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THE ETHICS OF NIETZSCHE.

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota by Ingebrigt L. Lillehei in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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THE ETHICS OF NIETZSCHE.

This attempt at an exposition of the Ethics of Nietzsche will not be an effort to establish sense where none is, or to harmonize discordant elements, or to make the lion and the lamb lie down together. My work is not to make a consistent system out of the multi-colored and multi-form ideas of Nietzsche, but merely to present the facts in the case with perhaps some little comment here and there. But first of all it may be well to try to make clear the peculiar character of the man - which character is more interesting by far than the writings - and to make a brief survey of the influences constituting the zeitgeist and the milieu in which it was his fortune - or misfortune - to live and labor.

Friedrich Nietzsche was born October 15, 1844 near Lützen, Germany. His father was a Protestant clergyman. The home he grew up in was rich in old-time German piety. He was soon taught the doctrine and practice of Christianity. He was sent away to school rather early. His critical nature soon found many discrepancies in his childhood religion. He also quite early came under the influence of Schopenhauer, and did not escape the pessimism of that philosopher. Schopenhauer was his liberator from much of the old in philosophy and religion; it remained for Nietzsche to free himself from his liberator. This he did ere long.

In 1864 Nietzsche entered the University of Bonn. Here he studied philosophy as a damper on his too emotional

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nature. He also studied theology. But he had a strong liking for philosophy and satisfied his craving in this regard by joining a Schopenhauer club, organized and maintained by the students. Here the young enthusiasts read philosophy and discussed ~~on~~ all manner of things. From 1865 to 1867 he became professor of Philology in the University of Bâle. During the Franco-Prussian war he served a while as army nurse. And the man of cruel, inhuman ideas was as tender as a woman. In fact, Nietzsche has always had a horror for suffering, and he has sought much to harden himself.

After 1870 his health was poor. Almost continual headaches robbed him of many a workday. His eyes were extremely weak. Only the utmost care kept him from going blind. He lived much in the South, which, by the way, he loved intensely. We find him at Nice and at other places along the Mediterranean littoral. He stayed much at Sils-Maria, Upper Engadine, Switzerland. He had to choose his abode for climatic reasons. For years he worked hard, and his books are many. He never married. In fact, he has some hard things to say about women. In "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" he speaks of how sad it is to see an eagle mated to a goose, that is, a superior man married to a mere woman.

From 1888 to 1900, the year of his death, he remained in an insane asylum utterly oblivious to his rapidly increasing fame.

There was much piety in Germany in Nietzsche's time.

It was to him unworthy, shameful humility. People were satisfied with vicarious redemption, and that seemed to him a trait of weakness and a lack of honor. In fact, people needed salvation from such "salvation". Man should move freely as a god among gods. And Nietzsche is not the only one who advocates strength, whom a certain weakness in the age leads to idolize strength of body and of will. We find the same in Ibsen.

He early felt the poisoning effect of the doctrine of sin, total depravity and the like. He soon felt the effect of "moralic acid", which effect he fought against all his life.

He lived in an age where German Romanticism with its plebeian ideals ^{of} and equality, with its sentimentality, its turgid emotion, its mystico-poetical outbursts was in vogue. He came in due time under its influence.

But his temperament was not fitted to keep him long in these ranks. His severe taste turned with disgust away, and through Goethe - whom, by the way, he always reveres - he turned his attention to Greece and to France. Here Nietzsche's nature found much to love and admire. He read many of the French writers on morals such as Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère, and while he did not altogether agree with these men, he found them artistic, keen, and somewhat sceptical. His acquaintance with Greece brought about a great

result in his life, as we shall see later.

Nietzsche is all nerves and - if I may be permitted - all "nerve". He hits hard, and loves to hit. He was ever a good fighter. But there are moments when he is not so ultra-iconoclastic, when he is almost as other men. His philosophy is autobiographical and self-assertive. He sets forth his inner life freely, and to contradict oneself is with him a sound principle of philosophy and an element in the freedom of the proper man. His philosophy is born of emotion more than of cool thought. This fact accounts for the rise and fall in vehemence and for the inconsistencies abounding. He put his feelings into ideas, into some principles, or into some idea of a certain befitting type of life. This achieved, he set about to criticize on all sides. He lacks catholicity of appreciation and is extremely intolerant.

