In what follows, an attempt has been made to determine the nature of 'virtue' according to various ethical systems. Perhaps the broadest division of ethical theories is between the Cognitive and the Non-cognitive types. The former claims that virtue-statements have an objective bearing and that this can be conceptualized and expressed. Almost all the classical theories are of the cognitive type. In general, the non-cognitive type of theories are limited to empiricists with leaning towards positivism. Hume, for example, was a non-cognitivist who saw no way of talking about objectivity of virtuous actions or vicious actions. They are defined, for him, in terms of feeling and hence cannot be investigated rationally or scientifically. According to cognitivists, virtue-statements have an objective bearing. Virtuous actions are objectively right and vicious actions are objectively wrong. And we are able to tell which are which.

Of course, there is none an easy way of classification which helps to divide up the ethical theories. Besides Cognitive and Non-cognitive division, there is also an
another one which takes us into naturalistic, intuitionistic and metaphysical. Naturalistic systems are those which admit of no transcendental spiritual values beyond our sensory experience. Such systems advocate the morality of the present life and the present world with a stress on the social or the individual virtues. The hedonists who make pleasure (whether gross or refined) for oneself or for others, the central ethical value; the utilitarians, who define virtue and vice as useful and not-useful respectively, the pragmatists and contemporary naturalists, who agree more or less with the utilitarians, are all naturalists on this basis of division.

The intuitionists consider virtue and vice as the quality which is perceived directly by a special moral sense or which is understood in itself without any utilitarian correlation of means and ends or any metaphysical study of human nature.

The metaphysical moralists advocate the view that virtue and vice is the basis of human nature. An ethics without a metaphysical background is, they say, at best an incomplete and at worse nonsense.

Another way to distinguish types of ethical theories is to contrast axiological and deontological theories. These refer to value and obligation theories respectively. An axiological system makes obligation dependent on a theory
of value. An action is virtuous, because it is valuable, hence one ought to do it; on the other hand, some actions are vicious, because they are not valuable, hence we should not do these actions. Plato, Aristotle, the Medieval Schoolmen and most moderns hold for an axiological Ethics. The deontological theorists are the formalists like Kant and the intuitionists such as Shaftesbury and Butler. According to them, actions are perceived to be virtuous or vicious apart from any consideration of their consequences.

Our effort in this chapter will be to give some indication of bases for compare and contrast the theories about 'virtue'. The comparisons and distinctions help identify the essential lines of each of the types which we will consider. Their inclusion here will be justified. All ethical theorists agree pretty well on the basic practical issues: they would agree that we should not steal, lie, injure one another, or that we should respect the rights of others and help others develop their full potentialities, etc. But when it comes to the reasons for doing these things, there is very great disagreement. Keeping before ourselves the aforesaid point of view we have to make an attempt to give, as far as possible, a complete and systematic analysis of the concept of 'virtue' (and 'vice') in the major ethical theories.

**Basic Facts of Morality** - There are certain facts of morality which practically all ethical theorists accept.
and which their theories attempt to explain. In the explanations many and strong disagreements appear, but these do not alter the general acceptance of the basic facts of morality.

First, there is the fact that we do make distinction between good and bad actions, between right and wrong. Secondly, we experience a sense of obligation to do what we call right and good and to avoid doing what we call wrong and bad. Thirdly, we experience a sense of freedom in choosing to act in one way or the other. And finally we experience a sense of responsibility for our own actions.

There is one other fact which is equally obvious but which is not a subject of inquiry in many modern ethical theories, because it is not considered to be significant. This is the fact that we experience not only a sense of obligation to do what we consider to be our duty but also an inspiration towards "beyond" the call of duty, and this is the virtuous life which has unfortunately not been given a prime status in many modern ethical theories. A true ethical life is the virtuous life. All other matters, though of theoretical importance, are only of subsidiary value. The concept of 'virtue' alone is central to Ethics. No matter how ethical thinkers interpret the nature of virtue in their ethical systems, men do find attracted by qualities of character such as kindness, considerateness,
loyalty, honesty, truthfulness; and repelled by cruelty, murder, backbiting, dishonesty, falsehood and so on. In all the various theories of morality, the nature of 'virtue' is variously interpreted. As the ethical ideal differs from system to system, so also the nature of virtue is differently interpreted. The object of this chapter is to bring out the various viewpoints in Ethics about the concept of virtue in different ethical systems.

(i) 'Virtue' according to Ethical Scepticism

Scepticism is an epistemological belief that the human mind cannot attain certain or absolute knowledge, or if it could, would not be able to recognize that knowledge as certain. This denial of absolute knowledge may apply to certain fields or subjects (e.g. God, immortality, the nature of the self, or the ultimate reality, etc.) or it may be extended to include all subjects whatsoever. Agnosticism and scepticism are loosely synonymous, except that the former is more a confession of ignorance than a doubt of possible knowledge. Further, Agnosticism is often used only where knowledge of God is concerned. Again, scepticism is to be distinguished from cynicism.

