Editor's Introduction
Tom Regan

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

"I was much interested in noticing an announcement of your course of lectures for the 'Ethical Society' in the *Daily News*, one day last week." So writes Henrietta Moore to her son George on October 11, 1898.[1] The ten lectures Moore was scheduled to give at the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy were advertised as "The Elements of Ethics, with a view to an appreciation of Kant's Moral Philosophy."[2] The plan proved to be too ambitious. As Moore states in his introductory remarks, "I shall not enter into the details of Kant's system at all" (*The Elements,* Moore's Introduction).[3] Instead, he announces that he intends to reserve Kant's moral philosophy "for a second course next term, if the committee of this School should desire me to deliver one" (ibid.). They did. And Moore did. But the written lectures (it was Moore's custom to write the full text of his lectures, in long-hand, and to read them) seem to have been lost; only notes taken by his brother

[1] Quotations from letters are taken from correspondence between Moore and the person identified. The date of each letter is given in the text. The letters are part of the collection of unpublished material comprising The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library.

[2] Moore's syllabus is reprinted after my Introduction. The syllabus originally was printed by Kenny & Co., Trade Union Printers, 25 Camden Road N.W., London. This is historically significant, because it means that the outline of the lectures—and, thus, the main outline of *Principia Ethica*—did not emerge on a week-to-week basis during the time (the autumn of 1898) Moore wrote the lectures, but must have been settled upon by Moore *before* he began to give the lectures. For further discussion of this matter, see footnote 28.

[3] Quotations from *The Elements of Ethics* refer to Moore's lectures as here reproduced. Quotations from the lectures hereafter are given in the body of the Introduction by citing *The Elements*, followed by the appropriate lecture.

Thomas (the poet Sturge Moore) and Sturge Moore's answers to examination questions survive. Because Kant's moral philosophy is barely touched upon in the lectures published here, they have been given the same title they came to have among Moore's contemporaries: *The Elements of Ethics.* The typescript on which they are based is the one submitted to and accepted for publication by Cambridge University Press in March 1902. Although for reasons explained in what follows Moore abandoned his plans to publish *The Elements*, these lectures are important to students of his life and work, if for no other reason than that they represent Moore's first effort as a systematic teacher.

That Moore should have been given the opportunity to offer lectures is itself a tribute to his youthful promise. At twenty-six and only recently named a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, he had a modest record of publication (two reviews, a contribution to a symposium on the unreality of time, and a more substantial paper entitled "Freedom").[4] By contrast, the remaining lecturers at the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy were mostly scholars of established reputation: T. H. Green, Leslie Stephens, Bernard Bosanquet, J. H. Muirhead, SamuelAlexander, G. F. Stout, and J. Ellis McTaggart, for example. Little wonder, then, that on October 10, 1898, Sturge Moore would write to his younger brother, perhaps in response to the same advertisement in the *Daily News* that had caught their mother's attention, "I congratulate you heartily on your success which I hope will lead to many others. We are all intending to help swell the audience to your lectures and look forward to gaining sound rudimentary notions." With his "Lectures on Ethics," Moore's reputation as one of his generation's leading philosophers was launched.

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[4] Moore's published work at this time included the following: (1) A contribution to an Aristotelian Society Symposium on the topic "In What Sense, If Any, Do Past and Future Time Exist?" *Mind,* n.s, v. 6, April 1897, pp. 235-40; (2) a review of Leon Brunschvicg, *La modaité du jugement* (Paris, 1897), *Mind,* n.s., v. 6, Oct. 1897, pp. 554-59; (3) his essay "Freedom," *Mind,* n.s., v. 7, April 1898, pp. 179-204, and (4) a review of J. C. Fichte, *The Science of Ethics, as Based on the Science of Knowledge* (translated by A. E. Kroeger, edited by the Hon. Dr. W. T. Harris, London, 1897), *International Journal of Ethics,* v. 9, October 1898, pp. 92-97.

THE SCHOOL

The London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy was a noble if short-lived experiment in alternative education. It was more a school in name than in fact. The Oxford philosopher Bernard Bosanquet served as its president, and among its three vice-presidents was Moore's former teacher at Cambridge, Henry Sidgwick. Beginning in the autumn of 1897, lectures were organized and presented at various places in London: Essex Hall and Morley College, for example, but mainly at the Passmore Edwards Settlement. According to its statement of "Aims and Methods," the school aimed at "supplying students of Philosophy in London with some of the teaching which the philosophy faculty of a teaching university might be expected to provide."[5] The school's founders believed they were responding to a real need. Both the University of London and existing auxiliary educational services, in their view, failed to supply adequate opportunities in London for the growing demand to study philosophy systematically. "That such additional opportunity for philosophic study is necessary is well known," Bosanquet writes in his First Report, "to all those familiar with the means already provided by existing institutions; that there exists a growing body of students willing to take advantage of such teaching seems to have been shown by the large measure of success which has attended the philosophical courses given from time to time by the London School for the Extension of University Teaching."[6]

Something better had to be tried. Bosanquet, Sidgwick, and the other members of the school's committee decided to break new ground, standing apart from both the University of London and the Extension Society. "The object of ceasing to work under the University Extension Society," Bosanquet writes, "was to give the Committee an absolutely free hand both in the arrangement of

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[5] The School's "Aims and Methods" are set forth by its president, Bernard Bosanquet, in both his "First Annual Report, The London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy, 1897-1898," and in his "Second Annual Report, The London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy, 1898 to 1899." The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library.