He cannot treat anything with a cool head. He sees in history the work of so many supreme liars that he must at once lay bare their evil designs with the utmost amount of spleen. He never rises above using the "moralic acid" vocabulary of the "herd" - a vocabulary which lends itself admirably to abuse. And right here let me say that much of Nietzsche's "dialectics" consist in nothing but the most violent abuse.

He lacks the historical sense. He has no patience with the intricate, undramatic, slow unfolding of history. His treatment of history is melodramatic in the extreme.

Sharp lines of demarkation separate nations and classes. His discussion of history has all the unsound brilliancy and perversion of motive of the melodramatic stage. In fact, he may be called a melodramatic philosopher. He is a firm believer in national traits. He thinks he can hit off the character of an entire nation by flourishing eight or ten adjectives as ^{flaring} ~~flowing~~ as the average American circus poster.

He is a hopeless idealist. Of course he would stoutly deny the charge. But to him men of old were beautiful, were strong, were healthy. They walked among gods with head high. He feels keenly the gap between the thing as it is and the thing as it ought to be. In some respects he is as sentimental and unhistorical as Rousseau and Victor Hugo in their treatment of savage man. To Nietzsche there was a golden age, and he hopes that there shall again be one.

He is a man who like Hamlet found the world out of joint. For him mere living is not life. The present, the near, the everyday thing, is an utter vanity. Distance lends enchantment. Accordingly we see that the people whom he loves, the ages which he likes, are far away in the past or far away in the future. He may fairly be represented as saying: "Da wo ich nicht bin, da ist das Glück." Man has always sought refuge from himself in some ideal dream, some kingdom of god. This is exactly what Nietzsche does. He creates for himself a heaven, the millenium of the Uebermensch. And what a mil-

lenium!

If someone else has expressed a truth it is henceforth spoiled for Nietzsche unless he can recast it in some way and make it his own. He does not want to be fully understood. He does not want the mob to come into the citadel of his heart.

He loves man only in the few rare moments in life. And likewise he loves only the exceptional in expression. A paradox brilliantly put and gamely maintained is more to his liking than truth painfully established à la Kant. A truth which does not lend itself to an aphorism is not worth much.

In his nature we find united two sides which are generally not found together in the same person. The philosopher's insight and the poet's - sensuous poet's - ability to clothe abstractions in rich garments. His language has all the parade of costume of an Italian pageant.

Let us say that he is a stern moralist who would heartily agree with Thomas à Kempis that "it is vanity to desire to live long and not desire to live well." Of course, there is a decided difference in the meaning of the "well".

Nietzsche was by nature sympathetic, kind, and very high-minded. Those who knew him had nothing but good to say of him personally. But his ideas, they were terrible! Yet, by his taste, Nietzsche is an aristocrat, and this aristocratic radicalism is the one great element of identity throughout his life.

Nietzsche has not a system, not a particular view of the world; he is far too sceptical and impatient for anything of this nature. But he loves - with the love of a poet, an artist, a lover - a certain type of life, the strong, the sturdy, the beautiful life. He sets about to criticize unmercifully anything which hinders this life from becoming dominant.

Those who are fond of periods and divisions divide the thought - life ^{of} and Nietzsche into three periods, to wit: the aesthetic, the intellectual, the ethical. The division may be of some value, but we must remember that the incentive to action was always artistic and moral, or the morals of an incurable artist. In the first period the artistic temperament found its most supreme expression. His interest lay in aesthetics and he put art and culture before everything else. As Miss Dolson, in her interesting study of the Philosophy of Nietzsche, says, "He made the artist the end and aim of the world." Much later in life, he says that the *raison d'être* for man is to produce great men. In his early book "The Birth of Tragedy" he remarks that the most important event in the life of the Greeks was the birth of tragedy.

In the second period he was more interested in truth - intellectual truth. His results were of a sceptical nature.

