HARE ON UTILITARIANISM AND INTUITIVE MORALITY*

ABSTRACT. In Moral Thinking R. M. Hare offers a very influential defense of utilitarianism against "intuitive" objections. Hare's argument is roughly that utilitarianism conflicts with defensible moral intuitions only in unusual cases and that, in such cases, even defensible moral intuitions are unreliable. This paper reconstructs Hare's arguments and argues that they presuppose the success of his problematic "proof" of utilitarianism. Contrary to what many have thought, Hare's negative defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections is not separable from his "proof". In the second part of the paper I argue that Hare does not succeed in defending utilitarianism against the objection that it is "too demanding". The final section of the paper sketches a substantially revised version of Hare's reply to intuitive objections. So revised, the argument is independent of Hare's proof and affords a plausible answer to the objection that utilitarianism is "too demanding".

R. M. Hare's Moral Thinking (hereafter MT)¹ is an important book. Richard Brandt describes it as "perhaps the most substantial formulation of utilitarianism since Sidgwick".² Hare offers two main arguments in defense of utilitarianism. The first argument is an elaborate proof that utilitarianism is the correct theory of right and wrong. This is an ingenious and fascinating argument. Many people (including myself) have written about it. But to my knowledge, no one (except Hare himself) thinks that the argument succeeds. Hare's second main argument is a defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections. Many people think that the second argument is at least partly successful.³ But this argument has not received anything like the attention which has been showered upon the first argument. My paper will examine Hare's second argument.

Most intuitive objections to utilitarianism fall into one of the following two categories:

(1) Objections to the effect that utilitarianism permits or requires of individuals actions which we "know" (intuitively) to be wrong.

(2) Objections to the effect that utilitarianism requires of people acts which we "know" (intuitively) to be supererogatory.

In Chapter 8 of *MT* Hare presents an argument which he claims disposes of all intuitive objections to utilitarianism. Hare's argument is roughly that utilitarianism conflicts with defensible moral intuitions only in unusual cases and that, in such cases, even defensible moral intuitions are unreliable. (Hare also formulates a slightly different version of the argument.) I contend that taken by themselves both versions of the argument are question-begging in that they assume that the correctness or desirability of intuitions is determined by their utility. Critics of utilitarianism would object that certain intuitive moral principles are "correct", even if our having them does not maximize utility. The arguments of Chapter 8 are not question-begging in the context of *MT* as a whole. Hare offers an elaborate proof that utilitarianism is the correct principle for "critical moral thinking". If successful, Hare's proof shows that the correctness or desirability of intuitive moral principles should be assessed in terms of their utility. My point is simply that Hare's defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections depends on his problematic proof. Contrary to what many have thought, his defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections is no more successful than his proof. The defense against intuitive objections stands or falls with the proof.

In Chapter 11 Hare defends utilitarianism against the objection that it is "too demanding" by arguing that the ideal intuitive moral principles for most people are not overly demanding. I examine this argument in the second section of the paper. I contend that the argument fails and that, given the truth of act-utilitarianism (AU), the ideal intuitive moral principles for many members of affluent societies would be very demanding. In the final section of the paper, I sketch a revised version of Hare's reply to intuitionist criticisms of utilitarianism. So, revised the reply does not presuppose the proof or any of Hare's meta-ethical views. (The revised argument is of interest apart from its place in Hare's moral system.) My revised argument also affords a better answer to the objection that AU is too demanding than does Hare's original argument.
I. HARE’S ARGUMENT IN CHAPTER 8

I.1. Intuitive and Critical Moral Thinking

Before presenting Hare’s argument, I first need to explain his distinction between the intuitive and critical levels of moral thinking. A person operating at the intuitive level applies fairly simple principles and attitudes imparted to him in moral training (or perhaps formed on his own). Intuitive moral thinking is needed for everyday ethical choices and judgments in which it is inappropriate or impossible to take the time and effort for protracted reflection on the issue at hand. Intuitive moral thinking also helps to free us from the “constant temptation to special pleading” (p. 38).

For example, it is only too easy to persuade ourselves that the act of telling a lie in order to get ourselves out of a hole does a great deal of good to ourselves at relatively small cost to anybody else; whereas in fact, if we view the situation impartially, the indirect costs are much greater than the total gains. It is partly to avoid such cooking that we have intuitions or dispositions firmly built into our characters and motivations. (p. 38)

According to Hare, intuitive moral principles should not be regarded as mere “rules of thumb”; they are not just time-saving devices whose breach should excite “no compunction” (p. 38). There are good utilitarian reasons for bringing up children to feel guilty for violating intuitive moral principles, even when violating those principles produces the best consequences and is justified on act-utilitarian grounds (p. 49). There are sound act-utilitarian reasons to raise children to have a very strong and deep-seated disposition to respect intuitive moral principles and not regard them as mere rules of thumb.