[6] The quotation is from Bernard Bosanquet's "First Report," p. 3.

courses of lectures with a view to systematic teaching, and in securing the services of teachers of high standing on terms which would make it worth their while to give fresh courses of lectures, specially adapted to their place among the other courses."[7]

Such independence had its price. That price was money, mainly the lack thereof. Finances for operating the school came largely from contributions made by subscribers, less so from the nominal fees charged for some of the lectures themselves. It was not enough. To make matters worse, the school's major benefactor gave notice of withdrawing his support on the grounds that the school should be self-supporting. In his letter of October 27, 1900, in which he announces the committee's decision to dissolve the school only three years after its founding, Bosanquet sadly notes that "it was necessary, therefore, for purely financial reasons, to close the School. And we must insist," Bosanquet continues— inaccurately, as will be explained below—"that these reasons were purely financial."[8] The one possible remedy, namely, to have the school's lecturers recognized as teachers in the University of London, came to naught when the university commissioners "felt unable to accede to the application" because the commissioners judged that the school failed to qualify as a Public Educational Institution, according to the University of London Act of 1898.

Bosanquet's bitter disappointment is apparent when he writes that "we cannot think that the absence, in the greatest city in the world, of adequate means for the systematic study of the central theory of life, will be permitted to continue. . . . [S]ooner or later, we must believe, the governing body of the University will grabble seriously with the problem of philosophical teaching," adding (ominously), "our students, we feel sure, will use . . . any influence they may possess."[9] Whatever practical "influence" these students may have had is unclear. What is clear, is that the not inconsider-

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[7] Bernard Bosanquet, "Memorandum on the Work of the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy," June 1899, p. 1. The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library.

[8] Quoted from Bernard Bosanquet's letter to subscribers of The London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy, October 27, 1900, p. 2. The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library.

[9] Ibid.

able demands placed on the school's youngest teacher, George Edward Moore, the newly appointed Fellow, Trinity College, Cambridge, played a decisive role in the development of his own, and in the history of this century's, moral philosophy.

BRICKS AND MORTAR

The school's central meeting place, where Moore delivered his lectures, was Passmore Edwards Settlement, 9 Tavistock Place, in the Bloomsbury section of London. The settlement's social mission was the same as its major benefactor's, J. Passmore Edwards. A true son of poverty, Passmore Edwards amassed an enormous fortune in the newspaper and periodical business. Once empowered by his riches, he set himself the task of making the world at least a little less inequitable, vowing to insure that future generations of the multitudinous poor might be spared the hardships he had faced alone. The luxury of "the helots of Park Lane" never tempted him. Literally scores of public buildings—libraries, galleries, hospitals, orphanages, convalescent homes, technical schools, and settlements (but no churches)—were built throughout England as a result of his largesse. His was the spirit of the optimistic philanthropist, his the perspective of the political visionary. His fierce utilitarian motto was, "Do the best for the most" In his conception of "the best," it was the quality of pleasure, not its mere quantity, that mattered. "When I read an interesting book," he writes, "I long to place it within reachable distance of anyone, however poor and lonely,who would like to read it; or when I hear Hnemusic I say to myself, 'Oh that the people, the multitudinous people, had the requisite tastes and opportunities to enjoy similar satisfaction'; and as with literature and music so with the other privileges of life."[10] Passmore Edwards's object was to use his wealth to elevate the tastes of the poor until they became those of the rich.

Few others could have more fully shared these same values than the founder of Passmore Edwards Settlement, the indomitable

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[10] J. Passmore Edwards, *A FewFootprints* (London: Clement's House, 1905), p. 34n.

Mary Ward, better known as Mrs. Humphry Ward, the author of *Robert Elsmere.* This remarkably successful novel, which sold more than a million copies soon after its publication in 1888, is the story of a young clergyman who loses his faith, leaves parish life, and together with his wife moves to one of London's least desirable areas, Bedford Square, Bloomsbury. There Elsmere creates a mission whose primary purpose is to serve the needy. The novel ends with Elsmere's death, but the author's message is one of hope: people *can* make a difference.