In modern use of the term, scepticism has been given the broad meaning of indulgence in doubt to the extent that the sceptic believes nothing, and in nothing, and rejects every evidence as inconclusive. According to scepticism,
human life does not seem to have any scheme of virtues, because there is no specific human ideal which can be formulated on any evidence as such; and consequently, the development of a good character, acquisition of the various virtues of man's life appear to be illusory. Hence, a theory of virtue becomes impossible, if scepticism is understood in the above sense. If by scepticism is meant that all knowledge is inconclusive, indefinite, inaccurate and inconsistent, then knowledge of virtues would be impossible. Sceptical theory regards the term 'virtue' as indefinite and vague. It may refer to the result of an action or the inner purpose or intention. Again, according to scepticism virtues show little consistency. A person who is loyal in one situation may be disloyal in another. Thirdly, on occasions, at least the virtues conflict with one another and with themselves. If they are taken as absolutes, an embarrassing situation arises. Loyalty to one may conflict with loyalty to others. Sometimes, loyalty to one may conflict with the demands of honesty. Hence, all the problems about the concept of 'virtue' will give us inconsistent knowledge. How, then, can the knowledge of virtues be possible? asks the sceptic.

But it appears that scepticism as an ethical theory cannot be the final resting place of human life. It may be said immediately that any of the ethical theories is
preferable in value to any form of scepticism; because "a sceptical theory necessarily ends in moral anarchy and frustration".¹ It should be noted incidentally that the present-day radical use of the term 'scepticism' is out of the tune with the original meaning. The Greek verb skeptomai meant to watch and search closely. A sceptic in ancient Greece was just meant a person particularly searching and careful type of investigator. "The sceptic seeks, observes keenly, and investigates, but that which he seeks is not doubt but truth."² Such an attitude towards scepticism is really more scientific in the sense that the one who searches has to continue his search until he has found out what removes his doubt. It was expected of the ancient sceptic that he would never give up and would persist in seeking and searching the 'object' of his knowledge.

On the contrary, if scepticism is understood as doubting everything—even our capacities to answer the questions with regard to the nature, origin and purpose of the universe—then scepticism appears to be self-destructive and inconsistent with itself. Sometimes, Philosophy is said to begin with 'doubt', but really speaking it should begin with doubt, and should not end with doubt. If scepticism is not understood as a means to an end, then it becomes self-destructive. Secondly, utter scepticism is inconsistent with itself, because it believes
at least in its own theory that 'no knowledge is possible'. Hence, in the words of Bhagavadgītā "the man who is ignorant, who has no faith, who is of a doubting nature, perishes".  

The criticisms directed against 'virtue' must not blind us to the value the type of character and conduct they represent. Self-control, courage, wisdom, justice, brotherly love and other virtues are as valuable as ever.

(ii) The Concept of 'Virtue' according to Ethical Hedonism and Utilitarianism

According to Utilitarianism, greatest happiness of the greatest number is the fundamental principle of morality. It maintains the view that the consequences of human actions is the standard of morality. If the act produces desired consequences, then it is a virtuous act. If it produces undesirable consequences, it is said to be a vicious act. The utilitarian moralists of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England attempted to base ethics on determinism, making pleasure, for oneself or for others, as the only good in itself, and pleasant consequences of actions, the standard or the criterion of morality. Besides David Hume, the two names most commonly associated with utilitarian philosophy are Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. It is on the thought of these two men that we shall concentrate our attention.

Bentham's "Introduction to the Principles of Morals
and Legislation gives fullest expression to his utilitarian theory of virtues. According to him, pain and pleasure are the two sovereign masters governing mankind. Hence, happiness, that is to say, pleasure, and avoidance of pain is the only right and universally desirable end of human action. This is the first principle which is used to prove all else and hence cannot itself be proved.

What follows from this first principle? It follows that the morality of an act, its virtuous or vicious aspect is to be judged by its consequences. An act is virtuous or vicious depending on its usefulness for producing pleasure or pain. Actions which produce pleasurable consequences, are virtuous, if the consequences are painful, then actions are vicious. No action is, in itself, virtuous or vicious. An action in which the pleasant consequences overbalance the painful consequences is a virtuous act, and the more so, the more virtuous the act. If, on the other hand, the painful consequences overbalance the pleasant ones, then the act is a vicious one. Just as the act is neither virtuous nor vicious in itself, neither is the intention nor the motive.

Bentham's theory has a profound effect on John Stuart Mill. Mill's "Utilitarianism" explains in detail Bentham's 'greatest happiness' principle. Mill's account of utilitarianism, or Mill's philosophy as a whole, has a thoroughly practical orientation. Ethics, Mill held, is
not a science but an art. In his meaning of the word, science provides factual analyses of things as they are, whereas art provides normative accounts of the way things ought to be. Science is in the indicative mood, Ethics in the imperative. While science proceeds from the particular to the general, Ethics, as any normative knowledge, proceeds from the general to the particular. Unlike Bentham, Mill states that man does not always seek pleasure, but he ought to seek pleasure always. Bentham supported psychological hedonism, Mill advocated Ethical hedonism. Bentham is a quantitative hedonist, Mill is a qualitative hedonist. According to Mill, happiness is not only an end but the only end for which all activities are performed. Hence, actions are virtuous in proportion as they are constituents of happiness or means to it, and vicious in proportion as they oppose happiness.

