When the student of the general history of ethical thought attempts to determine the characteristic and essential notes of the ethical teaching of the Founder of Christianity, two traits stand out as the most distinctive and best authenticated among the otherwise equivocal and conflicting moral attitudes ascribed to Jesus by the Synoptic tradition. The historian whose task is not conveniently simplified by some theological parti pris does not find it easy, upon the evidence, to be sure whether Jesus taught with emphasis a species of other-worldly asceticism, in which withdrawal from the civic and family life and the rigorous cultivation of individual purity were enjoined for those who were "able to receive" such commandments; or whether, on the contrary, the emphasis was laid upon the natural and social virtues of the common life of man, upon the wholesome enjoyment of the good gifts which the Father in heaven knows how to give even in this world, upon that broad and unstrained human sympathy by which man can best imitate the perfection of a God who makes his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sends rain upon the just and the unjust. These are questions which can be answered only after the New Testament critics have solved the prior problems concerning which they alone can speak with expert authority; and these specialists have unfortunately not yet reached such a degree of unanimity as can give much encouragement to the general historian of ethical ideas who waits upon their labors. But meanwhile two points seem sufficiently well established. The first is that Jesus' teaching centered about a certain "gospel of the kingdom" which was to come. What Jesus meant - in distinction from what the
evangelists understood — by "the kingdom of God" is obscure enough; that it was something extra-mundane, and cataclysmic in the manner of its coming, is possible, though hardly so certain as some recent critics would represent it to be. It is possible, also, that the kingdom was conceived as something that should be brought about solely by divine agency — as something which did not depend upon the moral endeavors of men. But, in any case, it resulted from this element in his preaching that Jesus' ethics was not merely static, not a system of fixed imperatives that took no account of time or events, but was infused with a sense of the relation between human life and action and a larger process at work in history, and fortified by a constant reference to future ends which the present righteousness of men might serve to help realize, or at all events to foreshadow; that, in the words of a recent writer, "the virtues and tasks emphasized by the ethics of Jesus were essentially such as were conditioned by expectancy and enthusiasm," and inspired by the hope of some "divine event to which the whole creation moves." The other element in the primitive Christian ethics — at least if we may regard the Matthew version of the Sermon on the Mount as reflecting in even a slight degree the spirit of Jesus himself — seems equally well established, is its insistence upon the "inwardness" of virtue. That discourse appears in the First Gospel as a somewhat systematic statement of the relation between the morals of the old law and the new demands of membership in "the kingdom of heaven." In successive sections (5:17ff.) the cardinal points of right conduct are set forth in the light of a contrast between that which "was said by them of old time" and "that which I say unto you;" and the contrast in each case consists,
not in the abrogation of any of the old requirements, but in the
translation of them into terms of permanent inward attitudes of feeling
and desire. Where the law forbade certain acts, the new command-
ment forbids corresponding states of the heart; where the one
forbade crimes of violence, the other forbids anger and hatred, and
requires the love even of enemies; where the one forbade adultery,
the other prohibits lustful thoughts and desires; where the one
forbade the breaking of oaths, the other forbids all taking of oaths,
both as implying irreverence towards the sacred name invoked, and
still more as implying a disposition to falsity and deceit in affirmations
not so attested. It is needless to point in detail to the evidence for
the familiar and generally recognized truth that the supremely
distinctive note of the ethical teaching of Jesus (as portrayed by
the Synoptists) is its inwardness.

Now it has often enough been pointed out that, in the first of
these characteristics, Jesus simply developed, and gave a new mean-
ing to, a feature that had already long been characteristic of the most
distinctive ethics of Judaism. The preacher of the "gospel of the
kingdom" was merely the consummator of the reflection and the
work of the Jewish prophets; both the phrase and the kernel of the
thought go back to them, and can be rightly understood only in the
light of this connection. It has, however, rarely been recognized
that the other unmistakable element in Jesus' ethics - the inward-
ness of it - is also historically the product of an evolution; that it, too,
has very definite Old Testament antecedents. If, in his preaching of
a coming kingdom of righteousness, Jesus gave the last and greatest
expression to the most characteristic trait of the ethical spirit of
prophetism, in his demand for integrity of heart as well as of conduct,
Jesus was similarly carrying out the most striking and characteristic
conception resulting from the movement of Jewish thought manifested in the Wisdom writings. Not only has the relation of this feature of the Christian ethics to the Wisdom movement been too little noticed, but also the singularly indirect and gradual character of the course of thought by which the idea of inward goodness was apparently evolved, has been generally overlooked. The present study attempts to bring out the stages of the evolution of that conception, so far as is possible in view of the uncertain date and origin of much of the literary material upon which the study must be based.