The parallel between the fictional Robert Elsmere and the flesh-and-blood Mary Ward, whom Dean Inge eulogized at her funeral as "perhaps the greatest English woman of our time,"[11] is unmistakable. Like her fictional counterpart, Mary Ward was a tireless crusader for social reform, a woman so passionately committed to every noble cause that she ran the risk, and sometimes encountered the fact, of public ridicule at the hands of the British aristocracy. But Mary Ward rarely bent and never broke. "The pleasures and opportunities which civilization brought and developed came mainly to the rich," she states in her remarks on the occasion of the informal opening of Passmore Edwards Settlement, "and yet if the state was to grow healthily, they must in time be brought down to the market-place and distributed far and wide. Hitherto they had been sadly lacking to the great mass of our people. It was for the equalisation and distribution of these advantages that Settlements were specifically meant."[12] And none more so, in Mary Ward's vision, than Passmore Edwards Settlement. As her biographer Enid Huws Jones observes, Passmore Edwards Settlement was Mary Ward's way of realizing "the dreams of Robert Elsmere in bricks and mortart."[13] It was Mary Ward's good fortune to find in Passmore Edwards a man who, in addition to sharing her vision, was able to pay for most of the building materials. It was not in her, nor was it in his, character to build with

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[11] Quoted in Enid Huws Jones, *Mrs. Humphry Ward* (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 166.

[12] Mary Ward, "Social Ideals," *The Manchester Guardian.* October 11, 1897.

[13] Enid Huws Jones, *Mrs. Humphrey Ward* (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 3.

anything less than total commitment to improving the minds of the workingmen for whom the settlement was mainly intended.

THE SETTLEMENT

The impressive structure housing the settlement was designed by two young architects, Dunbar Smith and C. Brewer, on land leased by the Duke of Bedford for 999 years. An 1899 volume of *The Studio* heralds the building as "a triumph of the Arts and Crafts movement."[14] Rooms were provided for the warden and eighteen resident scholars. In addition, space was provided for classrooms, club rooms, entertaining rooms, a gymnasium, a large hall with a seating capacity of five hundred, and a library with the initials "THG" on the fireplace, to honor the philosopher T. H. Green, after whom the library was named. The architects overcame the depressing mood that characterizes this genre of building. The settlement is the most charming and least vulgar advertisement imaginable," Mary Ward writes.[15] She must have been pleased, and J. Passmore Edwards not a little relieved.

The "advertisement" of which Mary Ward spoke was the fresh, positive image she wished to bring to the educational and social reform movements of which she was so vital a part. Hers was the gospel of good works, not good intentions, of devotion to this-worldly duty, not other-worldly dreams. Like Robert Elsmere she had lost her faith in God, and yet like him she never ceased to see her mission in missionary terms. "The ideal settlement," she writes, "presents itself almost wholly in religious guise."[16] As was true of her fictional hero, Mary Ward's faith was her works.

The creation of Passmore Edwards Settlement was one work among many. The settlement's primary purpose was to serve the needs of workingmen in a decaying neighborhood. Though then dotted with islands of affluence, the Bloomsbury area before and after the turn of the century was predominately poor. The set-

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[14] Quoted in ibid., p. 118.
[15] Quoted in ibid., p. 116.
[16] Quoted in ibid., p. 137.

tlement's mission was to give the working poor food for their thought, not just their stomachs. "It seemed impossible," Enid Huws Jones writes, "that this life of regular and sociable meals, of civil exchange of ideas, of enjoyment . . . of the arts, of contact with the mighty past and dreams of a mightier future—a life that was so rich and sweet to Mary Ward and her circle—should not elevate those to whom the door of the Settlement was now open."[17] As George R. Sims, writing in *Living London,* observes: "Here are potential hooligans sitting clean and in their right mind, at tea with the refined and refining colonists."[18] If only enough "potential hooligans" could be exposed to great ideas, great art, ennobling discussion, their own life would be ennobled. This was the raison d'être of the Passmore Edwards Settlement. Soon after its opening Mary Ward's critics charged that she had lost sight of why the settlement had been created.

A CHORUS OF CRITICS

Grounds for criticism came from diverse sources. One concerned the substantial commitment Mary Ward made to serving young children instead of the workingmen for whom the settlement was mainly intended; another concerned the status of the resident scholars, who (the critics charged) were treated as a class apart, there to pursue "their studies"; a third concerned—paradoxical though it may at first appear—the growing success of The London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy. Whereas the original hope had been to make the civilizing influence of high culture available to the underprivileged many, critics wondered aloud whether those who were benefiting were not a privileged few. As Enid Huws Jones observes, the students who paid their fees to hear Moore and the other lecturers were not "the shop-lads from Tottenham Court, as the founders had hoped."[19] They were people like Moore's friends from Cambridge, Desmond MacCarthy and

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[17] Ibid, p. 121.
[18] Ibid., pp. 120-21.
[19] 19 Ibid, p. 90.

Crompton Llewelyn Davies, and Moore's brother, Sturge Moore, and others who, in the latter's revelatory words, were "intending to help swell the audience" at Moore's lectures.