Again, utilitarians made morality dependent on consequences. The 'character' of the person is something different from the act performed: the act is not virtuous because performed by a good man nor vicious because performed by a bad man. Blameworthy actions may flow from praiseworthy qualities; and praiseworthy actions may flow from blameworthy qualities. When this happens we modify our moral judgement of the one acting but not of the act. The man may be amiable or brave, honest or kind but his act may be one which is not productive of happiness and so it
be a vicious act, well meant perhaps, but is vicious none­theless.

Virtuous character is something desirable because, in general, it is beneficial to many and contributes towards 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'. And virtuous character implies high motives. But the sole standard by which we can judge the virtuous or the vicious action is the consequences of the act itself, not the character or motive of the agent. Hence, virtuous or vicious actions are known by their beneficial or injurious results.

But this utilitarianistic view appears to be improper. What gives pleasure to one person may not give pleasures to others. The notions of pleasure and pain vary according to place, temperant, age, mood, mental development and the like. Owing to different attitudes of mind, the same thing may be regarded by the same man as beneficial or pleasurable on certain occasions, and injurious or painful on the others. Thus the variable subjective feelings like pleasure and pain and changing ideas of benefit and injury cannot be the standard or criterion of virtuous and vicious action. So virtue and vice cannot be objectively determined by the criterion of benefit or injury, by pleasure or pain. Moreover, we have no capacity to determine how, where, why, when and how much our actions will bear fruit. So from the results of actions, we cannot determine the nature of
virtuous or vicious actions. Hence, the utilitarianistic standard of virtuous or vicious action appears to be meaningless from an ethical point of view.

Are virtues absolute or relative? What is the worth of virtues? Have virtues instrumental or intrinsic value? About these questions the hedonistic and the utilitarianistic approach maintain the view that virtues are instrumental in character. Pleasure, being the ideal, virtues have been given a subordinate place. Virtues are valuable and desirable in so far as they yield pleasure either to the individual self (egoistic hedonism), or to the society (altruistic hedonism) or a reconciliation of both (utilitarianism). The worth of the various virtues is conditional, dependent. Virtues are not valuable in themselves. They have no intrinsic value. Kindness, honesty, truthfulness, benevolence are valuable and men like to follow these if these yield pleasurable experiences. Everyone of us desires to have a good physical health, adequate wealth, pleasant physical surroundings, an interesting work, a responsible position in society, lack of malicious enemies, a properly adjusted sex-life, nourishing and tasty food, frequent periods for play, ample opportunities to develop a taste for literature, for music, for painting, or for fine arts. Certainly, some of the above activities that we perform are not virtuous activities in the proper sense; but the basic question of the hedonists or utilitarians is:
Why do we seek these activities?, what do we want to achieve out of these activities? Do we perform these activities for the activities themselves? Their answer is that these activities, including the various virtuous actions, are not sought for themselves, these are means, being contributing elements of a happy life. Hence, all virtuous activities are means toward a happy life. Virtues are 'preyas' and not 'śreyas'.

Again, Mill's position is an improvement upon Bentham, as the former insisted upon, not merely the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. Hence, Mill tries to reconcile the apparent conflict between individual and social virtues. Mill looks upon man as a social animal, and this socio-psychological interpretation of human nature must be understood to mean the greatest happiness of the greatest number of individuals, not the good of some abstract humanity or some organization without concern for individuals.

Yet, Mill's account of virtues appears to be defective from the ethical point of view, because according to him virtuous action is to be judged by the happiness as an end, not the motive or the moral worth of the person who acts. This theory of virtue makes virtues dependent on consequences. What he is concerned with is external act. From the point of view of Aretology, consequences have only
a subsidiary value. Lokamāṇya Tilak is no doubt correct
in taking a strong objection to the one-sided view of the
utilitarians, like Mill, that the morality of an action
should be judged entirely by external consequences. It is,
however, unfortunate that he himself often goes to the
other extreme to maintain that the consideration of conse­
quences should be altogether avoided in passing the moral
judgement. What is necessary here is a balanced approach
in order to co-ordinate the views. If 'virtue' necessarily
means rightness of an action, then the hedonistic or utili­
tarian standpoint may be justifiable; but if 'virtue' also
means goodness of the character, then hedonistic or
utilitarian view does not throw light at all on this aspect
of virtue.