A few preliminary words are requisite in order to indicate the results of historical criticism with respect to the Wisdom literature that are taken for granted in what follows. That all the Wisdom writings - including a large group of Psalms having obvious affinities with the thought of this school of religious moralists - are of relatively late post-exilic date is here assumed. It is, however, possible to suppose that a considerable period of time elapsed between the earliest of these writings and that one of them which is both fullest in matter and best determined as to date - the book of Ben Sira (Ecclesiastes) (about 200 B.C.). The question of absolute date is, however, of no great importance for the purposes of this paper. As for the relative dates, I accept, in deference to the authority of Professor Toy, the sequence: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ben Sira, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom of Solomon; the last, however, with its doctrine of immortality, belongs in a class by itself, and does not come into consideration here. There seems, indeed, to be serious reason for doubting whether all of Job, or even the Colloquies of the Friends, constitute the earliest writing of the group; and the several psalms which belong to this body of literature manifestly represent quite different stages in the development of reflection upon the characteristic problems of the school.
This, however, implies little even as to their comparative dates; for an early phase of the doctrine may naturally enough survive and find literary expression at the same moment when some acute mind is finding very different implications in the same fundamental ideas, just as savages belonging properly to the Stone Age are contemporary with Edison and Marconi, and just as our libraries contain theological or philosophical works all bearing the current year as their date of issue, but belonging severally to the thirteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, in their character and contents. In the consideration of the Wisdom books, in other words, it is rather the logical than the chronological sequence that is of importance for our present inquiry; and the former appears to be fairly certainly ascertainable from the differing doctrinal characteristics of the books themselves.

I

It is a historical commonplace that the morality of early peoples is usually based upon an unquestioning acquiescence in established custom rather than upon any sort of reasoned reflection; that it concerns itself with concrete and objective acts, and not with introspective searchings of the conscience; and that it makes the community rather than the individual its unit of reference, regarding the individual as of importance chiefly as a member of a continuing visible society, and enjoining upon him duties and abstinences which often have no relation to his own ends, claims, or desires, but relate rather (when they are not purely arbitrary) to the well-being, increase, and glory of the family, tribe, or nation. It is an equally evident historical fact that, in virtually all races whose development is not arrested, there sooner or later supervenes a sharp and well-defined moral crisis, in which at least two of these traits of the old
morality of custom and communal solidarity are criticized and tend to disappear; when grounds more rational, and less local and accidental, than established conventions are demanded for the prohibitions and imperatives of morality; and when the individual, coming to a sharper self-consciousness, learning to think of himself as an entity having an existence and claims distinguishable from those of the community, begins to ask for individually valid reasons for his social virtues and conformities - begins to inquire what morality, as commonly understood, "has in it for him." This crisis, marked by such an outburst of rationalism and individualism, appears with especial distinctness in the history of the two peoples that have most influenced European thought; and in treating of it in the case of either it is instructive to note both the similarity and the contrast with the corresponding movement in the other race. Among the Greeks (or, more accurately, among the colonial and Athenian Ionians) such a turning-point in the history of morals is found in the period of the Sophistic Enlightenment, and in the resultant early attempts at a moral philosophy undertaken by Socrates and his immediate disciples; among the Jews the like tendencies exhibit themselves in certain of the later prophets, and above all in the Wisdom books. So much, then, is familiar. Upon a closer examination of the movement of reflection which took place at this juncture in Hebrew history, we shall see that precisely the trait which constitutes the peculiarity and the logical weakness of the Jewish Wisdom, as contrasted with the early Greek moral philosophy, was also the indirect cause of that development in Jewish thought by which it eventually reached the sort of profundity - an appreciation of the inner springs of conduct, and a sense of subjective "sin" - that the Greek mind scarcely ever attained. The sages of both the Greek and the Hebrew Aufklärung - the
former doubtless remotely influencing some of the latter - taught, for the most part, an ethics characterized by individualism and rationalism. But the ethical rationalism of the Jewish moralists was, as we shall have occasion to note, far less bold, consistent, and thoroughgoing that that of the Sophists and the Socratic schools. Yet just this failure in consistency it was that led the Wisdom thinkers into certain difficulties, in the attempt to extricate themselves from which they made the discovery of the inner life.

Primarily, both the Wisdom writers, and the Sophists and Socratic moralists, undertook to intellectualize morality. They all alike felt the necessity of reducing virtue to terms of knowledge, and of proving that the bad man was also in some sense a fool. But this undertaking was simply the response of earnest and, for the most part, morally serious minds to a growing individualism which they observed in the community around them. Morality must be intel-

The earlier history of individualism in Hebrew thought is instructively set forth in a paper by Dr. John Merlin Powis Smith, in the issue of this Journal for April, 1906. To Dr. Smith's paper readers of the present study may be referred for a fuller treatment of the transitional period, some of the later ethical consequences of which are here examined.