For'his part Moore must have anticipated the make-up of his audience more than he lets on. Although he remarks at the first meeting that he was "told that I must not assume in my class any large acquaintance with philosophic ethics" (*The Elements,* Moore's Introduction), he was only too happy to recommend Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics,* Mill's *Utilitarianism,* Plato's *Gorgias,* and, more respectfully, though less confidently, Kant's *Grundlegung.* This was hardly bedtime reading for weary, hungry workingmen. When, amid the torrents of the debate about whether the school had lost its rudder, Enid Huws Jones invites us to imagine the warden looking incredulously down the class rolls, it is not difficult to understand his worry that things perhaps were not going as the subscribers had intended.

Bosanquet and the other founders of the school must have been aware of the growing chorus of criticism, even as early as Bosanquet's "FirstReport" at the end of the 1897-1898 term. It was true, he allows, that because of the reputations of some lecturers, they drew "their own audiences from different parts of London" (not to mention Cambridge!); still, "there is . . . a certain nucleus of people who attend regularly, drawn chiefly from the neighborhood."[20] Somehow (or other) the tastes of the poor were being elevated until they were those of the rich.

The myth could not long endure. The success of the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy, apart from its financial failure, doomed it. It may have been in the right place, and it may have been at the right time, but it was the wrong idea, or at least wrongly implemented. The reasons for its short-lived and all but forgotten demise were not "purely financial," Bosanquet's protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. They were sociological and political. Whereas another friend of Moore's from Cambridge, the soon-to-be eminent historian G. M. Trevelyan, who lectured at

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[20] Bernard Bosanquet, "First Report," p. 6. The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Librarly.

the Working Men's College in London, was able to say that "the name of the College helped to keep the snobs away,"[21] Moore and the other lecturers at the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy lacked a similar protection. "Shop-lads" was not part of the school's name. At this place, and in that time, many of the snobs from Cambridge and London were in, and the hooligans from Totten ham Court, out. Small wonder that the warden—and others—persisted in feeling that the settlement was not being used by the people for whom it had been built. Small wonder that this bold experiment, fathered by Bosanquet and the others, entered the world all but stillborn.

REVISING THE REVISIONS

Moore presented his ten lectures on Thursday evenings during the autumn term. They were well attended. Thirty-six people paid fees ranging from one to five shillings for the full course; the average attendance was twenty-nine. The plan was for Moore to read a prepared lecture for an hour, then to lead a half hour's open discussion, an arrangement that allowed Moore to take the last train back to Cambridge. But things did not always work out as planned. The lectures average thirty-six double-spaced typed pages (hard to read aloud in an hour's time), and in some cases the discussions lasted longer than a half-hour. This regimen was not easy for Moore. He sometimes lost his patience during the discussion period, "in the heat of the moment," as he describes it, adding that the demands placed upon him are "so trying (to the nerves, I suppose I must say), that it is difficult to keep quite cool" (*The Elements,* Lecture III). Certainly the discussions must have been out of the ordinary, a development that led Bosanquet to draw particular attention to them because of their "unusual value and interest."[22] The young Moore, it would seem, had found a true admirer

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[21] G. M.Trevelyan, *An Autobiography and Other Essays* (London: Longman, Green and Company,1949), p. 24.

[22] Bernard Bosanquet, "Second Report," p. 6. The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library.

in the energetic president of the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy.[23]

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[23] Appearances may be deceiving: Bosanquet and Moore had a history of personal enmity, and although its causes remain obscure, its deleterious effects on Moore's early career are clear. During the years 1896 and 1897, Moore wrote two dissertations on Kant's moral philosophy, both of which are in the holdings of the Trinity College Library, University of Cambridge. Moore submitted both for a coveted Prize Fellowship. The first was unsuccessful; the second earned Moore a six-year fellowship (1898-1904) at Trinity, with rooms and meals provided, and an annual stipend of £200. Moore's former teacher, James Ward, presented Moore's case before the Board of Electors. He more than had his work cut out for him.

Bosanquet served as the outside reader of the second dissertation, and to say that he found it less than satisfactory is to understate his severe judgment. In his "Report" (also in the Trinity College Library) he declares that he finds "a difficulty in regarding (Moore's philosophical position) as serious." Moore's views, he states, "appear to me to lie beyond the limit of paradox permissible in philosophy." If he had been asked to review Moore's work for *Mind*, Bosanquet explains, "I should have treated it as a brilliant essay by a very able writer, but should have endeavoured to point out that its positive stand-point and consequently its treatment of the subject were hopelessly inadequate." "Hopelessly inadequate." It is a tribute to James Ward's rhetorical skills (or to his political connections) that, in the face of Bosanquet's acid assessment, the Board of Electors was convinced to award Moore a Prize Fellowship.

Moore was aware of Bosanquet's unflattering report, and Bosanquet was aware that Moore was aware of it. Writing to Moore on October 30, 1898, Bosanquet proposes that they have lunch, after which they might have "an hour's talk. . . . It would be pleasant for me to improve your acquaintance . . . even apart from the question of the Dissertation." Because Moore was then offering a course of lectures at a school Bosanquet headed, the tone of the latter's letter is predictably conciliatory: "I should be uncomfortable if I did not say that I hope we meet as fellow students of philosophy. I formed a clear opinion about the Dissertation and will tell you what it is as well as I can. But I do not feel any mission to speak as an authority or to 'give advice' in any sense of that kind. We will talk over our views, and we ought to be able to understand each other. I thought the Dissertation full of interest, though as you have heard I took a strong view against its main contentions" (The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library).

