excellent qualities, both as a man and a writer. He was temperate, chaste, honest, and a lover of his country.”

As an earnest student, an ardent lover of liberty, an en­thusiast in the cause of virtue, and a man of unblemished life and untiring beneficence, Shaftesbury probably had no superior in his generation. His character and pursuits are the more remarkable, considering the rank of life in which he was born and the circumstances under which he was brought up. In many respects he reminds us of the impe­rial philosopher Marcus Aurelius, whose works we know him to have studied with avidity, and whose influence is unmistakably stamped upon his own productions.

Most of Shaftesbury’s writings have been already mentioned. In addition to these there have been published fourteen letters from Shaftesbury to Molesworth, edited by Toland in 1721 ; some letters to Benjamin Furly, his sons, and his clerk Harry Wilkinson, included in a volume entitled *Original Letters of Locke, Sidney, and Shaftesbury,* which was published by Mr T. Forster in 1830, and again in an enlarged form in 1847 ; three letters, written respectively to Stringer, Lord Oxford, and Lord Godolphin, which appeared, for the first time, in the *General Dictionary* ; and lastly a letter to Le Clerc, in his recollections of Locke, first published in *Notes and Queries,* Feb. 8, 1851. The *Letters to a Young Man at the University* [Michael Ainsworth], already mentioned, were first published in 1716, it being uncertain by whom. The Letter on Design was first published in the edition of the *Characteristics* issued in 1732. Besides the published writ­ings, there are still to be found several memoranda, letters, rough drafts, &c., in the Shaftesbury papers in the Record Office.

Shaftesbury, it is plain, took great pains in the elaboration of his style, and he succeeded so far as to make his meaning trans­parent. The thought is always clear. But, on the other hand, he did not equally succeed in attaining elegance, an object at which he seems equally to have aimed. There is a curious affectation about his style,—a falsetto note,—which, notwithstanding all his efforts to please, is often irritating to the reader. Its main characteristic is perhaps best hit off by Charles Lamb when he calls it “genteel.” He poses too much as a fine gentleman, and is so anxious not to be taken for a pedant of the vulgar scholastic kind that he falls into the hardly more attractive pedantry of the æsthete and *virtuoso.* But, notwithstanding these defects, he possesses the great merits of being easily read and easily under­stood. Hence, probably, the wide popularity which his works enjoyed in the last century ; and hence, undoubtedly, the agreeable feeling with which, notwithstanding all their false taste and their tiresome digressions, they still impress the modern reader.

It is mainly as a moralist that Shaftesbury has a claim to a place in the history of literature and philosophy. Like most of the ethical writers of his time his first impulse to speculation, or at least to publication, seems to have been derived from a desire to combat the still fashionable paradoxes of Hobbes, and to arrest the progress of doctrines at which society still continued to be seriously alarmed. Hence it became his main concern to assert the reality and independence of our benevolent affections, and to show that these and the acts which result from them are what mainly elicit the feeling of moral approbation. This work he appears to have conceived it his special mission to undertake, not as a “pedant” or a “Schoolman,” but as a “man of taste.” It was probably in accordance with this conception that he refrained from using the language about the “laws of nature” which had hitherto been current in ethical treatises, and that he preferred to represent morality as a matter of “taste,” “sentiment,” or “affection,” rather than as dictated simply by reason.

The leading ideas in Shaftesbury’s ethical theory are those of a system, or the relation of parts to a whole, benevolence, moral beauty, and a moral sense.

The individual man himself is a system consisting of various appetites, passions, and affections, all united under the supreme control of reason. Of this system the parts are so nicely adjusted to each other that any disarrangement or disproportion, however slight, may mar and disfigure the whole. “Whoever is in the least versed in this moral kind of architecture will find the inward fabric so adjusted, and the whole so nicely built, that the barely extending of a single passion a little too far, or the continuance of it too long, is able to bring irrecoverable ruin and misery.”

