In the second place, there is, according to Freud, not only this irreconcilable conflict between the life and death instincts but a fissure within the libido itself, which from the ethical point of view is at least as important. The growth of the individual is shaped by the pleasure principle, that is by the desire of the individual for his own happiness. No doubt he can only attain this through membership in a community. But this condition is sometimes represented by Freud as a sort of unfortunate necessity, as something he would be better without. For culture, as we have seen, is necessarily restrictive of the individual; it demands instinctual renunciation. There is thus as Freud says\(^1\) dissension in the camp of the libido itself, a struggle between the striving for happiness and the impulse towards union with others. Freud asserts that this contest will ultimately be resolved in the case of the individual and perhaps also in the future of civilisation. But unfortunately the theme is not further developed.

The ethical theory that Freud's discussion suggests is one of enlightened self-interest, that is self-interest purged of unconscious distortions, fears and anxieties not rooted in the objective situation. What such self-interest would require can only emerge after therapeutic analysis both of the individuals and societies. But it is difficult to believe that psychology will ever by itself solve the fundamental problems of human relations, or in the Freudian terminology, the problem of the right apportionment of libidinal attachment as between self and other "objects". A theory of ethics which rests on the assumption that in dealing justly with others the individual can after all secure his own happiness has all the air of an "illusion" which from the Freudian points of view should be relegated to the infantile stages of the development of morality.

It is, I think remarkable that while Freud and his followers have so much to say about love, they pay hardly any attention to justice. The only reference I can find is in Freud's *Group Psychology and the Psychology of the Ego*. "Social justice", we are told, "means that we deny ourselves many things so that others may have to do without them as well, or what is the same thing, may not be able to ask for them". The demand for equality among the members of a group is said to be rooted in the jealousy aroused against those who would monopolise the love of the leader, just as their sense of community rests on their common renunciation of his exclusive love. This reduction of humanity and justice to envy and jealousy is somewhat mitigated by his interpretation of Eros as a force working for unity and harmony. But the two sides of his theory, ultimately due to the vagueness and ambiguity of the concept of the libido, are nowhere satisfactorily brought into relation and, on the whole, the "egoistic" trend in his thought predominates. It is difficult to see how such a conception of human nature can ever provide the basis for a rational ethics.

The most important problems of ethics centre round the theory of justice and in dealing with it psycho-analysis is, I think, at its weakest. I see no reason, from the purely psychological side, for accepting the Freudian view of the origins of the sense of justice. Neither in the history of the invidual nor of civilisation can this be shown to be rooted predominantly in the desire that no one shall fare better than ourselves. It owes at least as much to the power of sympathy, that is the power of entering in imagination into the situation of another and seeing it as though it were our own. Above all there is a rational element in it which the Freudian analysis completely ignores. The core of justice is the demand for equality and this is based at bottom on the rejection of arbitrariness, the recognition that individuals ought not to be treated differently unless a reasonable ground can be given for so treating them. I can see no ground for regarding this demand as merely

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 136.
emotional. If I say that “one man’s good is of as much intrinsic worth as
the like good of another”, I certainly do not mean that “the emotion which
I experience in knowing that one man is benefited or injured is the same
as that which I should experience in the case of any other”. This latter
statement would be manifestly untrue in many instances, but the recognition
of its falsity has no bearing on the truth or falsity of my recognition of the
principle of equality as binding on me. The difficulties in the theory of
equality begin to emerge when we try to think out the grounds which
justify differential treatment. On these again psychology may throw some
light, but in the end value judgments have to be made, which, though in-
effectual, if lacking in emotional warmth, do not depend for their validity
on the strength of the emotional response.