Possibly Moore and Bosanquet joined for lunch. Possibly they had a hour's talk about their philosophical differences. The available evidence is moot. Talk or no, Bosanquet's less than enthusiastic opinion of Moore's philosophical views remained unchanged in the years ahead and twice worked against Moore's chances for continued support from Cambridge—first, in 1900, when Moore applied for the position of Knightsbridge Professor of Philosophy that became available when Sidgwick fell mortally ill, and second, in 1904, when Moore applied for a research fellowship. It could not have come as good news to Moore to read, in an undated letter written to him by the university vice-chancellor, that, in addition to the references Moore had supplied for his candidacy as Knightsbridge professor, the vice-chancellor was "writing to ask Dr. Ward and Dr. Bosanquet to send me such a letter with regard to your qualifications as I can read to the electors" (The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library). Whatever the real merits of the youthful Moore's candidacy may have been—and even a partisan on Moore's side would have to concede that they were less than spectacular—they were not as bad as Bosanquet likely said they were, neither in this case nor, four years later, when Moore

Moore submitted *The Elements of Ethics* to Cambridge University Press on March 6, 1902. Within a fortnight word came that the book had been accepted. The Cambridge philosopher W. R. Sorley evidently championed Moore's cause, observing in a letter to Moore, dated March 16, 1902, that he "was responsible for the Syndice's decision." Sorley's good news was a mixed blessing. All was not well with *The Elements.* Because he had played a key role in havihg the book accepted, Sorley writes that he feels "almost bound to put the other side before you (I mean of course the 'other siqe' of the case as it presents itself to my own mind—not what other people said)."

At least part of what "other people said" is to be found in a neatly hand-written page of criticisms, not in Sorley's hand, that accompanied his letter. The overall finding is simple: The manuscript stands in need of extensive revision if Moore is to make a successful transition from a course of lectures to a book. For example, "the repetitions are far more frequent than is desirable in a book with a consecutive argument, and they seem sometimes to be introduced at places which do not suit a reader though they would suit a lecture audience." Of course, even in his most polished philosophy, the mature Moore has a marked tendency to repeat himself; it is part of his unique philosophical style. As a young lecturer, however, as we find him in *The Elements,* this tendency sometimes is near obsessional. Sorley knew that recasting the lectures would not be easy, but he encouraged Moore to persevere: "I hope that you will not hesitate to put a good deal of time into it," he writes. Because Moore *already* had put "a good deal of time" into revising the lectures, the prospect of having to do more could not have been pleasant.

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applied for a research fellowship. As Moore was to learn ten years later (the information is contained in an entry in his diary for April 27, 1914, The Moore Papers, Cambridge University Library), "why the older members of Council voted against my Research Fellowship was because of unfavourable reports from English philosopher Bosanquet." It is a fine irony that a man who hurt Moore's early chances for a more permanent position at Cambridge would, by having him offer a series of lectures at the school over which he presided, help sustain the young Moore in the composition of *Principia Ethica.* An immortal work is the best answer to one's harshest critics.

The earliest evidence we have that Moore continued to work on his lectures after 1898 is a letter to his mother, dated February 27, 1900, where he writes that he is working on his "old volume of Ethical lectures." Soon thereafter, on March 18, he writes again to tell her that he has "begun revising" them. Even as he worked on revising them, rumor had it that they *already* had been published. "Moore!" writes Henry Sidgwick in a letter from 1900, "I did not know he had published any *Elements of Ethics*!"[24] Impatient with the pace at which the project moved, Moore labored on, lamenting to his mother, in a letter dated September 12, 1901, more than a year and a half after he had begun revising them, "But lately I have made very little progress with what I intended to do—rewriting parts of my Ethics."

More regrettable still, in Moore's view, was the absence of the published lectures when he applied for Sidgwick's vacant pro-fessorship. "I fear the hope [of his receiving the appointment] is quite absurd," he writes to Desmond MacCarthy on June 2, 1900, adding: "I feel perhaps I ought to regret now that I did not make more effort to get my Lectures published. Now it is too late." Too late to strengthen his candidacy, that is. But it was not too late to revise his lectures with a view for eventual publication, which is what Moore continued to do until March 10, 1902, when, as noted earlier, he submitted them to Cambridge University Press.