But morality and human nature cannot be adequately studied in the system of the individual man. There are parts in that system, both mental and bodily, which have an evident respect to something outside it. Neither man nor any other animal, though ever so complete a system of parts as to all within, can be allowed in the same manner complete as to all without ; he must be con­sidered as having a further relation abroad to the system of his kind. So even this system of his kind to the animal system; this to the world (our earth) ; and this again to the bigger world

and to the universe. No being can properly be called good or ill except in reference to the systems of which he is a part, “ When, in general, all the affections or passions are suited to the public good or end of the species, then is the natural temper entirely good. If, on the contrary, any requisite passion be wanting, or if there be any one supernumerary or weak, or anywise disserviceable or contrary to that main end, then is the natural temper, and consequently the creature himself, in some measure corrupt and ill.” Hence it follows that benevolence, if not the sole, is at least the principal moral virtue.

The idea of a moral and social system, the parts of which are in a constant proportion to each other, and so nicely adjusted that the slightest disarrangement would mar the unity of design, almost necessarily suggests an analogy between morality and art. As the beauty of an external object consists in a certain pro­portion between its parts, or in a certain harmony of colouring, so the beauty of a virtuous character consists in a certain proportion between the various affections, or in a certain harmonious blending of the various springs of action as they contribute to promote the great ends of our being. And similarly, we may suppose, the beauty of a virtuous action would be explained as consisting in its relation to the virtuous character in which it has its source, or to the other acts of a virtuous life, or to the general condition of a virtuous state of society. This analogy between art and morality, or, as it may otherwise be expressed, between the beauty of external objects and the beauty of actions or characters, is never long absent from Shaftesbury’s mind. Closely connected with it is the idea that morals, no less than art, is a matter of taste or relish.

This idea leads us to the last of the distinctive features in Shaftesbury’s ethical philosophy. The faculty which approves of right and disapproves of wrong actions is with him a sense, and more than once he anticipates Hutcheson by calling it a “moral sense,” an expression, indeed, which he may be said to have contributed to the English language. This “ sense of right and wrong” is “ as natural to us as natural affection itself,” and “a first principle in our constitution and make.” At the same time it includes a certain amount of judgment or reflexion, that is to say, a rational element. Shaftesbury’s doctrine on this head may, perhaps, briefly be summed up as follows. Each man has from the first a natural sense of right and wrong, a “ moral sense ” or “ conscience ” (all which expressions he employs as synonymous). This sense is, in its natural condition, wholly or mainly emotional, but, as it admits of constant education and improvement, the rational or reflective element in it gradually becomes more pro­minent. Its decisions are generally described as if they were immediate, and, beyond the occasional recognition of a rational as well as an emotional element, little or no attempt is made to analyse it. It was reserved for Hume properly to discriminate between these two elements, and to point out that, while the feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation is instantaneous, the moral judgment which precedes it is often the result of an intellectual process of considerable length and perplexity.

It may be sufficient to supplement this brief survey of Shaftes­bury’s system by a still briefer summary of the answers, so far as they can be collected from his works, which he would have given to the principal questions of ethics as they are now usually pro­pounded. His answers to these questions are, as it appears to the present writer, that our moral ideas—the distinctions of virtue and vice, right and wrong—are to be found in the very make and constitution of our nature ; that morality is independent of theology, actions being denominated good or just, not by the arbitrary will of God (as had recently been maintained by Locke), but in virtue of some quality existing in themselves ; that the ultimate test of a right action is its tendency to promote the general welfare ; that we have a peculiar organ, the moral sense, analogous to taste in art, by which we discriminate between characters and actions as good or bad ; that the higher natures among mankind are impelled to right action, and deterred from wrong action, partly by the moral sense, partly by the love and reverence of a just and good God, while the lower natures are mainly influenced by the opinions of others, or by the hope of reward and the fear of punishment ; that appetite and reason both concur in the determination of action ; lastly, that the question whether the will does or does not possess any freedom of choice, irrespectively of character and motives, is one (at least so we may gather from Shaftesbury’s reticence) which it does not concern the moralist to solve.

The close resemblance of Hutcheson’s speculations to those of Shaftesbury, amounting sometimes to identity, will be apparent on reference to the account of that philosopher (vol. xii. pp. 409-11). Next to Hobbes, the moralist with whose views Shaftesbury’s stand in most direct antagonism is Locke, who not only maintained that moral distinctions depend solely on the arbitrary will of God, but that the sanctions by which they are mainly enforced are the hope of future reward and the fear of future punishment. “By the fault is the rod, and with the transgression a fire ready to