But really what concerns us here is the third period, the frankly and avowedly ethical. The moral questions assert supreme influence over his mind. The question of values,

the "value" of having values, the origin of our present system, what trans-valuations it has suffered, etc. Such matters occupy his mind in his four great ethical works: Beyond Good and Evil, A Genealogy of Morals, Zarathustra, and The Case of Wagner.

Through his philological studies and through the influence of Goethe, Nietzsche turned to a study of the Greeks of the so-called Golden Age of Athens. Here he found - or imagined he found - a race which did not go to art for weak consolation, for escape from living life as it is, but who could see in art a great unfolding of life and who could view suffering without fear. With his usual melodramatic intensity this is the idea he formed of the Greeks. Nietzsche in his revolt against the Schopenhauer ethics of sympathy and in his great historical "discovery" found himself. Here is the conversion of Nietzsche.

He fancied he found humanity writ large here in the Golden Age. Life and beauty, strength, fearlessness, power to look death in the face, in short, master morality. This is his first and well nigh final stand from which he criticizes modern Europe. Here he thought he had found "an art and a race which from beyond optimism and from beyond pessimism, met life, and life in its plenitude, to wit, life in beauty."* In this we have anticipated the position in Beyond

*Quoted by Fagnet in En Lisant Nietzsche.

Good and Evil and in Zarathustra.

Here Nietzsche found that for which he was most fitted by nature. But it cost him a great deal of struggle to break entirely with the old. "Some time after (after his historical "find") I was sick, more than sick, overwhelmed by the continual disillusioning in the midst of that which makes us enthusiastic, we modern men.....wearied by loathing for all that which there is of effeminacy and wild exultation in this romanticism and all this idealistic lying...."

Well, Nietzsche found himself, and set about to stem the tide of modern civilization.

The origin of moral distinctions is most clearly treated in ^AGenealogy of Morals, in the first essay. We have two sets of moral opposites: good and bad, good and evil. These are not only different in meaning but also different as regards origin. "The judgment 'good' was not invented by those to whom goodness was shown. On the contrary, the 'good', i.e., the noble, the powerful, the higher situated, the high-minded, felt and regarded themselves and their acting as of first rank in contradistinction to everything low, low-minded, mean and vulgar."** There is at this point no moral significance, or at any rate, Nietzsche does not make it known. These men were at the top, they named things according to ap-

*Quoted by Emile Fagnat in En Lisant Nietzsche.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 19.

parent differences in fact, much as Adam named the beasts in Paradise. "Here (in the political arrangement) 'pure' and 'impure' are, for the first time, contrasted as caste-distinctions, and here also a 'good' and 'bad' are afterwards developed which have lost their caste-sense."* Here Nietzsche brings out that at first there was nothing but a mere difference of fact which led to the different naming. "'Pure' man is from the beginning, merely one who washes himself."**

The opposite of the "good" is "bad". The "bad" expresses merely the condition of fact of the lower class, slave cast^e, as the masters saw it. Nietzsche investigated etymology and found, to his own satisfaction at least, "that 'superior', 'noble', in the caste sense, was in every case the fundamental concept from which 'good' in the sense of 'superior in sentiment'.....necessarily developed"[§]; and good in the sense of superiority of sentiment is rather what Nietzsche believes to be the proper kind of morality.

Now these masters felt themselves secure in their saddles. They rejoiced in life and were strong. But a priestly class developed - men who were more thoughtful and less prone to action. They began to analyse and ponder - and this was an element of disruption in life. Here the chival-

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 27.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 27.

§A Genealogy of Morals, Page 23.

ric-aristocratic and the priestly-aristocratic valuations developed into antitheses. And why? "The chivalric-aristocratic valuations presuppose a powerful capacity.....extravagant health, and all that is necessary for its preservation, - war, adventure, hunting, dancing, sports, and in general, all that involved strong, free and cheerful activity. The priestly-aristocratic valuation has -as we have seen - other pre-suppositions: so much worse it fares in case of war! The priests are.....the worst enemies - and why? Because they are the most impotent."* We see now the reason why the priests gradually evolve out of their physical impotency a system of morals which agrees so very well with that which the weak and down-trodden slaves put together.