When thus submitted, only four of the ten lectures had been revised, and in the page of criticisms accompanying Sorley's letter he was informed that "the criticisms apply to the four chapters revised for press as well as to the remainder of the book." Even the revisions needed to be revised. It was more than Moore could bear. When he writes to his mother on March 18, 1902, to share the good news that his lectures have been accepted for publication, Moore notes ruefully that "I shall have to alter them a good deal, which may take some time and will not, I'm afraid, make a very good job, after all." Clearly, Moore's enthusiasm already was wan-

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[24] From a letter of Sidgwick's to Henry Graham Dakyns, dated February 3, 1900. Quoted in J. B. Schneewind, *Sidgwick's Ethics and Victorian Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 17.

ing. After this period there is no evidence that he continued to work on *The Elements.* Another project would soon command most of his time and energy. That project was *Principia Ethica.*

THE MAIN OUTLINE

Though his memory is not always reliable, we have it on Moore's own authority that *The Elements of Ethics* was the parent, *Principia* the child. "It was in writing the course on Ethics," Moore recalls, "that I developed the main outline of *PrincipiaEthica.*"[25] This may be true in spirit but perhaps not in letter. Although Moore wrote his lectures each week throughout the autumn term of 1898, the professionally printed course syllabus was prepared and distributed no later than and possibly before the first meeting. To read the syllabus and the summaries of the several lectures is to recognize the "main outline" of *Principia* in embryonic form. Since the syllabus was prepared *before* Moore had written a single lecture, the "main outline" of *Principia* actually can be placed somewhat further back in time than Moore remembers.

    In his "Autobiography," after noting the connection between the lectures and *Principia,* Moore observes that *"Principia* was almost an entirely new, and was a much longer, work, and the latter part of those six years [that is, 1898-1904] was mainly occupied in writing it."[26] Again, Moore's memory is faulty. *Principia* was essentially finished by March 1903, while his fellowship did not elapse until the end of September 1904. And it proves even more unreliable when he writes that his "first course [of lectures for the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy] was on Kant's Ethics, and the second on Ethics simply."[27] Just the opposite is true. Faulty memory and the precise date of the beginning of

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[25] G. E. Moore, "An Autobiography," *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore* (New York: Tudor, 1952), p, 24.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p, 23.

Principia[28] to one side, "the main outline" of this later book is apparent in the structure of the earlier lectures.

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[28] Fixing the "precise" date of *Principia's* beginning probably is impossible. There are some clues, however. Starting in 1900, and continuing for a few years thereafter, Moore kept records of his philosophical work (preserved in The Moore Papers, Cambridge IIniversity Library), records that not only mention what projects he worked on but also how long he worked on them. Citing an entry for May 23, 1902, which reads "Begin writing at my book," Paul Levy concludes that this is the fateful day on which Moore began to write *Principia* (Paul Levy, *Moore:* G. E. *Moore and the Cambridge Apostles* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981], p. 233). The initial plausibility of Levy's finding is strengthened by the unhappy prospects Moore faced if he was to continue to revise his lectures to meet the criticisms lodged against them. It is easy to imagine Moore deciding to abandon the latter project altogether and instead to strike out In a new direction. This may be true. But there is other evidence that challenges this finding.

Certainly the *idea* of writing a book that stood apart from *The Elements* was one Moore had entertained before May 23, 1902. As early as September 12, 1901, in a letter to his mother, cited earlier in my Introduction, Moore writes that he "has made very little progress with what I intended to do—rewriting parts of my Ethics and *beginning* my *new book*" (emphasis added). Moreover, Moore refers to *The Elements* as "Ethics," "my Ethics lectures," "my Ethics," or simply "my lectures." When he refers to his "book," he evidently has *Principia* in mind. If true, then Levy is mistaken when he fixes the date of *Principia*'s beginnings as May 23,1902. As early as the Long Term of 1901, that is, between July 30 and August 27, Moore writes that he "work(s) at book." Thus, if we assume that when Moore uses the word 'book' he is referring, not to *The Elements* but instead to *Principia,* then the date of Moore's commencing to write *Principia* actually is some nine months earlier than the date Levy chooses.

Against this suggestion it can be argued that Moore does say, quite clearly, that he "begins writing at my book" in his entry for May 23, 1902. If he "begins writing at my book" on this day, then this is the day he begins to write it. What could be clearer? But things are not as clear as they seem. In his written records of his work Moore often writes of "beginning this" or "beginning that" in ways that do not imply that he has begun something new. For example, during the period April 19 to June 17, 1901, Moore writes that he "begin(s) writing" a review of McTaggart's Ethics for the *International Journal of Ethics,*on July 15, however, almost three months later, he again notes that he "begin(s) working" on this same review. How are we to make sense of his confusing diction? The most obvious answer is that the former entry refers to Moore's work on McTaggart's book during the May Term of 1902, while the latter refers to his work on this *same* review during the Long Term. What it means, then, for Moore to say that he "begins" to do something, is not necessarily that he has begun a new project, it could just as well mean that within a particular period of time (say, the Long Term) there is a particular date when he *renews* his work on an old one. That Moore should write, "Begin writing at my book May 23," therefore, does not entail that this was the date on which, for the first time, he began to work on *Principia.*

