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IMMANUEL KANT
Lectures on ethics

but raillery can be brought in anywhere. A man is more demeaned by it than he is by malice; for if we are a laughing-stock to others, we have no dignity, and are exposed to contempt. We have to see, though, what makes us an object of laughter to others. Often we may concede it to them, for if it costs nothing to either of us, we lose nothing thereby. A habitual scoffer betrays that he has little respect for others, and does not judge things at their true value.

OF DUTIES TO ANIMALS AND SPIRITS

Our author here goes on to speak of duties to beings that are above us and beneath us. But since all animals exist only as means, and not for their own sakes, in that they have no self-consciousness, whereas man is the end, such that I can no longer ask: Why does he exist?, as can be done with animals, it follows that we have no immediate duties to animals; our duties towards them are indirect duties to humanity. Since animals are an analogue of humanity, we observe duties to mankind when we observe them as analogues to this, and thus cultivate our duties to humanity. If a dog, for example, has served his master long and faithfully, that is an analogue of merit; hence I must reward it, and once the dog can serve no longer, must look after him to the end, for I thereby cultivate my duty to humanity, as I am called upon to do; so if the acts of animals arise out of the same *principium* from which human actions spring, and the animal actions are analogues of this, we have duties to animals, in that we thereby promote the cause of humanity. So if a man has his dog shot, because it can no longer earn a living for him, he is by no means in breach of any duty to the dog, since the latter is incapable of judgement, but he thereby damages the kindly and humane qualities in himself, which he ought to exercise in virtue of his duties to mankind. Lest he extinguish such qualities, he must already practise a similar kindness towards animals; for a person who already displays such cruelty to animals is also no less hardened towards men. We can already know the human heart, even in regard to animals. Thus Hogarth, in his engravings,* also depicts the beginnings of cruelty, where already the children are practising it upon animals, e.g., by pulling the tail of a dog or cat; in another scene we see the progress of cruelty, where the man runs over a child; and finally the culmination of cruelty in a murder, at which point the rewards of it appear horrifying. This provides a good lesson to children. The more we devote ourselves to observing animals and their behaviour, the more we love them, on seeing how greatly they care for their young; in such a context, we cannot even contemplate cruelty to a wolf.

Leibnitz put the grub he had been observing back on the tree with its

* ['The Stages of Cruelty', 1751 - Tr.]

leaf, lest he should be guilty of doing any harm to it. It upsets a man to destroy such a creature for no reason, and this tenderness is subsequently transferred to man. In England, no butcher, surgeon or doctor serves on the twelve-man jury, because they are already inured to death. So when anatomists take living animals to experiment on, that is certainly cruelty, though there it is employed for a good purpose; because animals are regarded as man's instruments, it is acceptable, though it is never so in sport. If a master turns out his ass or his dog, because it can no longer earn its keep, this always shows a very small mind in the master. The Greeks were high-minded in such matters, as is shown by the fable of the ass, which pulled by accident at the bell of ingratitude. Thus our duties to animals are indirectly duties to humanity.

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The duties to other spiritual beings are merely negative. We should never meddle in such actions as imply a *commercium*, or intercourse, with other beings. All such actions are of a kind that makes men fanatical, visionary and superstitious, and are contrary to the dignity of mankind; for that dignity includes the healthy use of reason, and if one is given to things of that sort, the sound use of reason is impossible. There may always be such beings, and all that is said of them may be true, but we are not acquainted with them, and cannot have dealings with them.

In regard to evil spirits, the situation is the same. We have just as good an idea of evil as we do of good, and refer everything evil to Hell, as we attribute everything good to Heaven. If we personify this perfect evil, we have the idea of the Devil; and have only to imagine that such a being may have influence over us, that he appears at night and stalks abroad, to be plagued with phantoms that abolish the rational use of our powers. So our duties to such beings are negative.

Our author goes on to discuss duties to inanimate objects. These also allude, indirectly, to our duties towards men. The human impulse to destroy things that can still be used is very immoral. No man ought to damage the beauty of nature; even though he cannot use it, other people may yet be able to do so, and though he has no need to observe such a duty in regard to the thing itself, he does in regard to others. Thus all duties relating to animals, other beings and things have an indirect reference to our duties towards mankind.

OF SPECIAL DUTIES TO PARTICULAR KINDS OF PEOPLE

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Our author now points out special duties that we have to particular kinds of people, namely, duties in regard to differences of age, sex and station. But all these duties are deducible from the foregoing universal duties to mankind. Among differences of position, there is one that is founded on a distinction of inner worth, namely the status of the scholar, which appears