Again, hedonism, in general, gives importance to
worldly virtues. Mill's and Bentham's idea of virtues,
after all, is only one of the secular types. We do not
find in Bentham's hedonism, the state of bliss born of the
supreme equanimity of the pure reason visualized in the
Bhagavadvītā. The Bhagavadgītā describes such a state of
experience variously; viz., infinite bliss (VI/28), supreme
tranquillity (IV/39), the state of uniform happiness devoid
of all suffering whatsoever (VI/21, 23), Eternal Bliss
(V/21). It is obvious that the 'virtues' of utilitarians
are secular. And with secular virtues as the ideal, the
conflict between the virtues of one's own and those of others becomes inevitable. But is this conflict to continue for ever? If one sticks to the hedonistic or utilitarianistic determination of the human ideal, then the conflict between Egoistic and Altruistic virtues can never be solved. One has to transcend these worldly conflicts from the secular level and enter a higher plane of life. Worldly virtues are relative. Though through social reforms the inequalities and differences can be more or less reduced, a complete elimination of them, on an empirical level, does not seem to have been possible. This can be achieved only on a transcendental level through the theory of the ultimate identity of all souls. (Bhagavadgītā, V/25.) Amānitva, abhaya, adambitva, akrodha, śānti, anāsakti, acāpala are some of the spiritual virtues which transcend the individual and the social virtues. These are the God-regarding virtues. This naturally leads us to the consideration of the virtues in the religious Ethics, but ethically this is worthwhile.

Lastly, the hedonistic account of pleasure and its relation to the virtues appear to be quite unsatisfactory. Hedonism is a kind of self-indulgence. But I think that undue self-indulgence will entail suffering rather than give pleasure as such. It is said that indigestion is not caused by the mere eating of sweetmeats, but by their being taken in undue quantity. Similarly, pleasures per se are not evil,
but pleasures indulged without moderation as such will upset the equilibrium of the virtuous life and destroy its true happiness. Hence, immoderate pleasures are evils and should be avoided. Such pleasures go beyond the measure. It follows, therefore, neither the natural appetites nor the higher impulses and emotions are to be suppressed, but that they are all to be co-ordinated, systematized and regulated in the virtuous life.

(iii) The Treatment of Virtues in Ethical Formalism

According to Ethical Formalism, Reason occupies the supreme place in human constitution. Ethical Rationalism is also known to be Ethical Formalism, which is radically different from moral-sense theories in modern ethical thought. Shaftesbury, Hobbes, Joseph Butler, Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, are some of the biggest names in moral-sense Ethics. However, each approaches the problem in his own way. Formalistic Ethics and Moral-sense Ethics have striking differences. For instance, the formalists are rationalists and the moral-sense thinkers are empiricists. Formalists are interested in epistemological and metaphysical problems, moral-sense thinkers are interested in experiential psychological problems. For this reason, formalistic Ethics becomes much more dry and technical than fairly easy-going psychological analyses of moral-sense Ethics.
Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is the typical of the school of formalism. According to Kant, reason gives the moral law and regulates moral conduct. Man is a rational being, and Kant wanted to save Ethics from scepticism and relativism and wanted to establish Ethics on some absolute principles. For the present it is sufficient to indicate the place of virtue within the general scheme of Kant's writing.

According to Kant, virtue consists in 'duty for duty's sake'. In Hinduism and in Christianity the practice of virtues prescribed on every single occasion becomes the 'duty' of every adherent of either of these religions. To say that justice is a virtue is nothing different from saying that it is our duty to be just. From this point of view, the Hindu concept of 'Varnashrama-dharma' could be treated to be expressing both virtue and duty. Hence, at least in the religious Ethics, it is very difficult to maintain a distinction between duty and virtue. 'It is because of this mutual involvement that Hinduism uses the same term, Dharma, for virtue as well as duty.5

Now, if virtue consists in "duty for duty's sake", it is obvious, according to Kant, that it should be followed without any reference to an ultimate end such as wealth, power, status, and so on. 'Virtue' is not a hypothetical imperative. Hedonistic account of virtue is hypothetical,
conditional or relative. Its principle is 'an action ought to be performed if it gives pleasure'. Herein, the nature of the hedonistic 'ought' is practical but it is non-moral. On the contrary, when Kant says that virtue ought to be followed, the nature of the ought is moral. 'Virtue' is a categorical imperative, and is to be followed without any external end. Non-moral ought has an external sanction, moral ought has an internal sanction, hence its value is intrinsic and not extrinsic.

By the way, it appears that Kant's Categorical Imperative has its roots in the Christian Divine Imperative in terms of the Will of God. He only re-emphasized an absolute obedience to the Categorical Imperative. Again, there is a striking parallelism between Kantian and Bhagavadgītā's account of "Duty for duty's sake". The following stanzas of the Bhagavadgītā explain Kant's doctrine of "duty for duty's sake". The Bhagavadgītā, like Kant, advises men to work without concern for the results. "To action alone hast thou a right and never at all to its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive; neither let there be in thee any attachment to inaction." (2/47)
"But even if these works ought to be performed, giving up attachment and desire for fruits, this, O Partha (Arjuna) is my decided and final view." Again,

"Sahásra Śrīkanta fahē caitre sthāya: sālākīsē māt: ॥ (18/9)"

"But he who performs a prescribed duty as a thing that ought to be done, renouncing all attachment and also the fruit—his relinquishment is regarded as one of 'goodness'." (Translations of these utterances I have taken from Dr. S. Radhākrishnan's The Bhagavadgītā.) Compared to Kantian analysis of Categorical imperative and its three implications, Bhagavadgītā's analysis has become outstanding and classical in the history of Hindu ethico-religious writings. (For details, refer to Gurudev Ranade's The Bhagavadgītā As a Philosophy of God-Realization, p. 198.)