We have now the first set: good and bad. "Good" is what the masters call themselves and their own conduct, "bad" is what the masters call the slaves.

But there is another set of valuations, good and evil. This is the slave-morality set - the system now in vogue in Europe and America. Let us explain this.

"The slave-revolt in morality begins by resentment itself becoming creative and giving birth to values. The master-morality is a reckless, free yea-saying to life; the slave-morality is born under difficulties and is more cal-

*A Genealogy of Morals, Pages 29, 30.

culating and circumspect."* "Whereas, on the one hand, all noble morality takes its rise from a triumphant yea-saying to one's self, slave-morality will, on the other hand, say no to something exterior....."*** That is to say, slave-morality being that of weak people must limit itself severely, must make out a careful modus vivendi in order to exist at all. It has to exercise the care of the sickly.

What makes the resentment create values? The master morality creates suffering among the slaves, among the lower classes in general. These then set up a system of morals adequate to their powers.

Are these people really degenerate, weaker? They are. One may tell it by the belief in the freedom of the will. It is an excuse for being weak, a way to obscure the issue. "No wonder, therefore if the suppressed secretly glowing emotions, hatred and revenge, avail themselves of this belief (which Nietzsche does not accept) and, in fact, supports no belief with so much zeal as this, that the strong are free to be weak....." § The strong are strong; they cannot help being strong. They need not such a doctrine.

Here Nietzsche brings in his will to Power. The slaves seek to conquer, to express their natures, so they

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 35.

**Genealogy of Morals, Essay I.

§A Genealogy of Morals, Page 47.

create a system of ethics commensurate with their strength. "Let us be different from the 'bad', let us be good! And good are those who never violate, who never attack.....who altogether demand little of life, as we do, the patient, the humble, the just - this means, viewed coolly and unprejudicially, no more than: 'We, the weak, are - it is a fact - weak; it is well for us not to do anything for which we are not strong enough.'" *

The masters are self-assertive and the slaves thereby suffer. The slaves too are self-assertive, but they lack nobility and strength so their system is comparatively weak and must be very humble. They believe in free will, so that they may think that, though they chose the weaker, they do so by choice and not by lack of strength. What the masters call good - oppression, violence, arrogance - the slaves call evil, for it makes the slaves suffer. What the masters call bad - that is, the weak will, the impotence, the lack of taste, the "mob" constructs into a system of ethics and calls it good. Both forms of ethics, that of the master and that of the slave are modes of self-expression, of the Will to Power. But the will of the slaves has too little audacity in it and too little power behind it to make it worthy of a proper man.

This account of the rise of moral distinctions is melodramatic in the extreme and little true to history or to

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 481.

anything else. It does not go far enough back. How was the cast system built up in the first place? The question may best be answered by studying the two states of society which Nietzsche had in mind. The caste system in India and the feudal system in Europe. Well, in each case it was a commonly accepted system of morals and religion which rendered possible, if not the origin, at least the maintenance of the condition. In the age of feudalism master and man both shared in the ideals, though both did not equally profit in a material way. Again, there never existed such sharp lines of demarkation in the ethics of the same people. He also takes only one side of man's nature in pronouncing him weak or strong. Is a mental giant with a weak body less "strong" than an imbecile with great muscles? At the same time as we find man in a highly organized society we find that he lives in a realm of fact as regards morals. But no historical account of man shows him thus. There is always something sacred, something which says "ought", something which seems more permanent, more constitutive than himself.

In "Beyond Good and Evil" Nietzsche points out three periods in moral development.

1. Pre-moral. This is when actions were judged solely by the effect they had.
2. The moral period, when an action is judged by the intention, by its origin. We are in this period now.

3. The ultra-moral. This period is yet to come. Here he gets back to his idea of something fundamental unfolding itself of which morality is but the sign language. He asks: ".....is it not possible that we may be standing on the threshold of a period which to begin with, would be distinguished negatively as ultra-moral? Nowadays when at least amongst us immoralists, the suspicion arises that the decisive value of an action lies precisely in that which is not intentional, and that all its intentionality, all that is seen, sensible or "sensed" in it, belongs to the surface or skin - which, like every skin, betrays something, but conceals still more."* Morality is but the sign, the symptom. Intention-morality has been but a prejudice, a something which must be surmounted.