In sum, the issue that psycho-analytic theories of ethics have to face is
that with which all naturalistic ethics are confronted. The problem is whether
moral judgments express desires, strivings or emotions or whether they go
beyond what is actually desired to what ought to be desired. It seems to me
that psycho-analysts suffer from what might be called an “ought phobia”.
They show too great an anxiety to explain the “ought” away, and they
tend to pass from the indicative to the imperative mood without realising
the implications of the transition. Thus, for example, Professor Flugel, in
his very illuminating study of the psychological basis of morals, is in search
of an ethic purged of anger and aggression, and one that would make its
appeal to reason. Yet reason is, in his view, concerned with means and
not with ends, which in the last resort are set by “orexis” or desire. The
moral criterion which is finally adopted, however, clearly goes beyond what
individuals actually desire to what they ought to desire, or, if you like, to
what they would desire, if they were rational. This criterion is the free and
spontaneous expression of the instincts in so far as this is compatible with
harmony not only in the individual but in society. Is this ideal then “orectic"
or cognitive? Again when we are told that increasing sociality and increasing
individualisation are complementary aspects of moral evolution, is this a
statement of fact or of what ought to be fact? We have seen that according
to Freud the conflict between individual and social development is far from
being resolved, and Professor Flugel also points out that the compromise
which has to be effected between socialisation and individualisation remains
one of the most acute problems of modern democracy.1 To set up social
harmony as an ideal is to describe a form of life held to be desirable, not
one which in fact is necessarily desired. If the test is to be found in what
people actually desire, the impulses making for discord may prove more
powerful, or no less powerful than those making for harmony. Despite a
good deal that is attractive in Professor Flugel’s exposition I feel that in
the end he leaves undefined the relation between the striving and the
cognitive elements in the moral judgment. He says that in a scientific
handling of human relations, “we must substitute a cognitive and psycho-
logical approach for an emotional and a moral one.”2 But this, I think,
would be not to explain morality, but to explain it away.

IV

I turn now to the views of Erich Fromm, which in important respects
involve a departure from Freudian theory. In the first place, his con-
ception of human nature is not as individualistic, or asocial, as he takes
Freud’s to be. He has a different conception of both the love and hate
elements in the human mind. Man is fundamentally social in that he needs
to be related to others, to escape aloneness, to belong or to be needed.

Destructiveness on the other hand is the result of a baulking of vitality, not an inherent or primary need to hurt or destroy. In the second place he distinguishes more radically than the Freudians between what he calls an "authoritarian" conscience and a "humanistic" conscience. The former is the voice of an internalised external authority, the super-ego of Freudian theory. The latter is not "the internalised voice of an authority we are eager to please and are afraid of displeasing; it is our own voice, present in every human being and independent of external rewards and sanctions". It is the "expression of our true selves", "the reaction of our total personality to its proper functioning or disfunctioning". It bids us develop fully and harmoniously, that is "to realise ourselves, to become what we potentially are".

Here we are back full circle to theories long familiar to philosophers, but now claiming to be derived from empirical psychology. While there is a great deal that is very helpful in Fromm's analysis of the conditions of harmonious development, he does not seem to me to succeed any better than the Freudians in making the transition from what is or may be to what ought to be. To say that we should aim at becoming what we potentially are is not illuminating since we are potentially evil as well as good and what we need is a criterion for distinguishing between them. The appeal to the "real" or "true" self is purely verbal, since the real self is not the self as it is but as it ought to be. Furthermore the formula of self-realisation leaves out of consideration the central problem of ethics—that of the relation between self and others. In the end, it is not any form of self-fulfilment that is desirable, but that which is compatible with the fulfilment of others. Clearly such an end goes far beyond what any particular individuals actually desire, and it may require them to abandon or sacrifice a good deal of what they so desire. The philosophical problem of the principles of justice thus remains. It seems to me that writers like Fromm and Karen Horney are too optimistic in assuming that these can be discovered by "listening to ourselves". What we may thus hear may not be very enlightening. The conditions of social harmony have to be discovered; they will not follow automatically from the striving towards self-realisation, even if each individual is "true to himself".