- because, as it seemed, it must be individualized; because, that is, the individual man was beginning to demand that reasons which both satisfied his individual judgment and had reference to his individual ends and interests, should be shown him, for the rules of life which his ethical teachers prescribed. It is very evident also that, in this phase of both Greek and Hebrew history, there was a general intellectual ferment, a new awakening to almost an intoxication over the charms and wonders of the "kingdom of man's mind;" so that morality in such a period could best and most persuasively be taught by being represented as a sort of cleverness as an art of life based upon insight and skilled judgment. The
method of ethical reasoning which the Greek thinkers - especially Socrates and the Socratic schools - developed, to meet the demands of such a juncture, consisted in showing that morality is a means to an end, which end the individual does, as a matter of fact, desire and seek; so that wrong action becomes a sort of self-contradiction or self-stultification - a choice of means inconsistent with the end at which, in the last analysis, one really, and by virtue of one's essential nature, aims. This necessary end of all rational human volition - this state of being which would satisfy man's will and give him what, at bottom, he always wants - was, of course, variously defined: for the Cyrenaics, and apparently for Socrates, in one phase of his teaching, it was pleasure; for the Cynics, and for Socrates in his most characteristic mood, it was \( \textit{autarkos} \), self-sufficiency, freedom from all desire for, and dependence upon, any goods not completely within the power of one's own unaided will; for Plato it was (among other things) the complete and balanced functioning of the entire nature of man as a rational being. In each case, however, the essence, the compulsive force, of the moralist's argument lay in his appeal to a supposed universal "end of every man's desire." To attain virtue, then, meant to realize with clearer self-consciousness the nature of this end, and to have an insight into the means to its realization; while vice implied, for the same reason, ignorance and inconsistency. Virtue was knowledge, and vice was folly - in both cases with reference to the realization of the implicit ends of the individual's existence.
The method of the Wisdom moralists, though less explicitly defined, was unmistakably the same. They very plainly and constantly take for granted that all men really want one thing—and that thing, in essence, happiness, well-being, prosperity, within the natural term of a man's life. They assume that the best way to

4 Except when they momentarily forget their role as sages, intellectualizers of morality, and are (as rarely happens) carried away by a burst of simple and natural moral or patriotic feeling.

Recommend virtue to men is, not to appeal to the moral feelings or sentiments latent in human nature, but to show the bearing of different kinds of conduct upon the well-being of the individual. The egoistic hedonism implicit in Proverbs, Ben-Sira, and Ecclesiastes is, indeed, obvious and well recognized. "Wisdom is the principal thing," contends the writer of the little ethical treatise which constitutes chapter 1-9 in our Book of Proverbs; and the meaning and value of wisdom (as a quality in human nature) consists in the fact that (3:13f.):

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom,
And the man that getteth understanding ....
Length of days is in her right hand,
And in her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are pleasant ways
And all her paths are peace.

The individualistic reference could hardly be more plainly put than in 9:12:

If thou art wise, thou art wise for thyself,
And if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it;

The use of the term "scorners"(סנרים), as a name for those lacking in wisdom, is characteristic of the writers of Proverbs(cf.also Ps.1). The word occurs in parallelism with "simple ones"(also a favorite Wisdom term in Proverbs and Psalms), with "folly," and the like. Outside of Wisdom writings, a like use of סנרים is, I believe, found only in Isa. 28:22; 29:20; and Hos. 7:5.

or in 8:36, where Wisdom speaks in poetical personification:

He that misseth me wrongeth himself;
And they that hate me love death.

The evil-doer is denounced, less in a tone of moral indignation against
his actions than in a tone of contempt for his folly - for the futility of his aims and the short-sightedness of his devices for procuring happiness. The Wisdom moralist can hardly be said to have caught a vision of the beauty of holiness; but he has realized with great force the profitableness of decency and order in the conduct of life. Most of these writers - especially the author of Prov. 1:9 - lay great emphasis upon the virtue of chastity; the subject, doubtless owing to social conditions in their time, seems to be something of a preoccupation with them. But their reasons for the observance of this virtue are in all cases strictly egoistic and hedonistic. The sexual vices are inveighed against, not from any aesthetico-moral sentiment of purity, nor yet from any consideration of the social importance of maintaining the integrity of the family, but because the "latter end" of such conduct is "bitter as wormwood," because "the house of the strange woman inclineth unto death," and through association with evil women "a man is brought to a piece of bread." Adultery is condemned, hardly at all as a breach of honor and social faith, but as foolish; for the angry husband "will not spare in the day of vengeance, he will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content though thou givest many gifts;" so that the adulterer shall get only "wounds and dishonor." Side by side with this - in Proverbs, Ben Sira, and Ecclesiastes - there is much commendation of early marriage and of the enjoyment of married life - usually in a somewhat frankly sensual tone (Prov. 5:15-19; Eccles. 26: 13-20; 9: 9; 11: 9-12: 1). In general, the purely didactic writers of the Wisdom school,

6 In Eccles.12:1 the reading יחלש is so imperatively indicated by the context that it is difficult to see how any critic can hesitate to adopt it - as does, e.g., Davidson, s.v. Ecclesiastes in Encyclopaedia Biblica. For the usage, cf. Prov. 5:16, 18; Song of Solomon 4:12.