According to Kant, virtue demands unconditional obedience. Virtues should be practised at any cost; e.g., truth should be spoken without regard to consequences, and justice should be done even if the world be destroyed. An act to be virtuous must, therefore, exclude the influence of desires, and be the outcome of a pure regard for a virtue. In order that the action should be morally right, it is not enough that it conforms to a virtue, but must also be done for the sake of virtue. Virtue is unconditionally and intrinsically good. "If we are to act consistently with our nature as
rational beings, we must not measure the value of an act
... by appeal to our feelings, prejudices and self-interest. Of course, Kant is not saying, as some have supposed, that an action is wrong if we have an inclination to do it, or if we derive from it. He is saying that if we do it solely from external end then it is not morally good. If devotion to duty brings us pleasure, that is a sign of virtue. If a man performs a virtuous action from inclination or desire alone, that action has no intrinsic value. Virtue implies a 'good will'. 'Virtue' is good not because it may produce good consequences, but because it is good in itself.

In estimating Kant's account of virtue, it appears that his account of virtue is felt to be too much rigorous. According to him, for instance, no conduct can be regarded as truly virtuous which rests on feeling. He would condemn the act if a person who from love or kindness nurses a sick person and would praise it when it is done only from the sense of duty. He forgets that virtue is the harmony of rationality and sensibility. Regulation, and not extirpation, of sensibility is the true rule of life. If desire, love, inclinations are irrational, then what about the desire to be dutiful or love for "virtue for virtue's sake"? Hence, Kant's rigorism leaves no room for many noble virtues of common life, and make virtue formal and artificial. The virtuous acts that we admire so much—the acts of benevolence, kindness, sympathy, honesty, sincerity, brotherly
love etc. proceed from the fullness of the heart. We love virtue in proportion as it is spontaneous. Poet Schiller was right when he said:

"Willingly serve I my friends, but do it,
Alas! with affection;
Hence I am plagued with the doubt;
Virtue I have not attained."

Kant's rationalism, therefore, gives us form of virtue without matter; hedonism on the other hand gives us matter without form of virtue. Hence, both these views appear to be one-sided.

Again, according to Kant, universalization is the test of a virtuous action. If a person is tempted to steal or to lie, he should ask to himself whether he is able to will that stealing and lying become universal. Obviously, his reason dictates to him that he cannot will that they be universalized. On the other hand, celibacy could not be universalized, yet we can see some cases in which celibacy is not only good but one of the fundamental virtues of human life.

Moreover, we have stated that according to Kant virtue consists in "following duty for duty's sake". The Hindu institution of Varnāśrama reveals the virtues in terms of duties of each varṇa. Each varṇa is temperamentally and vocationally different from the other. The
Brahmana is the intellectual, moral and spiritual leader of the community, and their virtues are scholarship, enlightenment and understanding. The Kṣatriya is the ruler and soldier and his virtues consist in protecting the nation when it is in peril, and be prepared to defend, by all means, the integrity and interests of the society. The Vaiśya should be most practical in matters of trade and industry. The Śūdra must demonstrate the virtues of obedience and service. In this brief statement of 'Varnaśrama-dharma' it is easy to find the duties prescribed for members of different classes. The virtues of the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra consist in following their specific duties respectively.

But I think that this does not exhaust the virtuous life. Virtue may consist in following one's duty without any regard for an external end. But virtue may even consist in some uncommon duties which do not belong to a specific class as such, and which are expected to be followed universally. This is the concept of 'Sāmānyadharma' of Hindu Ethics which appears to be similar to the Kant's concept of 'imperfect obligations'. But Hindu analysis of 'Sāmānyadharma' gives us an outstanding analysis of the common virtues of ahimsā, satya, asteya, Sauca and indriyanigraha. Such a detailed analysis of common virtues appears to be absent in Kantian Ethics.

From this, it, logically, follows that virtue may
surpass duty. One may rise above duty. The Samānyadharma can transcend the Varnāśrama-dharma. Hence, it is ethically possible and valuable to do something which is not enjoined as a duty, and yet is commendable and morally praiseworthy.

(iv) The Treatment of Virtues in Ethical Perfectionism

Perfectionism tries to make a reconciliation of Hedonism and Rationalism. It tries to rectify the defects of each of the ethical system, and gives a complete view of human life. It tries to reconcile hedonism and rationalism and their interpretations of virtues of man's life. The highest good does not consist in pleasure for its own sake, nor does it consist in conformity with the law for its own sake. The highest good must consist in something positive and involve the perfection of the individual. This is known as Perfectionism, Eudaemonism, Energism, or Ethical Idealism. The highest good does not consist in surrendering to a life of sensibility (as Hedonism supposes), or in the extirpation of sensibility (as Formalism supposes). It consists in self-perfection, and this requires the virtue of the regulation of sensibility, and the virtue of the systematization of impulses and desires under the guidance of reason, accompanied by a feeling of inner happiness. Hence, the importance of the virtues of temperance and wisdom. Full justice, therefore, be done to both the virtues. This is substantially advocated by Plato and
Aristotle in the ancient times. Hegel and Neo-Hegelians, Green, Caird, Dewey, D'Arcy, Mackenzie, Muirhead, James Seth, Paulsen and many others in modern times also hold the same principle of virtues.