V

An interesting approach to the ethical aspects of psycho-analysis is to be found in the various attempts that have been made to clarify the concept of a "normal" mind. It soon becomes clear that from the point of view of mental health the "normal" is not equivalent to the "well adjusted". Adjustment is a relation between the individual and his environment, and it is obvious that not every environment is equally likely to elicit what is best in the minds it moulds. The best adjusters, say to a criminal environment, are not necessarily the healthiest. If we value individuality and spontaneity we should have to regard the individual who conforms most fully to the patterns of a totalitarian society as unhealthy. The criterion of efficiency, in the sense of effective use of capacities, is equally unhelpful. A selfishly prudent person may be successful in achieving his own ends to the detriment of others. "Social efficiency" is again relative to the standards prevalent for the time being and as judged by them, the finest and those most sensitive to new values would have to be called "abnormal". Again

1 Man for Himself, p. 158.
2 "Nor must we overlook the fact that the greatest ethical reformers, prophets and heroes were certainly neurotics, and that ethics has been furthered by them." Pflister, Some Applications of Psycho-analysis, p. 229. It is not clear to me by what tests they are adjudged "neurotic".
in periods of rapid changes in the social structure the individual who shapes his conduct in accordance with standards developed in periods of greater stability may have to carry a burden too heavy for mental peace. In such circumstances the "well-adjusted" person may well be the exception and not the rule.

Considerations such as these suggest that the normal and the abnormal cannot be fruitfully defined in terms of conformity with or departure from current standards. From the point of view of psycho-analytic theory we have to consider not only the fact of deviation but its causal background. Dr. H. J. Wegrocki has suggested that the differentia of abnormality is to be found in "the tendency to choose a type of reaction which represents an escape from a conflict-producing situation instead of a facing of the problem". This may serve well enough, I imagine, provided the notion of "escape" can be defined in a manner which would make it include all the symptoms that psycho-pathologists use in identifying neuroses. But in its broader applications the charge of "escapism" can easily be levelled against anything that we do not happen to approve. Those who think that radical social reforms can only be brought about by inward psychological changes will regard all those who put their faith in external institutional changes as "escapists", and conversely. Similarly the pacifist and his opponent may well accuse each other of running away from the facts and not "facing reality".

An important attempt to arrive at an objective standard of normality has been made by Dr. Ernest Jones in his paper on "The Concept of the Normal". In effect, if I have understood him rightly, he gives a psycho-analytic version of the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean, with the analyst playing the part of the "phronimos". If the individual could through analysis be purged of his unconscious fear, hate and guilt, his potentialities would have the chance of developing in due proportion. In his relations with others he would then show neither the excessive friendliness which may mask an unsolved sadism, nor the insensitiveness which may be a defence against a love of which he is afraid. He will thus avoid the kind of selfishness which is a form of "secondary narcissism" and the sort of self-sacrifice which is rooted in unconscious guilt. Having inner security, he will meet frustration and hostility calmly and fearlessly. Freed from unconscious guilt he will develop the capacity for happiness, that is a combination of the capacity for enjoyment with self-content. He will have the inner freedom which will result from the removal of undue repressions and the barriers that impede the flow of energy between the conscious and unconscious levels of the mind.

Clearly this describes an ideal rather than an existing state of affairs. To the question whether a normal mind thus defined exists, Dr. Jones replies "definitely in the negative". He adds that we are only in the early stages of learning about the conditions in which the standard laid down can be attained. From the point of view of ethical theory the problem is whether Dr. Jones is describing what people actually desire or what in his view they ought to desire. On his own showing people are in fact torn between love and hate, between gratification and repression, between the super-ego actuated by guilt based on fear and the super-ego actuated by affection. To say that as a result of analysis the ethics of affection will be shown to be superior to the ethics of authority is to say that the former ought to prevail over the latter; it is a value judgment and not an assertion of psychological

---

1 Except, of course, in dealing with gross pathological deviations.
fact. Furthermore, we are told very little about the contents of an ethic of love. It is not to be taken for granted that love, even if "desexualised", will suffice to solve the problems of human relations.\(^1\) There will remain the difficulties of choice and the grading of values. We cannot and ought not to love everything in ourselves and in others indiscriminately. The principle of universal love, taken by itself, might easily lead to the position of philosophical anarchism, that everyone should be allowed to do what he wills. If it is urged that to do so would result in the majority of people not getting what they want, we are brought back to the real task of social ethics which is to discover the principles of distributive justice and the limits with which constraint may rightly be used to ensure their being carried into effect. To this task psychology may contribute much of importance, but is hardly likely to have the last word.