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ability to get along without particular pleasures, counsel also the
prompt grasping of all unharmed pleasures as they fly, the losing of
no opportunity for cheerful enjoyment - though they are ever mindful
that not much of this sort of thing is to be expected, in view of the
meagerness of man's powers, the uncertainty of his fortunes, the
brevity of his life. So Ben Sira (14:14 f.):

Defraud not thyself of the good day,
And let not the part of a good desire escape thee ....
Give and take and beguile thy soul,
For there is no seeking of dainties in Hades.

Thus far, then, the Greek moral philosophers and the teachers
of the Hebrew Wisdom undertake to meet the apparent needs of
similar junctures in the moral development of their respective nations
in the same general way - by stating morality in terms of insight,
and teaching the principles of the art of living well from the egoistic
standpoint. But there remains, from the beginning to the end, a
fundamental difference between the two groups of thinkers. The
Greek philosophers, having defined virtue as consisting in a right
knowledge of the means to some determined end - pleasure, or self-
sufficiency, or self-realization in accordance with the generic nature
of man as a rational animal - thereupon proceeded to reconstruct
the content of morality by the use of the principle which they had
discovered. They undertook the enterprise - both logically and
socially a hazardous enterprise - of boldly revising the established
moral codes, rejecting all requirements not deducible from their doc-
trine of the end, and adding all imperatives which their general
moral criterion seemed to demand. As everyone knows, this revision
of the particular contents of the code of right conduct went at first
to extraordinary lengths in the case of the Cyrenaics, the Cynics, and
even of Plato. But in all this the Greek philosophers showed at
least consistency and intellectual intrepidity. The Hebrew sages were far less bold. They did not say: "Virtue is what leads to happiness, prosperity, and long life; therefore we will discover what courses of conduct lead to these ends, and commend them; while we will set down as evil only those things which can be clearly seen to be unfavorable to the individual's happiness." On the contrary, they unquestioningly took for granted the validity of the customary Hebrew code and of the written law; so that their task became, not that of deducing rules of conduct from the principle of egoistic hedonism, but merely that of showing that the traditional and generally accepted rules of conduct were justifiable from the standpoint of egoistic hedonism. Where, indeed, the law had not spoken, the moralist permitted himself to deduce his particular counsels from his general conception of the end and aim of existence; and the result nowadays was not always such as one can admire. An example of this is the injunction against going surety for a neighbor, in Prov. 6: 1-5 (Ben Sira seems to adopt a somewhat more generous attitude, 29:14); the advice is doubtless that of prudence and commercial shrewdness, but the spirit of it is mean and ungenerous. But, in the main, the Wisdom teacher is content dimly to enforce the recognized system of duties by the hedonic sanction - dwelling, doubtless, by preference upon those virtues (such as industry, peaceableness, chastity, and temperance) in which this egoistic justification is most easily made out. Above all, these sages are (with one possible exception) untouched by religious skepticism; their belief in God's reality and power over human affairs is intense. For them God not only exists, but is an extremely practical reality, to be reckoned with in any practical scheme of life. If the art of living well consists in shrewdly adapting oneself to those facts in the world upon which
one's welfare depends, then it must first of all consist in accommodating oneself to the good pleasure of the Almighty, from whom all prosperity comes. Thus the Wisdom writers never weary of reiterating that "the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom."

There is no discrepancy between the attitude of the Wisdom moralists and the legalistic pietism of those psalmists whose "delight" was "to meditate on the law of Yahweh day and night." All this class of psalms clearly represent simply one side of the Wisdom movement. The authors of them share with the gnomic writers their recognition that the revealed Torah is the primary source of that practical knowledge by means of which a man may secure for himself the best and happiest of possible lives, in a rather mysterious and dark world; they share with them also their silence and relative indifference in regard to sacerdotalism and the ceremonial aspects of the Jewish religion. The glowing praises of the law which these religious poets sing are motivated usually by considerations entirely characteristic of the Wisdom type of thought; the commandments of the law are precious because they "enlighten the eyes" and "make wise the simple" — and because, finally, "in keeping of them there is great reward."

The result of this combination of a thoroughgoing egoistic hedonism with a thoroughgoing acceptance of the traditional and written moral law, was that the Wisdom theorists were from the outset committed to a large and precarious affirmation; namely, that the good man who observes the customary morality and devoutly obeys the divine law, in every case enjoys greater well-being, gets a greater measure of the concrete goods of life, than does the evil-doer — and that within the limits of an earthly lifetime (since no belief in a future life of compensations and expiations had yet arisen). Earlier Hebrew thought, with its sense of the solidarity of the individual with the
family or race, was committed to no such contention; the sufferings of the righteous might be explicable as a punishment for the sins of the fathers, or (in the lofty conception of the Second Isaiah) as a purification of the errant race as a whole through the vicarious suffering of its innocent with its guilty members. Later Jewish thought, after the growth of Pharisaism, likewise involved no such assertion— for it could maintain its theological utilitarianism in morals by pointing to the compensatory rewards of righteousness in another world. But at just this juncture in Hebrew reflection the moral teachers of the nation had involved themselves in the doctrine that a man's possession of the external good things of existence—long life (by which, with their obsessed fear of the grave, they set especial store), health, prosperity, and public esteem—corresponds always to the degree of his moral excellence.