Modern society is decadent. What elements enter in to make it so and to maintain it in this condition? The slave morality has conquered. This morality is a form of anti-naturalness. All healthy morality "is ruled by an instinct of life, - some command of life is fulfilled by adopting a certain canon of 'thou shalt' and, 'thou shalt not'.....Anti-natural morality, on the other hand (i.e. every morality which has hitherto been taught, revered and preached), directs itself straight against the instinct, - it condemns those instincts, sometimes secretly, at other times loudly and in-

*Beyond Good and Evil, Page 47.

solently.....The saint in whom God finds the highest satisfaction is the ideal castrate.....Life is at an end where the 'Kingdom of God' begins:....." "Everything good is in instinct", he says somewhere, "and therefore easy, natural free."**And again, "A well-bred and prosperous man will necessarily perform certain actions, and instinctively avoid others; he carries the disposition which he physiologically represents into his relations with men and things. His virtue is the consequence of his good fortune." § Such is not the condition in modern society. What things are to blame? First of all the rise of slave-morality through the great sanctifier of the desires and hopes of the masses, Christianity. It came about historically through the Jews and through Christ. "It was the Jews who.....dared to subvert the aristocratic equation of values (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = beloved of God), and who.....clung to their own valuation: 'The wretched alone are the good; the poor, the impotent, the lowly alone are the good.'" §§ Christianity has forever fought the superior man. It tends to maintain the "ill-conditioned", the "altogether-too-many". "Christian faith from the beginning, is sacrifice: the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 33.

**Twilight of Idols, Page 128.

§Beyond Good and Evil, Page 17.

§§Beyond Good and Evil, Page 31.

derision, and self-mutilation."* The church is inimical to life. The church has attacked the passions, "but to attack the passions at the root means to attack life itself at the root! The praxis of the church is inimical to life."**

But the church claims to have reformed man. To this Nietzsche answers: "To call the taming ^{of an} your animal the improving of it, sounds almost like a joke in our ears. Anybody who knows what goes on in menageries will be doubtful about the improving of animals there. They are weakened, they are made less mischievous, they become sick by the depressing emotions of fear, by pain, wounds, and hunger. - It is precisely the same with tamed man whom the priest has 'improved'. In the early Middle Ages, when in fact the Church was a menagerie more than anything else, the first specimens of the 'blond beast' were everywhere pursued....." But when the church had tamed him, thus he became: "And now he lay there, sick, miserable, ill-disposed towards himself; full of hatred against the vital instincts, full of suspicion with regard to everything still strong and happy. In short a Christian.....the church ruined man.....but it claimed to have 'improved' him." The above illustration gives a fair idea of Nietzsche's melodramatic way of treating history, of imputing mean motives, of using analogies which are bound to

*Beyond Good and Evil, Page 65.

**The Case of Wagner, Page 125.

break down.

Through weakness, through religious poisoning, the ascetic ideal has worked its way into society. What does this ideal mean? It simply means that the instincts are at cross-purposes, that man is breaking down, that he is trying to escape from his suffering by endeavoring to repudiate part of his nature - the very constitutive parts. This is true of the ordinary man as well as of the philosopher. "What does it mean when a philosopher renders homage to the ascetic ideal?he wishes to get rid of torture."* But after all, the philosopher works more for himself - works out his own salvation. But the priest spurred on by a sympathy and love for humanity - both his sympathy and his love are pernicious because thereby those who ought in all fairness to die are kept alive - is far more dangerous in his work among the masses. "The ascetic treats life as a wrong way which man had best retrace to the point whence it starts; or as an error which can be, should be disproved by our deeds.....He enforces where he can his own valuation."** "An ascetic life is a self-contradiction.....Here is an attempt to use power for the purpose of stopping the sources of power. Here physiological thriving itself,- especially, its expression, beauty and joy, is viewed with dark and jealous eye; whereas a satisfaction is felt and sought in all abortive, degenerate growth, in pain,

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 142.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 160.

in mishap, in ugliness, in voluntary detraction, in self-mortification, in self-castigation, in self-sacrificing."* The priest has his work to do, namely to defend the herd. But against whom? "Against the sound, no doubt whatever, and also against the envy of the sound; he must be the natural opponent and despiser of all health and capability which are rude, impetuous, unbridled, brutal, relentless, robber-animal-like."** The priest pretends to heal, but in healing he makes sick.