Dr. Jones makes the interesting observation that "analysed people, including psycho-analysts, differ surprisingly little from unanalysed people in the use made of their intelligence. . . ." They show greater tolerance, he tells us, in sexual and religious matters, but in other spheres, e.g. in dealing with the relative merits of capitalism or communism or the problems of class structure or international relations, they continue to be extensively influenced by the distorting effects of unconscious complexes. He goes on to suggest that if the analytic technique were applied to the convictions men hold in relation to all these problems, we should gain knowledge that would aid us in the study of normality.\(^2\)

This suggestion has been elaborated and carried further by Dr. Money-Kyrle, who by its aid arrives at a definition of the normal which identifies it with the rational.\(^3\) A desire is rational according to Dr. Money-Kyrle if all the beliefs that influence it are true. Presumably the beliefs are true if they represent accurately the qualities of the objects desired, or the appropriateness of the means used to attain these objects. On the other hand, the desires themselves cannot be either true or false, rational or irrational. The chain of means and ends cannot of course go on indefinitely. There are, however, no ultimate or irreducible desires until we reach the most primitive desires of all, such as "the hedonic impulse to avoid painful and seek pleasurable experiences". This, of course, is the sort of theory that has long been familiar to philosophers in various forms. What psycho-analytic theory adds is to stress the part played by unconscious factors in influencing beliefs. A desire is rational if these have been brought to consciousness and accepted only if shown to be true.

The distinction drawn by Dr. Ernest Jones between a super-ego actuated by guilt based on fear and a super-ego actuated by affection reappears here in the form of a distinction between the "authoritarian" and the "humanistic" character. In the former moral behaviour is predominantly shaped by the fear of punishment, in the latter, by the fear of injuring or disappointing something that is loved. Moral behaviour is defined as behaviour dictated by a sense of guilt. But while in the authoritarian character the sense of guilt is based on what, following Dr. Melanie Klein, Dr. Money-Kyrle calls the "persecutory position", in the humanitarian this gives place to the "depressive position", sorrow at having injured something

\(^1\) Of course, if you begin by putting all the virtues into love you can take them out again. Cf. St. Augustine: Temperance is love keeping itself uncontaminated for its object; Fortitude is love readily enduring all for the beloved's sake; Justice is love serving only the beloved and therefore rightly governing; Prudence is love sagaciously choosing the things that help her and rejecting the things that hinder. *De Moribus*, 1.15.25, 1841; translation of passage as given by Sidgwick, *Outlines of the History of Ethics*, p. 132, fifth edition, 1925.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 4.

\(^3\) *Psycho-analysis and Politics*, 1951.

18
loved. It is claimed that as a result of analysis a patient gets rid of his irrational fears and thus of his authoritarian morality. But as he gains increasing knowledge of himself he has an “empathetic understanding of his fellows and can neither injure nor neglect them without distress—or what is the same thing, without depressive guilt”. It is not clear whether this new form of guilt is just a feeling of depression or a recognition of wrong, nor whether the whole of the “ego morality” is exhausted in the unwillingness of the agent to injure or neglect his fellows. Be this as it may, the conclusion is drawn that since the transformation is effected through increasing knowledge or insight, we may say that to be normal, to be rational and to be humanistic are one and the same thing. In this way, Dr. Money-Kyrle argues, ethics can be given a scientific basis and thus escape the relativism, which, as he explains, he finds emotionally intolerable.