Those writers of the school who, whatever their date, seem to represent the earliest and simplest phase of its doctrines, advance this un plausible affirmation without much appreciation of its difficulties, of its incongruities with common facts of experience. Proverbs 1:9 is full of it; the Friends in the Book of Job frequently reiterate it; certain of the Psalmists insist upon it. Even in these cases it is, of course, admitted that temporary and superficial appearances may be against the doctrine; but in reality it is contended, the prosperity of the wicked is always brief, and serves only to make his fall more bitter; the sufferings of the righteous are likewise brief, and but enhance his final triumph. So the writer of Ps. 37:

Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,....
For they shall be cut down like the grass....
Trust in Yahweh and do good,
And he shall give thee the desire of thy heart....
For evil-doers shall be cut off,
But those that wait upon Yahweh shall inherit the land....
I have been young, and now am old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Or his seed begging bread ....
I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green tree on its native soil,
But one passed by, and lo! he was not.

But it must have very soon become apparent through the experience
of life that this strict proportionality between virtue and earthly well-
being could not at all universally be verified. Yet the moralist did
not abandon his theory. And so, out of this difficulty, this conflict
between the theory and the realities of experience, there arose the
characteristic problem of the Wisdom - which is the problem of the
Book of Job. The nature of that problem should not be misappre-
hended. It is not the problem of evil in general. In all the Wisdom
writings, with the possible exception of Prov.1:9, the reality and neces-
sity of evil is recognized and emphasized. The writers regard it as an
obvious fact - and a fact which, while it throws an intermittent gloom
and melancholy upon their view of life, causes no difficulty for their
theology - that man, being far inferior to his Creator in power and
dignity, can expect at best only a brief, broken, and imperfect felicity.
That "man that is born of woman is of few days and full of troubles,"
creates no special wonder in them. The fact which does seem to them
a difficulty is not evil in general, but the relative distribution of evil
- the fact that often the wicked are seen to flourish proudly while the
man of conscious rectitude of conduct is poor and sick and afflicted
and despised of men. There are few things in literature more
pathetic than the group of psalms which give utterance to the good
man's protestations of the integrity and uprightness of his own life,
and his bewildered distress at the delaying - even to the verge of the
grave - of that merited felicity and that vindication of the wisdom of
righteousness which his faith and his philosophy of life have taught
him to expect. "O spare me!" cries the Psalmist (39: 13; Job 10:
20 f.), with a painful note of urgency,

Spare me, that I may take comfort a little, Before I go hence and be no more.

The difficulty in which Hebrew reflection thus found itself was, in a sense, a gratuitous and illogical one. If the Wisdom thinkers had had the intellectual courage and thoroughness of their Greek counterparts, they might have avoided the difficulty, and retained the consistency of their doctrine, either by descending to what we should regard as a lower plane of moral ideas, with the Cyrenaics or the Epicureans; or by rising to a higher plane, with Plato. If they had rigorously adhered to their conviction that the good is simply that which is profitable for a man's enjoyment during his lifetime, they ought in consistency to have concluded that a course of life which does not appear to yield worldly happiness - even though it be prescribed by what professes to be a divine revelation - is one which a rational man has no obligation to follow. Or if they adhered to their conviction of the imperishable worth and validity of the ethical teaching of the law and the prophets of their race, they should have abandoned their meager hedonism; so doing, they might have reached Plato's profound paradox, that the just man realizes his own good

7 Republic, Book II.

better than the unjust, even though to the unjust life there be added all possible riches and health and power and worldly glory, and freedom from all fear of retribution after death. Yet, as a matter of fact, the inconsistency - or shall one say, the tenacious determination to hold both sides of an as yet imperfectly stated truth - was a reflective one, and singularly fruitful for subsequent ethical and religious thought. For out of the stress of the resultant difficulty there came - by a natural and necessary working of the human mind -
both the tendency toward the belief in a significant immortality, and that new recognition of the inner side of virtue, the more immediate causes of which we have now to consider.

II

The answer which the Wisdom thinkers found for the problem of the sufferings of the righteous and the prosperity of sinners is expressed in their conception of the divine instruction or chastening (τάσις). This conception alone is an important contribution of the Wisdom school to the religious interpretation of life. It is an application to the experience of the individual of an idea which the author of Deuteronomy had already applied (8: 2-5) in the explanation of God's dealings with Israel as a race. The good man suffers because the divine Instructor designs, through the uses of suffering, to increase his goodness.

Whom Yahweh loveth he chasteneth, Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Such is the favorite and the reiterated argument of most of the typical passages dealing with the problem - of the three friends and of Elihu in Job, of several sections of Proverbs, of a number of Psalms, of Ben Sira. Chastening is not an evil, but one of the rewards of goodness; for by means of it the righteous man becomes more completely righteous, and thereby has the greater assurance of eventually gaining in the fullest degree the outward rewards of righteousness. "He that refuseth correction despiseth himself."