In light of the above, it is entirely possible that Moore was at work on *Principia* from (roughly) August 1901 onward, that he continued to work on it sporadically even as he worked on revising his lectures, but that he decided to cease working on the latter project and instead to work exclusively on *Principia* owing to the great difficulties he would have faced had he continued to revise *The Elements*. The available evidence is consistent with this finding, a finding that is strengthened when we recall that Moore was hardly a speedy

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The ten lectures, as they were listed in the syllabus, have the following titles:

Lecture I. The Subject-Matter of Ethics
Lecture II. Naturalistic Ethics, Especially the Ethics of Evolution
Lecture III. Hedonism
Lecture IV. Hedonism Continued
Lecture V. Some Main Forms of Metaphysical Ethics
Lecture VI. Ethics in Relation to Conduct
Lecture VII. Free Will
Lecture VIII. The Ethics of the Inner Life
Lecture IX. Practical Applications
Lecture X. General Conclusions

Principia, by contrast, has only six chapters:

Chapter I. The Subject-Matter of Ethics
Chapter II. Naturalistic Ethics
Chapter III. Hedonism
Chapter IV. Metaphysical Ethics
Chapter V. Ethics in Relation to Conduct
Chapter VI. The Ideal

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writer. "I write very slowly and with great difficulty," he observes in his "Autobiography," recalling his work on *Principia* in particular, "and I constantly found that I had to rewrite what I had written, because there was something wrong with it" ("An Autobiography," *The Philosophy of* G.E. *Moore* [New York: Tudor, 1952], p. 24). If Levy is right, and Moore wrote all of *Principia* between May 23, 1902, and the Lent Term of 1903, which is when he sent the final chapter of *Principia* to Cambridge University Press, Moore would have had to have written a book of 225 printed pages in less than ten months! Though possible, this hardly seems to be consistent with the pace at which Moore, who wrote *Principia* "very slowly and with great difficulty," could write.

This finding, if true, makes a difference to how *The Elements* should be understood. Readers familiar with *Principia* will find some striking similarities between this work and *The Elements*—for example, both contain essentially the same account of natural and nonnatural properties, the same discussion of whether a beautiful world would be good even if no one was aware of it, and much of the same criticisms of hedonism in general and Mill in particular. Heretofore the reigning view has been that Moore took various parts of *The Elements* and inserted them into *Principia.*This is a natural interpretation, given *The Elements'* earlier date of composition. It is possible, however, that the reverse is true: Parts of *Principia* may have been inserted into *The Elements* as Moore struggled to revise the latter at the same time as he "slowly" crafted the former. It may prove to be impossible to know which way the borrowing went. It is even possible that it went in both directions. But since uncertainty hardly justifies dogmatism, the reigning view is at best one possibility among others.

Despite the numerical difference between the ten lectures and the six chapters, the overlap between the two is evident, especially between the first six lectures and the first five chapters. Moore's lectures, one might say, gave him the structure for his book. His challenge was to fill in the details, mindful that this time he was obliged to write for readers, not listeners.

On this latter point Moore himself proved to be a good listener. When Sorley wrote to him to explain the "other side" regarding *The Elements,* he passed along the suggestion that "the main divisions of your argument should be made the divisions of the chapters, and if possible the chapters divided into paragraphs corresponding with the steps of the argument." Moore's brother Bertie also offered some friendly advice, sending along detailed comments on the lectures and suggesting, in a letter dated merely "00," that they "would perhaps gain in clearness if you gave a concise summary at the end of each lecture . . . as Darwin does." None of these suggestions found its way into *The Elements,* but all were incorporated into *Principia*. In addition to being a good teacher, Moore was a good student.

A DIFFERENT LIGHT

The differences between *The Elements* and *Principia* concern more than matters of style and are not attributable merely to the fact that the lectures were read by Moore, the book by his readers. *Principia* is, quite simply, a vastly better work of philosophy. Whereas in *The Elements* Moore flounders, loses the thread of his argument, and makes leaps of faith when reason prohibits him from reaching the conclusions he desires (see, for example, his appeal to "Common Sense" in the final pages of Lecture X), *Principia* is a work of great rigor, a philosophical treatise (in the best sense) in which the author endeavors relentlessly—and, no less important, passionately—to extract every ounce of truth. To read it afresh is to encounter a young thinker (Moore was still in his twenties when *Principia* was finished) who is totally in control of where the argument is headed and why. Not so in *The Elements*. Here we find Moore confused about where he is going, and how to get there. Why, then, if *The Elements* are inferior philosophically, publish these lec-

tures today, more than ninety years after they were originally presented and almost ninety years after Moore abandoned them?

To begin with, publication of *The Elements* enables contemporary scholars to gain access to an important source of Moore's influence. Heretofore Moore has been known mainly through his published work, yet during his early years at Trinity, first as a student, then as a fellow, his unpublished papers and lectures helped make him a major figure in late Victorian and early Edwardian intellectual life in general and in philosophy in particular. In no small measure this was due to Moore's membership in the Apostles.[29] The unpublished papers he prepared and read before this semi-secret society, often on philosophical questions at the very heart of his developing philosophy, helped shape beliefs and attitudes well beyond his own and the small circle of the sons of privilege to whom he read them. A committed student today can find and read these papers, but, as they will not be published, what we might call the "unpublished Moore" would be all but inaccessible if it were not for the publication of *The Elements.* To read these lectures now is to open a door previously closed, and to remove some of the mystery about what lies behind it.

