

Right and Good

The 'right' is a means to the realisation of the 'good'. An action is right if it tends to bring about what is good. An action is wrong if it tends to bring about what is evil. The conception of right is subordinate to the conception of good. The right is subservient to the good. The good is an end which a person ought to realize in order to realize his deeper self. It is an end which satisfies his rational nature. It fulfills the demands of his sentient nature in conformity with the higher law of reason. It satisfies his total self—sentient as well as rational. The concept of right is derived from that of a moral law or law of duty. A moral law is not a law of nature. It is not a statement of what always happens. A moral law is that which ought to be. The right is the fundamental category of jural ethics. The good is the fundamental category of

teleological ethics. The notions of 'right' and 'good' are fundamental in morality.²

The Good and the Highest Good

What fulfils a need or satisfies a desire is good. Health, wealth, knowledge, culture, etc., are good. Certain things satisfy our biological needs. They are bodily goods. Certain things satisfy our economic needs. They are economic goods. Certain things satisfy our social needs. They are social goods. Certain things satisfy our intellectual, moral and æsthetic needs. They are Truth, Good and Beauty. There is a hierarchy of goods at the top of which there is the Highest good. It is good in itself. It is not a means to any other higher good. The highest good is the absolute good. The subordinate goods are instrumental or relative goods.³

Right and Duty