8 Prov. 15: 31.

It is this last point which is significant, and is oftenest misapprehended, in the Wisdom doctrine of the divine chastening. No Wisdom writer has any idea that chastening is valuable because of
the intrinsic excellence or beauty of the qualities of character that are gained in the school of sorrow. His ultimate concern is always about the ulterior and external consequences; such qualities are valuable only - or, at all events, chiefly - because they are a part of the practical wisdom which leads to well-being and happiness. The chastening, therefore - this is very clear upon a comparison of all the passages bearing upon the subject - is conceived, not as a training, but as a testing. The good man may have some hidden weaknesses, some "lack of understanding" at a special point, of which he might remain unconscious until too late - until the weakness betrays him into fatal error, and so into misery and disgrace. Both for the testing of the genuineness of the virtue of the professed follower of wisdom, and for the prompt and advantageous bringing to light

9 Cf. Ecclus. 4: 17:
At the first Wisdom will walk with him in crooked ways,
And bring fear and dread upon him,
And torment him with her discipline,
Until she may trust his soul and try him by her laws,
Then will she return the straight way unto him,
And comfort him, and show him her secrets.

Also 2: 12; 6: 18 f.

of the latent imperfections of the man of essentially right character, rigorous discipline is necessary. For both purposes the virtuous man prays for such discipline - to demonstrate the completeness of his virtue, or (in humbler mood) to enable him to see in what particulars it is incomplete. So Job calls for vindication (23:10):

10 God knoweth my conduct, (M),
When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold ....

And so the psalm-writers:

10 Judge me, O Yahweh, for I have walked in mine integrity,
I have trusted in Yahweh without wavering,
Examine me, O Yahweh, and prove me,
Try my reins and my heart;

10 Pss. 26: 12 and 139; cf. also 17: 3.
Or again:

Search me, O God, and know my heart,
Try me, and know my thoughts,
And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way of perpetuity.

Thus the Wisdom conception of the corrective chastening of the righteous (which is developed in the search for a solution of the central difficulty of the doctrine of the school) involves the recognition of the possibility of "secret" or unconscious sins (יָדְנִים) or "ignorances" (ἀγνοήματα, as the Greek version of Ben Sira renders it) - that is, deficiencies of which the man himself is unaware. It must, once more, be observed that the discovery of these deficiencies is regarded as beneficial, not so much because the deficiencies are in themselves inherently evil, as because they are dangerous, the potential causes of greater disaster in the future. Such is the spirit of Ben Sira's prayer for correction (23: 2):

Who will set scourges over my thoughts,
And the discipline of wisdom over mine heart?
That they spare me not for mine ignorances,
And it pass not by my sins:
Lest mine ignorances increase,
And my sins abound to my destruction,
And I fall before mine adversaries,
And mine enemy rejoice over me.

But what is most significant is that these "unconscious sins," to the idea of which the doctrine of discipline so directly leads, are necessarily regarded as inner sins. A man is not ignorant of his outward acts; he knows whether or not he has violated any of the prescriptions of the law. The man who is conscious of his rectitude, as Job or some of the psalmists, may express perfect confidence that his record is clear of any outward wrong-doing. It can only be concerning his inner state of "heart" - out of which wrongful acts may in due season spring - that he can feel the need of any self-revealing discipline.
At this point another feature of the Wisdom writings must be mentioned which serves to reinforce the influence of the idea just noted as making for a recognition of the inward side of character. In their thought about God these thinkers delight above all to dwell upon what may be called the intellectual aspect of the cosmic attributes of deity. Not so much the divine goodness as the divine wisdom is the supreme object of the reverence of the sages — and this means God’s power to conceive and design a world so vast, so complex, and so orderly, and, after creating it, to understand it completely — to know it through and through in all its parts, from the incomprehensibly great to the inconceivably little. In a word, the omniscience of God was the attribute that most impressed these enthusiasts of “understanding” in all its manifestations; and this led them to a vivid sense of the openness of even the most secret and subjective movements of human consciousness to the divine vision.

Sheol and Abaddon are before Yahweh,

How much more, then, the hearts of the children of men.

11 Prov. 15: 11.

So the most nobly eloquent of all the Psalms:

12 Ps. 90: 8.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
Our hidden sins in the light of thy countenance.

Consequently these moralists feel strongly that the obedience which can win men/favor of such a God cannot consist simply in external acts of ceremonial or of moral correctness, but in inner states and qualities; for Yahweh “tries the reins and the heart” and “requires truth in the inward parts.”

