



A Short History of Ethics

By Reginald A. P. Rogers

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The following questions will serve to give the reader a general idea of the nature of the problems which Ethics attempts to solve: – Is happiness the ultimate end of action? Is virtue preferable to pleasure? How do pleasure and happiness differ? What is meant by saying that I ought to perform some particular action, or to respect some general precept such as the keeping of promises? Am I under any obligation to seek the welfare of other persons, as well as my own? If so, what is the right proportion. between the two welfares? What is meant by "freedom of the will"? Is feeling or reason the right guide to conduct? What do the terms "good," "right," "obligation," "duty," "conscience" signify, practically and theoretically? These problems and others associated with them form the subject-matter of Ethics, which may be described as the science which investigates the general principles for determining the true worth of the ultimate ends of human conduct.

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