Another element in the decadence of society is the state. The state is the great bête noire for Nietzsche. It serves merely to shelter the ill-conditioned. It maintains hospitals and makes itself a huge hospital. It affords breeding and feeding place for unnumbered hosts of plebeians. It is a sorry sight! "Far too many are born, for the superfluous the state was invented." § "What I call the state is where all are poison-drinkers, the good and the evil alike. What I call the state is where all lose themselves, the good and the evil alike. What I call the state is where the slow suicide of all is called 'life'.....Look at those superfluous! Diseased they are, they vomit bile and call it newspaper. They devour but cannot digest each other." §§ And here is a touch

*A Genealogy of Morals, Page 161.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 174.

§Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 63.

§§Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 64.

which ought to have brought forth an imperial decree from Berlin: "They (the citizens of the state) all strive towards the throne: that is their madness,- as though happiness were sitting on the throne! Often mud sitteth on the throne; often also the throne sitteth on mud."* Well, we see how the state is an element in keeping up the decadence of society. Through education the state tends to make people alike, by its laws it provides the frame inside which the individual may, so to speak, complete the picture. But to Nietzsche it is merely slippered domesticity which is thus obtained. The state claims to make people happy, and so do the good modern citizens. "We have invented happiness say the last men blinking." But to Nietzsche such happiness is a disgrace. The rulers in the modern state have made sorry figures out of themselves; they now barter with the canaille for power - they condescend to grant constitutions and the like. The nearest modern ruler whom Nietzsche admires is Napoleon, for Napoleon was cruel, self-assertive, titanic.

Other elements of decadence in modern society are the philosophers, the Socialists, the economic theorizers. "The philosophers kill that which they adore", he says somewhere. They dissect and lay bare to such an extent that it takes away the will to effort. The socialists are the great levelers. They represent the herding-instinct morality now

*Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 65.

abroad in Europe. They have high ideals of equality - and to Nietzsche one of the needed elements in the state is inequality. The same applies to the social theorizers. All want more men, but they little care for quality as long as quantity is amply forthcoming.

So far Nietzsche has been criticizing obstacles, if not for any good to come of it, at least because he does not like the looks of them. But let us now turn to the more positive, compensating part of his theories. I use the plural advisedly!

The positive part of Nietzsche's "system" is most meagre. To be sure he says a great deal about the Overman in "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", but it is up in the clouds, and hard to explain.

Through the influences of Paul Rée Nietzsche came to believe in Evolution. But he had a profound and eloquent misunderstanding of evolution and its possibilities. He thought it would be possible for humanity to surpass itself, to create something more noble, more powerful, more beautiful. Man gets his significance from the fact that he is an eternal ^{becoming} being. "I teach you the Overman. Man is something that shall be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him? All beings have created beyond themselves"; and he wants to know if we are going to be the ebb of this great tide. "We must work

*Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 5.

for the coming of the Overman, for Overman is the significance of the earth."* Overman is to give "significance" to the world-process in his superior being, in his greater perfection. Again he tells us "man is a rope connecting animal and Overman,- a rope over a precipice."** "What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal. What can be loved in man is that he is a transition and a destruction." § That is, a destruction of the old morality, the weak morality, the stagnant morality, and a transition to the new order of things. I find it impossible to decide whether the Overman is a type which is now here in some few supreme creatures or is yet to be evolved by a process of evolution. Nietzsche seems to believe that it is possible for humanity to evolve this creature. "Thou shalt not only propagate thyself but propagate thyself upwards! Therefore the garden of marriage may help thee!" §§ But whether this means the parents ought to be chosen carefully in order to bring about a certain type, he does not say.