One more distinctive (and often overlooked) feature of this connected group of Wisdom ideas needs to be noted, to complete the
picture. The "secret sins" which are discerned by the divine omniscience, and brought to the consciousness of the individual himself by the divine "correction," do not generally seem to be conceived, as they are in the Gospels, as consisting of wrong states of feeling or desire with respect to one's "neighbor;" they are, though inward, yet purely religious sins, and are, indeed, reducible to a single fault - pride, lack of humility before God. The "last infirmity of noble mind," for the Wisdom doctrine, is unmistakably the pride of the virtuous man. And by pride is meant, not the introverted vanity of self-righteousness, but simply a failure in self-abasement before the incomprehensible wisdom of omnipotence. There is, to the end, in the Wisdom thought a considerable residuum of the notion, common among early peoples, of the enviousness of the deity, his jealousy for his own dignity and greatness. The final virtue is humility; the ultimate and unpardonable sin, even in the upright man, is overweening presumptuousness. "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to Yahweh" (Prov. 16:5). All this is clearly shown in the three classic expressions of the full meaning of the Wisdom doctrine of disciplinary chastening. The first of these is the speech of Elihu in the Book of Job, which, whether or not it be (as is probable) an interpolation, is at all events a typical bit of orthodox Wisdom philosophizing. Elihu confidently undertakes an explanation of Job's sufferings; and he does so without impeaching Job's claim to exceptional goodness of life in all outward conduct and in all his human relationships. Job lacks only one virtue - humility; and his bitter experiences have been merely a beneficent chastening for the purpose of making him conscious of this fault.

Then God openeth the ears of men,
And completeth the chastening of them,
That he may withdraw man from his conduct,
And remove pride from man,...
To bring back his soul from the pit,
That he may be enlightened with the light of the living.

So again:

If they be bound in fetters,
And taken in the cords of affliction,
Then he showeth them their conduct,
And their transgressions, that they have behaved themselves proudly.

He openeth their ear to instruction ....
If they hearken and serve him
They shall spend their days in prosperity.

Secondly, the conception is summed up in Ps. 19, a typical Wisdom
psalm

Who can discern his errors?
Cleanse thou me from unwitting faults!

Yea, restrain thy servant from proud thoughts.

14 In vs.13 בְּיָרָס may, of course, be rendered "the proud," i.e., proud
men, its more usual signification; and it is so translated by Welhausen.
But such a rendering wholly breaks the connection between this verse and
what immediately precedes and follows - a connection otherwise natural and
significant. How can "protection from the proud" be equivalent to
"cleansing from unconscious faults," and the last step toward the
attainment of "perfection"? We are entitled, then, to understand the
word to mean "proudnesses," or "proud thoughts" - or "presumptuous
sins" in the language of the R. V.

10 That they may not have dominion over me.
Then shall I be perfect,
And I shall be clear from great transgression.

Finally, the same thoughts find expression in that psalm (51) which
has been said to manifest the deepest conception of sin of any writing
in the Old Testament. The psalm is a cry of penitence, and a prayer
(unequaled, doubtless, elsewhere in ancient literature) for the search-
ing and purifying discipline of God; but the penitent confesses to
no wrong-doing against men, and acknowledges no outward departure
from the duties of the law. It is only when he looks within - and
when, looking within, he considers his attitude toward God, not
toward his fellows - that he seems to find that transgression in him-
self by which he can justify, as a salutary correction, the suffering which he has undergone:

Against thee only have I sinned; thou
It is in thy sight that I have done evil;
That thou mayest be justified in thy sentence,
And blameless in thy judgment ...
Lo, thou desirest truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden part thou wilt make me to know wisdom.
Purge me with hyssop that I may be clean,
Wash me that I may be whiter than snow.
Thou wilt make me to hear joy and gladness,
The bones that thou hast broken shall rejoice.
A clean heart create in me, O God,
And a steadfast spirit renew in me.
Cast me not away from thy presence;

And take not thy holy spirit from me.

15 Wellhausen's translation and explanation of this important psalm, in Haupt's Polychrome Bible, seems to me wise of the mark. With the aid of a gratuitous alteration to the text, vs. 8 is rendered:

"Yea, faith and truth - it is these that thou lovest;
Grant me then insight into the mystery."

On this and the following verses Wellhausen remarks: "It troubles him [the psalmist] to be obliged to acknowledge God's righteousness without understanding the reason therefor. If he could but get an insight into the mystery, his faith would be strengthened." "By the clean heart is meant a joyous spirit assured of the divine favor. The opposite to this is the troubled, not the impure, heart." The whole psalm, Wellhausen thinks, is based on Isa., chaps. 40 ff. "The servant [of Yahweh] prays for the restoration of his good conscience toward God, that he may execute his prophetic mission, the conversion of the heathen." But there is no indication whatever in the psalm of any national reference; its individualistic character is conspicuous. Its affinities, in language and thought, with the pietistic side of the Wisdom school are obvious; in particular, its emphasis upon the divine demand for a "clean" (not a "joyous") heart, and its prayer for an inner purgation of spirit, are (as is shown above) completely characteristic of the Wisdom thought, and have their counterparts in most of the other Wisdom writings. It is a further consequence of Wellhausen's determination to connect this psalm with Isaianic prophetism, instead of with the Wisdom, that he refuses to regard vs. 20 and 21 (in spite of their direct negation of vs. 18 and 19) as an orthodox "tag" added by a ritualistic editor.

