judged in this manner some of them, and not the least authoritative, seemed to dwindle into sheer absurdity.

Throwing away, therefore, the guidance of the mere coasting lines, I sought for better methods; but then I seemed confronted by an almost hopeless task. So vast a tangle, so many obscure positions lay in the way, that I found it necessary at length to take an entirely new cast of thought, and to deal first of all with the psychological problems which entered at every turn into the subject of Ethics.

This diversion into the realm of psychology occupied me many years and involved the strain of intense toil, but having at length finished my work on that side I was able to return, and now with added powers, to my special study of Ethics.¹

The task I set myself now was to find in the conditions of nature itself the sanctions of an ethical system, and to exhibit the main lines which on this basis serve as a guide to human conduct. Having discovered these, I had next to show the principle of development by which standards of judgment are established and from which institutions arise.

¹ Cf. "Psychology: A New System" and "Principles of Psychology" (forthcoming). I certainly should have had no reason for writing these books had I thought that the ground had been adequately covered before. So far from this being the case, however, I found it necessary even to state the central problem of psychology afresh and to introduce a new series of considerations in order to obtain my solution. I therefore say definitely now that I have shown, for the first time, the complete analysis of reason, and I have proved that by the combination of certain Fundamental Processes every mode of thought may be built. The consequences of this theory are, of course, innumerable.

This manner of regarding ethical questions is more objective than that of previous systems, but it gains in solidity and loses nothing of what is true in spirituality on that account, for though not directly aimed at, there emanates from this work, since it is found in the meaning of the world itself, an inspiration of Idealism.

I offer it now in the hope that it will at length become interfused with our very forms of thought and serve to guide us even in delicate adjustments of human affairs. This system of Ethics has reality of life; it sets forth the doctrines of Truth, Energy, Sympathy.¹

¹ I have, in order to possess a short distinctive name, called this system the Alethic system, from the Greek ἀλήθεια, truth. The first book is the forthcoming "Principles of Psychology," the second is "Ethics."

CONTENTS

PART I

SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
1. VALIDITY OF REASON	
Three principal methods of dealing with Ethics, authoritative, empirical, scientific	8
2. GLANCES AT THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICS	
Socrates known to us through Plato—Aristotle's ideal—The "germinal idea" of Aristotle's work	14
3. THE STOICS AND THE EPICUREANS	
Causes of influence in Philosophy—The Stoic doc- trines—The doctrine of Epicurus	26
4. BRIDGING THE DARK AGES	
The Roman Empire gave the juridic foundation to civilization—Dante's Divine Comedy— The work of Roger Bacon, Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes	30
5. THE RISE OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY	
Francis Bacon's "Novum Organum"—Hutche- son—Hume and Adam Smith	37

CHAPTER	PAGE
6. TYPES OF GERMAN PHILOSOPHERS	
Kant—The origins of the Transcendental Philosophy—Hegel	40
7. TYPES OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHERS	
Herbert Spencer—Bentham—Carlyle—The teaching of Tennyson and Ruskin	48
8. THE CONTRIBUTION OF BIOLOGY	
Claims of Biology—Huxley's warning—Examination of the formula: "Survival of the Fittest"—Lamarck's theory of Evolution—Darwin's theory of Natural Selection—Review of the principal phases of doctrine of Evolution or Transformism—From Lamarck to Ray Lankester	62
9. ETHICS AS A SCIENCE	
The science of Ethics is analogous to that of meteorology and involves various subsidiary sciences	83

PART II

STANDARDS, DIRECTIVES, AND CRITERIA OF DEVELOPMENT IN ETHICS

I. SEARCH FOR THE FOUNDATION OF ETHICS	
Difficulty of finding a base on which to build—Seeking aid in Psychology—Brief statement of guiding lines in Psychology: A New System—Fundamental Principles of Ethics—Truth, Energy, Sympathy	97