One catches glimpses of Overman now and then. He has a "new pride": He will not "put his head into the sand of heavenly things." He will "love peace as a means to new wars, and the short peace better than the long" §§§ He will be cruel for the sake of the more noble; he will be a Spartan decid-

*Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 5.

**Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 8.

§Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 8.

§§Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 94.

§§§Thus Spoke Zarathustra,

ing who shall inherit the earth. He is not a low physical brute, but a creature somehow doing great deeds in an off-hand way.

Nietzsche soon lost faith in the slow process of evolution. He turns more and more to the choice expressions of humanity such as artists and great rulers. He speaks of "we free spirits" but really he means the editorial "we". He is alone. In "Beyond Good and Evil" he speaks about the great philosophers of the future, philosophers who shall create new values. The older philosophers formulate the truths of the past. "The real philosophers, however, are commanders and law-givers.....They determine first the whither and why of mankind, and thereby set aside all the previous labor of all philosophical workers.....they grasp at the future with a creative hand."* These seem now his ideal men.

Let us touch upon some metaphysical considerations in his "system" in so far as they have any bearing on his ethics, and the consistency with which he preaches. Man is in no way responsible for his make up. "He is not the result of a special purpose, a will, or an aim, the attempt is not here to reach an 'ideal of man", an 'ideal of happiness", or an 'ideal of morality", it is absurd to shunt off man's nature toward some 'goal', in reality a goal is lacking.....we are necessary, we are part of destiny, we belong to the whole,

*Beyond Good and Evil, Page 152.

we exist in the whole.....But there is nothing outside of the whole! This only is the grand emancipation: that no one be made responsible any longer, that the mode of being be not traced back to a causa prima, that the world be not regarded as a unity, either as a sensorium or as 'spirit'.....we deny God, we deny responsibility by denying God: it is only thereby that we save the world."*

Nietzsche is a strict individualist as regards intellectual truth. He sees in truth the expression of instinct, an attempt to establish a certain mode of life.**He says in one place that no matter how far we carry our research we thereby merely reveal to ourselves more of our sense organs. At times he talks about the will to Power. Sometimes it embraces all of the instinct in some grand total, at other times, it is but a part of the number of instincts. The latter is the case with the partial, decadent people. At times again this will to Power creates truths of its own - is the very outcropping in consciousness of some great unfolding something. Again he says about truth: "It is nothing more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than semblance; it is, in fact, the worst proved supposition in the world." And in another place he says "No philosopher has ever carried his point."

*The Twilight of Idols, Page 143.

**Beyond Good and Evil, Page 14.

§Beyond Good and Evil, Page 50.

Nietzsche realizes fully the need of working-truths, the need of moral valuations, that is, he recognizes their effectiveness. We must have long obedience along one line.

"The essential thing in 'heaven and in earth' is, apparently (to speak it once more), that there should be long obedience in the same direction."* Practical morality, obedience to law has had great value. ".....Everything in the nature of freedom, elegance.....has only developed by means of the tyranny of such arbitrary law. 'Thou must obey someone and for a long time; otherwise thou wilt come to grief, and lose all respect for thyself' - this seems to be the moral imperative of nature."** No people could maintain itself without values. A table of values hangs over every people. § He often mentions that down in the twilight zone of intellect, where such words as "honor", "virtue" and the like abide it would be pleasant for weak flesh to dwell, but that it would be unbecoming a man.

What are then some of the main ideas of Nietzsche?

Present society is decadent - the slave morality, the herding-morality has conquered.

Christianity, through its origin allied with slave-morality, now helps to keep alive the unfit, the ill-conditioned. Its ministers purport to heal, but in healing make more

*Beyond Good and Evil, Page 107.

**Beyond Good and Evil, Page 109.

§Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Page 76.

sick.

The state provides conditions of stability where the weak may have protection in their weakness. This checks the weeding-out process of the unfit.

Socialists and others preach equality and "the greatest good to the greatest number". But their efforts simply mean a lifting up of the very low a pulling down of the high - and on a dead level of mediocrity they all are to graze in animal contentment.

Christianity through its disgraceful pity and sympathy and its blunderbus sin - psychology has helped to maintain the sick, and to make man morally sick. It has taught man to look down on his instincts, it has made man weary of life, has made him "a house divided against itself".