The weakness of this line of argument is revealed when we ask, why be rational or normal? The only answer that can be given, we are told, is that there is in us a desire for truth. The question then arises as to the status of this desire. So far as I can see it is not one of the primitive or irreducible desires, since hedonically, truth is far from being what we always want. But even if it were, it would be only one desire among others which conflict with it, and as between ultimate desires there is according to this view no rational way of deciding. We are thus left with a non-rational desire for rationality. It is not easy to see how this escapes relativism.

Dr. Money-Kyrle argues that it is possible on the evidence provided by psycho-analysis to define the “good” state, and to decide rationally between the rival political theories, now clamouring for our allegiance. The “good” state is, in short, the one that provides the most favourable opportunities for the development of the “normal” or “humanist” character in its citizens. If the non-humanist disagrees, we can show him that his beliefs are rooted in a character dominated by irrational anxieties within himself and that, if he submitted himself to analysis, he would be freed from their domination, his character would become more humanistic and his political views would be correspondingly transformed. I do not know whether this argument is purely hypothetical, or whether it has been empirically verified by actual analysis of representative samples of the different political parties. But in any case, Dr. Money-Kyrle wins his battles too easily. A very complex inquiry would be needed to determine to what extent political theories differ about the ends of social life or about the means. That tories want freedom without welfare, socialists welfare without freedom and communists neither freedom nor welfare are statements that each might make about the other, but hardly about themselves. Psycho-analysis can no doubt help in clarifying the ends of conduct relatively to the means needed to realise them. But I do not see how it can decide rationally which theories are “right” and which “wrong”, if it starts from the assumption that the distinction between true and false does not apply to the ends of desire. All that can be said on this assumption is that some prefer one political theory and some another. In this context the communists are on sounder ground when they urge, in agreement with many non-communist philosophers, that ends and means are dialectically interdependent and that in any evaluation they must be considered together. If so, we should be led to a different view of what constitutes rationality in action from that which seems to be

---

1 P. 87.
2 I think Bertrand Russell is more candid in dealing with a similar question. In an account he gives of an imaginary dialogue between Nietzsche and Buddha, he admits that in the end the issue cannot be decided by an appeal to facts, but only by an appeal to the emotions. (A History of Western Philosophy, pp. 799-800.)
favoured by psycho-analysts. We should in fact be searching for principles guiding desire and recognised as rightly guiding them. No doubt psycho-analysis gives powerful support to the doctrine that force is no remedy and that repression takes its revenge by generating fresh conflicts. In doing so it is in harmony with certain aspects of liberal political theory. But liberal thought has long ago recognised also that liberty rests on restraint, a principle again supported by what psycho-analysis has to teach us concerning the functions of repression in the development of the mind. The problem both in the case of the individual and of society is to determine the limits of coercion and the spheres within which it may be properly used. It is at this point that political theories diverge and I do not see why we should expect psycho-analysis to clear away the formidable difficulties which these theories have to face.

VI

It follows, I think, from the above survey that the attempts that have been made to derive an ethical theory from psycho-analysis have not so far proved successful. Psycho-analysis, it seems to me, is not necessarily committed to any particular theory, and is compatible with very different theories of the logical character of moral judgments. Its business as a therapy is to break down the barriers between the unconscious and the conscious levels of the mind and in this way to expand the area of conscious control. But it is not to be assumed that when an individual has become more fully aware of the impulses by which he has been influenced he will necessarily have discovered the right principles of conduct. That would only follow on the assumption of a natural moral sense which needs only to be freed from the obstructions to which it has been subjected to be enabled to see at once what is right and what is wrong in human relations. Psycho-analysts are, of course, as entitled as anyone else to subscribe to a naturalistic theory of morals, but I cannot see that such a theory derives special support from the teaching of psycho-analysis.