According to perfectionism, actions are virtuous or vicious, if they are consistent with or conducive to the perfection of the self or inconsistent with or not conducive to the perfection of the self respectively. Here 'self-realization' means realization of the total excellence that man has embedded in his personality.

Perfectionism regards other-regarding virtues as of utmost importance. It believes in the organic unity of the society. It disregards self-regarding virtues. According to perfectionism, society is an organism and the members of it are its self-conscious limbs. True ethical life cannot be selfish. Hence, perfectionism reconciles egoistic and altruistic virtues and maintains that there can be no such thing as absolute self-regarding virtues any more than absolute other-regarding virtues. Hence, perfectionism, rightly interpreted, will reconcile all the conflicting virtues under Asceticism and Epicurianism, virtues under Rationalism and Sensualism, or Rigorism and Hedonism. This theory, in brief, incorporates into itself the elements of truth implicit in the rival theories.

The 'self' is variously described. Epistemologically, the self is the bearer of subjective experiences,
the self is the 'Knower' (Jñātā). Cogito of Berkeley; the 'self' is taken to be the 'total self', body and soul. This is the metaphysical sense. In psycho-analysis the self is the ego. But out of all these, none appears to be satisfactory. H. W. Wright's account of self appears to be satisfactory. For instance, he distinguishes:

(1) the individual self: This is the harmonious organization of individual virtues such as self-preservation, pleasure and culture. This involves fulfilment of man's spiritual passion for truth, goodness and beauty;

(2) the social self: Here man develops social or other-regarding virtues. This self is perfected by altruistic and humanistic virtues, and subordinates individual virtues to those of the society;

(3) the universal self: This is the spiritual being whose existence, Wright cannot prove, but must take on faith. Herein, the individual and social virtues culminate into spiritualism so that the claims of religion and morality are brought into perfect harmony.

Such an interpretation of the self justifies our concept of 'virtue' as the excellence of character. Human character consists of various aspects. It is a totality of the various excellences. Good character is an organic unity of individual, social and spiritual virtues; bad
character signifies a lack of organic unity of these kinds of virtues. But how this kind of perfection is to be attained? It is the time factor that counts. A man who starts on his journey must not expect to reach the end at once. There is bound to be a time interval between initiation and realization. It will require a good deal of time before one conquers his lower passions (Kāma, Krodha, etc.) and devotes himself to inner spiritual being. So initiation and realization should not be spoken of in the same breath. Perfection is only gradual. A gardener might sprinkle water upon the trees and the plants, but it is only after the spring sets in that the trees and the plants bear fruit. Similarly, the acquisition of individual, social and spiritual virtues is to be attained gradually, and never instantly. Jñānesvara calls Śaṅkara a pilgrim progressing on the spiritual path. As to the spiritual progress of our mortal beings, it is a very arduous course to tread.

Again, Ethics of the Hindi saints is both analytical and synthetical. The analytical study is concerned with an enumeration and elucidation of the different virtues, and the synthetical, with the building up of a theory of Ethics thereon. The ethical ideal of perfectionism, according to Hindi saints consists in moral preparation, i.e. ethical perfection consists in the acquisition of individual virtues, such as, activism, non-attachment, discrimination, self-
control, courage, patience, sufference, equanimity and so on; social virtues, such as, good company, sympathy, benevolence, sacrifice and so on; and spiritual virtues, such as, celibacy, penance, introversion, study of Philosophy, reverence for Master, meditation on God, divine optimism, and vision of God everywhere. Individual and the social virtues are the moral virtues, the virtues of the third are supra-moral virtues. This, again, justifies our thought that ethical life ought to culminate into spiritualism, which is not anti-ethical, but supra-ethical. Moral life gets its real ethical zeal if it is oriented to spiritual life. The best moral life is truly religious in character.

Individual and social virtues give us relativistic Ethics. The Hindu concept of 'Mokṣa' alone repudiates the relativistic approach towards Ethics. The concept of Mokṣa reconciles the harmony between theory and practice, logic and bliss, philosophy and morality. According to Indian philosophy, Mokṣa constitutes the summum bonum of life, the realization of which is possible. Mokṣa can be experienced in this very world, this is known to jīvanmukti. This state can be experienced and attained by discrimination (Viveka) and self-control (Indriyanigraha) which make the sadhaka transcend all kinds of relativism. Such a jīvanmukta is called 'Sthitaprajña' in the ethics of the Bhagavadgītā. It is the highest moral ideal realizable by man, according to Bhagavadgītā. Apathia of the Stoics,
Ataraxia of the Epicurians and Sthitaprajñā of the Bhagavad-gītā are all on the same level. Gurudev Rānade beautifully brings out the characteristics of a Sthitaprajñā under four heads: psychological, ethical, social and mystical. Such a man rises above all kinds of relativism and dualism and reaches an uncommon level of ethical perfection. This is real perfection in which the psychological, ethical, social and mystical aspects of 'self' are fully realized.