Morality may be looked upon as a sign-system of working-value as means to an end. All systems of morals are expressions of life, of the will to power.

Their only significance lies in what they can do. "There is no such thing as a moral fact."* It is merely a false interpretation of a condition. Life has evolved the values in the past, hindering life in creating new values, abiding by any one set, is stagnation.

In a practical way, "'Beyond Good and Evil' does not mean 'beyond good and bad'".**It means the restoration or establishment of the master-morality valuations. Under this

*Twilight of the Idols, Page 144.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 57.

system there must be war, there must be slaves to work for the masters, there must be a shaking up in stagnating security now and then. Things will be stern. "The weak and the ill-conditioned shall perish: first principle of our charity. And people shall help them to do so."* "What is more ^{justi-}ingenious than any crime? Practical sympathy for the ill-conditioned and the weak."* There is needed a fear of man. "Fear preserves the well-constituted type of man. That which is really to be feared.....is not the great fear but the great surfeit of man, and in the same way the great pity for man."**

The noble souls are of value, they shall rule. But how are they to know and how are we - unfortunately-situated ones - to know who are who? "It is some fundamental certainty which a noble soul has about itself, something which is not to be sought, is not to be found, and perhaps, also, is not to be lost. - The noble soul has reverence for itself."[§] It knows itself. "He knows that he is on a high." And here Nietzsche the artist speaks out in full "The essential thing in a good and healthy aristocracy is that it should not regard itself as a function of kingship or of the commonwealth but as the significance and highest justification thereof - that it should therefore accept with good conscience the sacrifice of a legion of individuals, who for its sake must be

*The Anti-Christ.

**A Genealogy of Morals, Page 167.

§Beyond the Good and Evil, Page 256.

reduced to imperfect men, to slaves and instruments." Of course, he has Athens in mind and the great artistic period of Greek life.

Now what are some of the obvious sins of Nietzsche?

He is too much of a prophet. He does not seek to establish his doctrine of the Overman, the coming man, the worthiness of this type, by any method of logic. He trusts to his instincts.

He is all the time bringing in charges of "fäse" though he is a strict individualist in intellectual truth. He never seeks to understand fully wherein truth consists, but he seems to imply something which Hegel would spell with a capital - Truth.

In his doctrine of the strong man, he takes a narrow view of man's nature. Man's nature is capable of more manifestations than the expression of physical strength, and Nietzsche cannot prove that a philosopher like Kant is less "strong" and less of a "man" than, say, Napoleon.

He admits that both forms of morality, the master's and the slave's, are expressions of the Will to Power. On this basis he can only prove the master stronger by taking the unwarranted assumption that physical strength is the only proper, befitting human - defining power.

He tells the masses to sacrifice themselves. For what? For the glory of the masters. But how is man to sacrifice for something which in no way will benefit him, and is

in no way the expression of his nature. With the sharp distinction of master and slave morality, the masters could not maintain themselves. The only way they were maintained was by a commonly accepted system. He tells man to sacrifice himself for the coming of the Uebermensch, but he fails to show the superior value of the Overman - except as an intoxicated man shows his hilarity, - and he also fails to show how man by sacrifice, by "taking thought", can bring on the coming of the Overman.

He condemns man's gregarious nature and its various manifestations such as altruism, competition within the limits of law. He does not prove that man is stunted in society; it is still possible that man finds his highest, his most germane expression there.

He has a narrow appreciation of a certain type of man - the self-sufficient brute man - and condemns by unexpurgated abuse and not by logic all things of a nature supposedly contrary to this type of man. He does not prove - and cannot prove - that the altruistic ideals of the day are anything to be ashamed of.

Nietzsche never shows how man came to act morally, how he began to do and refrain from doing in the light of an ideal, in short, how man got a conscience. Of course, Nietzsche will say that a conscience represents a diseased condition - but that is something he must prove.

Well, Nietzsche did not like the "moral" man, the

modern good citizen and father, and he set about to tell him
so in sixteen big German volumes - that's about all that can
be said.

Ingebrigt Larsen Lillehei,

...

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