The predilection shown by psycho-analytic writers for the view that moral judgments are "aesthetic", that is expressions of desires or striving, is, I think, traceable to two sources. First, psycho-analysts have never freed themselves from the doctrine of psychological hedonism, despite the criticisms directed against it by moral philosophers. They tend to interpret Freud's "Pleasure Principle" as implying that impulses have for their sole object the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. From psychological hedonism they pass in a manner familiar in the history of philosophy to ethical hedonism, in other words from the assertion that men seek pleasure or happiness to the assertion that happiness is their good. The appeal to the "real self" also lends itself to a species of naturalism amounting to the assertion that the good is what satisfies the self or what would satisfy it, if it knew its "true" nature.

In the second place, I suggest that the predilection for the view that moral judgments are rooted in desire or striving may be a sort of defensive reaction against the authoritarian element in morals. In their flight from the ought psycho-analysts overlook the distinction between moral obligation and self-coercion. This is encouraged by the fact that the moral law is often regarded as a sort of command. But strictly the relation of command-obedience is inter-personal, and it is only by analogy that it is extended to the self. A man cannot really "obey" himself or such an abstraction as a general principle. It is not doubt the case that moral judgments claim to possess authority, but this is only another way of saying that they claim to be true. It is psychologically convenient to speak of recalcitrant impulse struggling against reason or of conflicts between impulses. But all this has
little bearing on the problem of the logical validity of moral judgments. Constraint and validity are not interchangeable terms.

On the empirical side psycho-analysis can, I think, make important contributions to the study of morality mainly in two directions. It can help in the first place by building up what might be called a comparative moral pathology. It would be of the greatest interest to the moralist to know what moral changes are brought about by analysis in, say a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, or a Communist living in their own setting. The analysis of representatives of these creeds in other than their own environment is another matter, the issues being complicated by the influence on the individual of conflicting moral codes. Data of this sort would provide valuable material for the study of the causes making for variation in moral codes and they would facilitate the task of their critical evaluation.

In the second place, psycho-analysis can contribute towards the clarification of moral experience by ridding it of the magical elements that have gathered around it and purging it of fear and anger. An example of what I have in mind is to be found in the persistent influence of the emotional demand for retribution on the criminal law and on the philosophical theories of the ethical basis of punishment. The movement in recent psychoanalytic writings towards a "humanist" ethics is clearly in this direction. But though an ethic based on love is vastly superior to one based on obedience, it will not suffice to salve the complex problems of human relations, even in small groups, and still less in the "great society". The demands of love generate conflicts of their own. There are fissures, as Freud saw, within the libido itself. To overcome them we need more than goodwill. Neither in theory nor in practice can love replace justice.

The Story of South Place—V
CONTROVERSY AND A FRESH START

At the close of the first decade of South Place W. J. Fox had attained a position of remarkable influence in London. His Sunday discourses were heard by a congregation which included many prominent statesmen and men of letters. His services on the platform were constantly sought by the organisers of progressive causes. His direction of the Monthly Repository ensured for him a place in the small company of literary editors. Meanwhile it was evident that the ties which bound him to the Unitarian Association were wearing thin. Fox was never interested in denominationalism, and his religious ideas were far too radical for the general body of Unitarians and their leaders, whose liberalism was governed by theological beliefs still kept within the framework of biblical authority. That South Place should become an entirely untrammeled centre was inevitable. During the early eighteen-thirties the important question was whether the Minister's independence, personal no less than intellectual, was likely to endanger the unity of the congregation. And there was ironic significance in the events which caused the young woman who could rightly be described as the most beloved member of the Society to become the central figure of a crisis in 1834. For some five years before that date Fox's personal life had been closely affected by Eliza and Sarah Flower, and the elder sister was now to be of controversial import.

Their father had died in 1829, entrusting his daughters to the care of his friend and neighbour in Upper Clapton. They were gifted, beautiful, and expressive; unfortunately also marked by the physical delicacy to which young ladyhood condemned so large a percentage of English women in that age. Eliza was a musical genius who composed spontaneously from childhood. Robert Browning, when urging her to make