Hence, of all the ethical theories, perfectionism, in its ethico-religious sense, and its account of virtues, appear to be the most satisfactory theory of Ethics, because it alone gives us a perfect ethical ideal in which all the virtues are harmonized.

(v) Treatment of Virtues in Ethical Intuitionism

According to Intuitionism, sense-experience is one of sources of knowledge. A possible source of knowledge is intuition, or the direct apprehension of knowledge that is not the result of conscious reasoning or of immediate sense perception. In the literature dealing with 'intuitionism' one comes across such expressions as "immediate feeling of certainty", "imagination touched with conviction", "a total response" to some, "total situation" and a "direct insight into truth". It is not our purpose here to know the various positions men hold regarding intuition. It is sufficient here to state that 'virtues', being the qualities
of character, are not to be perceived but are to be known intuitively. Intuitionists believe that man possesses a separate 'faculty', neither sensory nor rationalistic in character, which is capable of apprehending truth or reality of virtues directly. There are various forms of Intuitionism such as epistemological, metaphysical, ethical and so on. Ethical Intuitionism is the doctrine which states that man has a special faculty (usually identified with conscience) which is able to intuit virtues as such. Both Absolutism and Formalism in Ethics usually include intuitionism as a basic doctrine.

'Virtue' being an abstract notion cannot be logically defined. It is a simple concept, and not a pseudo-concept as the Logical Positivists used to hold. Even Moore says that virtue cannot be defined because it is a simple property and yet he does not reject the possibility about the knowledge and possession of the various virtues. The various virtues are the qualities of man's character which are worth acquiring, and their presence is not to be detected by any ordinary species of observation, experience or investigation. How is it detected then? Some would say by intuition.

Other intuitionists among whom were H. A. Prichard and David Ross, somewhat modified Moore's doctrine not fundamentally but in principle dissenting from it. They wanted to make intuition do more work than Moore had assigned to it.
Consider, for example, Prichard's argument in his paper, "Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" His reply to this is in the affirmative for the following reason. 'Why should we be virtuous?' He, like Kant, gives a deontological answer to this question. In answer to this question he, like Moore and Kant, maintains the view that there is no reason why we should be virtuous, except precisely that we should be virtuous. If one mentions some other feature such as being productive, or conducive to happiness, one is simply flying off at a tangent. Virtue may lead to happiness but that is not the precise reason for 'Why I ought to be virtuous?' Hence, in order to free ourselves from the insidious and misguided inclination to look for arguments we must realize, Prichard says, the self-evidence of virtue i.e. the immediacy of our apprehension of it. In what sense do we intuit the virtues?

According to Intuitionism, man's knowledge about the various virtues is through intuition, which was accepted by some Indian Philosophers as one of the sources of knowledge. The question is: how do we know the various virtues? Quite obviously, we do not know them through using our senses, and the logical positivists would say that what we cannot know through our sense we do not know at all, where off one cannot speak there off one must remain silent, and would regard virtue-words as pseudo-concepts. As Strawson put it in his paper "Ethical Intuitionism", "virtue-words are a matter of
what is felt in the heart, not of what is seen with the eyes or heard with the ears ... the only access to the moral world is through remorse and approval, just as the only access to the world of comedy is through laughter. But when the real intuitionists say that we do know some facts of moral action intuitively, the term 'intuition' is used here in a specific sense. What is that sense? Let me elucidate, highlight, the sense in which the term is used.

Certainly, the term 'intuition' is an ambiguous term. Its meaning and form are taken differently by different people. Whatever meaning the term 'intuition' may have, Intuitive knowledge has certainly to be distinguished from inferential knowledge. Inferential knowledge is mediate knowledge. Intuitive knowledge is immediate knowledge, i.e. we accept facts for their being what they are, and not because they are in some ways entailed in other facts that we already accept. Both perceptual and intuitive knowledge are, in a certain sense immediate knowledge. It is of course, understood that we use our senses in perception whilst we do not do so in intuition. That is to say, we expect that the object of intuitive knowledge would present itself as a simple quality of a non-natural kind before our mind's eye, as it were, in the same way as a quality presents itself to our visual or any other sense in sense-perception.

I must make it clear that I am not saying that any
piece of human understanding, including the knowledge of virtue, is either perceptual, inferential or intuitive.

I do not agree with the perceptionists when they say that virtue and vice are to be determined through consequences as such. Even in our knowledge of virtues, all the three modes of awareness are indissolubly mixed up. The distinction is a distinction between recognizable aspects of things rather than between the understanding of entirely different types of things. Suppose that we know two people A and B who are engaged in the same sort of job, selling a particular brand of toothpaste. A has all the traits of a good salesman, while B has not. We will then say that A is 'industrious', a quality additional to what we have observed about him. And this is in contrast with the sort of behaviour that is exhibited by B. This is, I say, intuitive understanding, although no doubt it involves perception and inference in some ways as well. That is to say, the difference between industry and lack of industry is a characteristic kind of difference that we recognize directly, and it is not revealed to us merely through our senses, or through a process of inference.