More significantly, having access to *The Elements* permits a new generation of scholars to recognize the problems Moore was grappling with in his lectures and to use this insight when reading *Principia.* For more than the main outline of this latter book is to be found in the lectures. Many of the same questions are asked and answered in both, and although some of the answers differ in many important ways there is reason to believe that Moore's answers in *Principia* can be better understood if they are considered alongside the ones he offers in *The Elements.* Moreover, much of the basic metaphysical and epistemological framework that undergirds Moore's ethical teachings in *Principia* already is in place in *The*

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[29] The fullest account of Moore's membership in the Apostles is Paul Levy, *Moore: G. E. Moore and the Cambridge Apostles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). Moore's unpublished Apostles' papers play an important role in my account of the development of his moral philosophy. See my *Bloomsbury's Prophet: G. E. Moore and the Development of His Moral Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

Elements. And this is important: past generations of Moorean schol-
ars, lacking access to the lectures, and having interpreted *Principia*
in the vocabulary of the philosophical fashions peculiar to their
place and time, have failed to recognize and to do justice to
Moore, the metaphysical and epistemological realist. The hope,
then, is that by publishing *TheElements,* another generation of
scholars might read *Principia* in a different light and thereby under-
stand Moore's actual position better than their predecessors. Just
two examples of how this hope might be realized will be offered
here.

MOORE'S PLATONISM

The first concerns Moore's understanding of Good. In *Principia*, as
is well known, he argues that the word 'good', when it is used to
mean "that which is good in itself", names a nonnatural property
that is unique, simple, unanalyzable, and indefinable. These claims
have occasioned an enormous outpouring of critical commentary,
much of which misses Moore's meaning. Access to *The Elements*
should help remedy this. In this work Moore's Platonism (with a
capital P) is in some ways more obvious than it is in *Principia,* where
it is no less real.

   The broad outlines of Moore's metaphysic at this time are in
part as follows. There exists a world of individual things (tables
and chairs, minds and their contents, for example). These things
all are in time, and some are in space as well. They are constituted
by those natural properties that together make them what they
are. There is no substantial "something I know not what" in which
these properties subsist; the natural properties are *themselves* sub-
stantial.

   In addition to the world of particular things in space or time,
Moore recognizes a second, radically different order of being. The
denizens of this world are not individual things but *concepts* or
universal meanings (for example, yellowness, not this or that yellow
thing). These concepts are not in space or time, do not come into
being and pass away, and are not subject to qualitative change.

Moreover, "of *all* concepts," Moore writes in *The Elements* (Lecture V), "it is true that they *are*whether they exist or no."Since this is true of all concepts, it is true of the concept Good.

The similarities between Moore's views and those of Plato are unmistakable, something Moore himself explicitly notes in *The Elements*. "The chief significance of Plato's doctrine of Ideas," he states, is that it recognizes "this peculiar kind of being which belongs to concepts as such"; what Plato calls Ideas or Forms, Moore adds, is "what I have called concepts'" (ibid.).

No reader will find as clear a debt expressed to Plato in *Principia*. But the debt is there, between the lines, and Moore's Platonism makes an enormous difference to how he should be understood. For what Moore means when he claims that "Good is indefinable" is barely distinguishable (if distinguishable at all) from what Plato would mean if he said "the Form (or Idea) of Good is indefinable." One looks in vain throughout most commentaries on Moore's moral Philosophy to find an appreciation of the metaphysical backdrop against which Moore's famous discussion of the natu-ralistic fallacy takes place.[30] Indeed, Moore is more often credited with, and praised for, being *anti*-metaphysical![31] If nothing else, ready access to *The Elements*, where Moore explicitly acknowledges the Platonic roots of the metaphysic that grounds his ethical theory, should help future scholars read *Principia*'s repeated critique of naturalism with a fresh view. It is only if or as we understand *what it is* that Moore there claims is unique, simple, indefinable, and

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[30] A notable exception is Robert Peter Sylvester, *The Moral Philosophy of* G. *E. Moore,* edited and with an introduction by Ray Perkins, Jr., and R W Sleeper (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990). Sylvester's book is the more remarkable because it was written without his having had access to Moore's unpublished work.

[31] Thus G. J. Warnock writes that Moore "did not borrow a modish metaphysical idiom to make up for, or to conceal, in his own lack of relish for any such thing." *English Philosophy Since 1900* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 12. Nothing could be further from the truth concerning the *early* Moore, the Moore we find up to, and in, *Principia Ethica*. Moore's genuine "relish" for metaphysics during this period is confirmed by his other writings of this time, both published and unpublished. For some of his relevant published work see Tom Regan, ed., *G. E. Moore: the Early Essays* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).