Yet deep as is the note of spiritual experience and of religious feeling sounded in this great Hebrew lyric of the inner life, it falls completely into place among the expressions of the characteristic conceptions to which the affirmations and problems of the Wisdom moralists eventually led. It contains no ideas - though it assuredly contains qualities of emotion and of literary utterance - which have
not their counterparts in other Wisdom writings; it is, indeed, only a more intense and profound version of Ben Sira's prayer for the disciplining of his thoughts and the correction of his "ignorances." 16

16 For a similar expression, in the Book of Proverbs, of this idea of the inward-reaching and heart-searching nature and office of the divine chastening, cf. the reference in Prov. 20:30 to stripes "that cleanse away evil and reach the innermost parts of the belly".

The psalmist accounts for his own sufferings, and reconciles them with the justice of God, by the same explanation which is proposed to the recalcitrant Job by the less inspired utterances of Elihu in that dialogue. The whole group of Wisdom writers (external and superficial as much of their didacticism seems) are thus constantly led, as it were by the unescapable dialectic of their own doctrinal position, to this recognition of the possibility of an inner sinfulness which may remain even after all the social duties and outward moralities of the law have been fulfilled. It is a significant fact that the characteristic phrase of a subjective and introspective, but still untechnical, ethics, "a pure heart," is peculiar, in the Old Testament, to the Psalm Book and the Book of Proverbs. And it is in one of the earliest, simplest, and most unquestionably representative of the Wisdom writings (Prov., chaps. 1-9) that there occurs the warning which perhaps, out of all the Old Testament, sounds most like a sentence from the Sermon on the Mount: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

We have seen, then, that the sages of the Hebrew Wisdom were led by their emphasis upon the intellectual attributes of deity, and therefore upon the divine omniscience, to an especially vivid and constant thought of God's knowledge of the "hidden things of the heart" of man. And they were at the same time led by the exigencies of their doctrine of the divine chastening (which was their only solution of the problem of the sufferings of the righteous) to con-
clude that chastening must be chiefly directed, not to the correction of external transgressions, but to bringing to the consciousness of the man of essentially right purposes the deep-seated and unrecognized inner weaknesses, the wrong subjective attitudes, which constituted the final limitation upon the completeness of his virtue, and thereby prevented him from attaining the prosperity, earthly pre-eminence, and happiness which are (according to the primary contention of the school) the necessary consequences of virtue. The inner sins which they had in mind do not seem to have included wrong attitudes of feeling and desire toward other men, but only unacceptable states of heart toward God—and chiefly, the sin of pride. In this the Wisdom ethics conspicuously falls short of the Christian teaching, in which the acceptability of a man in the sight of God is measured by his possession of certain qualities of emotion and will with respect to his social fellows—above all, by the degree of his "love of his neighbor." But, though the Christian ethical doctrine gave to the conceptions of inward goodness and inward sin a wider application, it is clear that it is to the Wisdom moralists that we must look for the first introduction of the note of inwardness in ethical thought; of the emphasis upon motive as contrasted with act; and of the conception of the morally supreme thing in the experiences of life as consisting, not in the deeds done before men, but in the progressive purification of the inner life before the searching judgment of a Father "which seeth in secret." It is, indeed, a strange source for such a historical result, for the Wisdom writers are, as a school, not distinguished for philosophical subtlety; and they are not, by first intention, inclined greatly to introspection. It was, therefore, by somewhat indirect courses, and almost in spite
of themselves, that their reflection was led to so important an outcome. For just this reason, the continuity of development from the first attempt of the earliest Jewish moral philosophers to justify good conduct and obedience to the law in terms of individualistic hedonism, to the Christian demand for thorough rightness of spiritual attitude toward God and man, constitutes one of the most remarkable phenomena in the whole history of the development of ideas. The ethics of Christianity seems to have fused into a single conception two elements which had been separately elaborated by two dissimilar groups of Hebrew thinkers: the prophetic gospel of the coming kingdom, with the insistence upon social righteousness which had always been associated with it in the prophets' teachings; and the Wisdom's recognition of the primacy of "the heart" in morality and of the reality of a sinfulness lying deeper than evil-doing and a possible goodness transcending any outward expression in deeds. The real characteristic of the Christian teaching lies chiefly in the perfection of its fusing of these two. But if we consider them separately, it is perhaps rather the latter element - the factor which was developed out of the Wisdom ethics - that constitutes the uniquely distinctive trait in the influence of Christianity upon the history of morals. The "inwardness" of Christianity is, indeed, a fount from which bitter as well as sweet waters have been drawn; it has been some-

17 This, however, through a neglect of the other element. It does not seem unwarranted to say that the discourses of Jesus bid men look within only for the sake of making sure of the soundness of their attitudes and the genuine self-forgetfulness and sincerity of their purposes with respect to the outward and objective realities of the world of persons in which they live.
tianity has made its peculiar contribution to the world's stock of fundamental moral ideas; it is in this, perhaps, that it has done most to enlarge the range of human experience and to make fuller and values not contained in nor expressible through their deeper men's sense of the worth and significance of their lives—outward activities and achievements.