In the same way, a difference between virtue and vice, good and bad, is a characteristic kind of difference that we intuit directly in some features present within our experience. Hence, it is through the actual behaviour, we intuit 'goodness' of man in contrast to the behaviour of an
opposite kind. But the question is: are these the properties of the behaviour concerned in the same way as sweetness is a property of sugar?

If by 'property' is meant a quality of an object like the sweetness of sugar that we perceive by our senses, then whatever is called a 'moral characteristic' is not a property, for by saying that we intuit it, we have already said that we do not perceive it by our senses. It is more complex than a sensible quality, and is not out there in the same way as sensible quality. It is a higher 'order-quality' which is discerned to be what it is because of - or as a consequence of our noticing certain other things about a person's character or conduct. This 'characteristic' is a value point of view - whether instrumental or intrinsic. When we call a man 'virtuous', we are attributing to him a quality or characteristic which is revealed to us not immediately, in the same way as sweetness of sugar is, but when we approach the facts revealed relatively immediately, in a certain way, take up a certain attitude towards them, or look at them from a particular point of view. This is a 'higher-order' quality, it being noticed to be what it is because of other things or qualities observed more directly. And it is in this sense that we discern the moral qualities of an action, and the virtues of human life.

In brief, according to Intuitionists, the distinction
between 'virtue' and 'vice' is not based on any external criterion. There is no 'outer' principle of differentiation of 'virtue' and 'vice'. He sees that 'X is virtuous' or 'Y is vicious', the implication being that 'virtue' is known intuitively as it were and does not require any external criterion.

Of all the theories of Ethics this is intellectually the least satisfying. Pressed with difficulties, the intuitionist can only reply, "This is what I clearly see". No one can prove that he does not see what he says he sees. Using the same tactics any one can reply to the intuitionist that he sees the moral world differently. From each fruitless dialogue it would follow that in moral matters every man is on his own and there would be as many moral standards as there are men with different intuitions. And this state of affairs would be that of subjectivism.

In the second place, neither the moral life nor moral science begins with intuition. It is true that the first principle of action of 'good is to be pursued and vice to be avoided' is known intuitively. But a child cannot apply that principle to moral action until he knows what is morally right and what is morally wrong. He has no intuition of the wrongness of stealing or lying. He reasons to the rightness or wrongness of his actions by comparing them to the instruction of his teachers, but
instruction presupposes norms and criteria. Since moral science is not autonomous but dependent on principle assumed to be true, it does not rest on intuition. The mistake of the intuitionist is that he leaps from the fact that the well-trained adult makes certain of his moral judgements intuitively to the conclusion that the moral process, especially its beginning, is entirely intuitive. Moral knowledge proceeds by reasoning from principles. Do we have intuition of these principles? We have intuition of such principles such as "to each his own", "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" but these are not the basic principles upon which moral science rests. The science rests upon metaphysical principles and of these we have intuition. But we have not, as intuitionists claim, intuition of concepts such as 'moral good', 'moral evil', 'right', 'wrong', 'ought', 'virtue' and 'vice'. We require instruction to learn them. It would seem that the intuitionist has misplaced his intuitions.

It is true that the various virtues of human life are not based upon either calculation or utility, but upon the direct appeal to intuition, to our sympathies and affections. However, the weakness or danger of intuition is that it does not seem to be a safe method of obtaining knowledge of virtues when used alone. It goes astray very easily and may lead to absurd claims unless it is controlled or checked by reason and the senses. William Pepperell Montague, in
his "the ways of knowing" says that "no intuition or experience is so secure that it can elude rational criticism". Intuitionism says that the qualities of character (i.e. the virtues) are to be known intuitively. But there is another way to know one's virtues when they are expressed in conduct. Of course, generally, there is sometimes, found a discrepancy between character and conduct, but, in principle at least, a good character must be expressed in good conduct. But this leads us to a situation in which I can understand the specific virtue that is needed, but ethically it is desirable that I ought not express it. This leads us to the question whether virtues are absolute or relative, or some are absolute and some are relative. Can virtues always be consistent with the voice of intuition? Not necessarily. The alleged voice of conscience is not constant. It is merely a state of mind, which gets transformed according to education and the environment. What is deemed virtuous by one's intuition is considered otherwise by another's. Thus, it is altogether unsafe to rely upon the voice of intuition as final in the determination of virtue and vice. In fact, no section of human society leaves the question of virtue and vice to the uncertain dictates of individual intuition.

Intuitionism assumes that the power to intuit virtue and vice is present universally in every individual, but in actual experience we find no justification for this
assumption. If, like the fundamental principles of Logic, we could discover the fundamental virtues readily admitted by all rational beings, then only the determination of virtue and vice by intuition could be established. Again, one may have intuition about some actions to be virtuous but actually he may not practise them. Hence, an appeal to intuition, conscience or moral consciousness can be of little help in determining the nature of virtue and vice.

REFERENCES

4. Mahābhārata, Śānti, 139.61.