

KEY IDEAS OF BENTHAM'S *INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS AND LEGISLATION*

[included in 'Utilitarianism' by John Stuart Mill, ed. Mary Warnock, *Oxford University Press*]

<u>Item</u>	<u>Idea</u>	<u>Page</u>
1.	Our actions are entirely controlled by the influence of pleasure and pain	33
2.	Our moral principles, telling us what we <i>ought</i> to do, are also guided by pleasure and pain	33
3.	Even our speech and thoughts are governed in the same way, and we can't change it	33
4.	The 'principle of utility' judges actions according to whether they increase or decrease happiness	34
5.	The good of the community simply consists of the sum of the happiness of its members	35
6.	Moral words like <i>ought</i> and <i>right</i> and <i>wrong</i> have no meaning apart from the principle of utility	36
7.	It is impossible and unnecessary to prove the principle as it is the starting point for all moral thought	36
8.	Nearly all of humanity have always accepted the principle throughout their lives (at least in judgements)	36
9.	However, many thinking people have (inconsistently!) disputed the correctness of the principle	36
10.	The main objections to the principle of utility are actually based on the principle itself	36-7
11.	Some people seem to find the principle distasteful, but they will struggle to find an alternative	38
12.	Would people want to give it up, and if so, wouldn't they just replace it with an emotional prejudice ?	38
13.	If we ignore consequences and follow prejudice, then can't we each follow our own prejudices?	38
14.	We will then either be dictators (imposing prejudices) or anarchists (never judging anyone)	38-9
15.	In the latter case actions could be both right <i>and</i> wrong, or change over time from one to the other	39
16.	If judgements are based on thought instead of emotion, it is hard to see how to avoid involving utility	39
17.	If any other principles are proposed, it is hard to see what motive we would have for following them	39
18.	The principle of asceticism is always wrong, because it is always opposed to the principle of utility	40
19.	The principle of sympathy and antipathy is sometimes wrong, when it opposes utility	41
20.	Asceticism approves of an action if it <i>reduces</i> happiness, and disapproves if it is <i>increased</i>	41
21.	Utility disapproves of crimes because of the pain caused, but ascetics hate the criminal's pleasure	41
22.	Moralists seem to become ascetics because they hope for honour and respect	41
23.	The moralists are usually just indifferent to pleasure, or aim for it as 'refined' pleasure (e.g. honour)	42
24.	Religious thinkers seem frightened of pleasure, and sometimes actually want to increase pain	42
25.	The educated tend to morality, and the poor to religion, but they combine in contempt for 'Epicureanism'	42
26.	Occasionally moralists intrude into politics (e.g. Sparta), but religion tends to be an individual matter	43
27.	Admittedly religion inflicts misery on non-believers (in wars), but not usually on fellow believers	43
28.	While monks inflict vermin on themselves, no politicians deliberately inflict criminals on society!	43
29.	Disapproval of pleasure seems to result from the muddled idea that it always leads to pain	44
30.	Pleasure can be consistently pursued, but if everyone was an ascetic life would become hell	45
31.	The supposed principle of sympathy and antipathy is just prejudice, and not a principle at all	49
32.	The principle just follows our feelings, and judges by the motto 'punish as you hate'	49
33.	<i>(note)</i> All other moral principles are just disguised expressions of sympathy and antipathy	50
34.	In practice, of course, (especially in the law) sympathy and antipathy tend to support the utility principle	51
35.	Feelings of antipathy tend to lead to a lot of exaggerated, unfair and cruel punishments	54
36.	Also people tend to feel antipathy for local crimes and sympathy for more remote ones	55
37.	The 'will of God' gives no guidance , as we understand and interpret it according to human principles	56
38.	We approve of motives if they produce good effects, even when the motive is a feeling of antipathy	57
39.	But antipathy and resentment can also lead to bad effects, and so are <i>not</i> good motives for actions	57
40.	The only way to regulate feelings of antipathy and resentment is by the principle of utility	58
41.	Pleasure and pain are the only targets for politics, and only they can compel people to behave well	59
42.	Physical sanctions are a result of the ordinary course of nature	60
43.	Political sanctions are imposed on people by those who act as their judges	60
44.	Moral or popular sanctions come from the disapproval of ordinary members of a community	60
45.	Religious sanctions are those caused by an invisible superior being (possibly in a future life)	60
46.	All four types of punishment result in a similar infliction of pain (e.g. a fire, whatever its cause)	61
47.	We can only speculate about religious punishments, but physical sanctions are the basis of the others	62
48.	The value of a pleasure or pain is the same as its force	64
49.	For individuals, evaluate intensity, duration, certainty and nearness of the feeling	64
50.	For actions also evaluate the fecundity (likelihood of repetition) and purity (absence of opposite feeling)	64-5

51. Finally evaluate the extent of the feeling (the number of people involved in it)	65
52. So to evaluate an action, calculate the feeling of a typical person, then sum for all the people involved	65-6
53. Such calculations cannot, of course, be strictly applied, but should be ' kept in view ' when deciding acts	66
54. Such calculations apply even if the feelings are labelled <i>good, evil, profit, convenience, mischief</i> etc.	66
55. This calculation is not weird, but normal human practice (as in estimating the value of a piece of land)	66-7
56. A pleasure or pain is an 'interesting perception', arises from a single cause, and is simple or complex	68
57. Senses, wealth, skill, friendship, reputation, power, piety, kindness, unkindness, memory, imagination, expectation, association, and relief seem to be all of our simple pleasures .	68
58. Senses, loss, awkwardness, enmity, reputation, piety, kindness, unkindness, memory, imagination, expectation, association, unsatisfied desire, disappointment and regret seem to be all our simple pains	68-9
59. Taste, drunkenness, smell, touch, sound, sight, sex, health, energy, and novelty are sensual pleasures	69
60. (each of the simple pleasures and pains is carefully defined)	69-76
61. Hunger, taste, smell, touch, sound, sight, temperature, and ill-health are sources of sensual pain	73-4
62. The only pains & pleasures involving other people (<i>extra-regarding</i>) are benevolence & malevolence	76
63. The law is involved whenever these pleasures are denied or these pains increased	76
64. (<i>note</i>) Complex pleasure (such as a country scene) can be analysed down into simple pleasures	77

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