The intuitive level of moral thinking cannot resolve conflicts between intuitive principles; nor can it justify intuitive moral principles (p. 40). These tasks can only be performed at the critical level. At the critical level moral judgments and moral principles must be justified by facts and logic alone; intuitive moral principles cannot be appealed to here. Two important tasks of critical thinking are to select intuitive moral principles and to resolve conflicts between them.

I.2. Hare’s Argument

In Chapter 8 of Moral Thinking Hare presents a systematic reply to intuitive objections to utilitarianism.
Since nearly all these objections employ the same basic move, originating in the same misunderstanding, it may be helpful if I first explain the move and the answer to it in quite general terms. I shall do this in the form of some simple instructions to students, first on how to manufacture objections of this sort, and then on how to demolish them. I hope thereby to forewarn and forewarn them against anybody who tries to waste too much of their time with such objections; the answer to them all is the same, and one exercise in dealing with them is enough. (p. 130)

Hare’s method for constructing intuitive objections to utilitarianism is to find a moral judgment that nearly everyone accepts and then construct an example in which utilitarianism conflicts with that judgment. One can imagine cases in which: (i) an act judged intuitively to be wrong has better consequences than any alternative course of action, or (ii) an act judged intuitively to be right has worse consequences than some alternative act. Hare instructs us to first ask the objector whether he is talking at the intuitive level or the critical level of moral thinking.

Hare proceeds:

Briefly, if he is talking about the critical level, he is allowed to bring up any examples he pleases however fantastic; but at that level no appeals to received intuitions are allowed, because the function of critical thinking is to judge the acceptability of intuitions, and therefore it cannot without circularity invoke intuitions as premises. If, on the other hand, he is talking about the intuitive level, he is allowed to appeal to any intuitions he thinks the audience will agree with, pending their examination by critical thinking, but must be very careful about what examples he uses. For his audience’s intuitions are the product of their moral upbringings (2.2), and, however good these may have been, they were designed to prepare them to deal with moral situations which are likely to be encountered (3.2); there is no guarantee at all that they will be appropriate to unusual cases. Even in the unusual cases, no doubt, the usual moral feelings will be in evidence; but they provide no argument. (pp. 131–132, also see p. 182)

Hare argues that utilitarianism conflicts with received or generally accepted intuitive moral beliefs only in very bizarre or unusual cases. In such cases it is illegitimate to appeal to intuitive morality; we have no reason to suppose that our intuitive moral beliefs and attitudes will be appropriate here (p. 135; also see pp. 98, 113–114, 182).

I.3. A Preliminary Reconstruction of the Argument

Hare’s general argument seems to be the following:

(a) AU conflicts with received or generally accepted intuitive moral principles only in unusual cases.
(b) Received intuitive moral principles are unreliable in unusual cases.

Therefore

Conflicts between AU and intuitive moral principles provide no compelling reasons for rejecting AU as a criterion of right and wrong action.

The foregoing argument requires that premise (a) be understood to mean that there are no common cases in which AU conflicts with generally accepted intuitive moral principles. If Hare were to grant that there are common, ordinary cases in which AU conflicts with generally accepted intuitive moral principles, then premise (b) would leave open the possibility that some sorts of conflicts between AU and intuitive morality constitute serious or decisive objections to AU. In the case of each type of intuitive objection that he considers at any length, Hare takes pains to try to show that the particular case cited as an objection to utilitarianism could never happen in the ordinary course of things. (See for example pp. 134 and 141.) Note also the following passage:

Undoubtedly critics of utilitarianism will go on trying to produce examples which are both fleshed out and reasonably likely to occur, and also support their argument. I am prepared to bet, however, that the nearer they get to realism and specificity, and the further from playing trains—a sport which has such fascination for them—the more likely the audience is, on reflection, to accept the utilitarian solution. I am thinking of their example in which trolleys hurtling down the line out of control have to be shunted into various alternative groups of unfortunate people. I have myself, when helping to build a railway, seen trolleys run out of control, and therefore find the unreality of the examples very obvious . . . . I have done quite a lot of work on serious practical problems in medicine, war, politics, urban planning and the like, and have never come across any actual example in which this kind of anti-utilitarian argument was the least convincing. (pp. 139–140)

But in light of the foregoing, the first reconstruction of the argument does not accurately reflect Hare's views. Hare explicitly rejects premise (a). He thinks that actual intuitive moral principles have often been sharply at variance with AU and that in those cases received intuitions were in error. The intuitive moral codes of English-speaking western societies once justified the enslavement of Africans (p. 130). Hare takes it to be a virtue of AU that it is inconsistent with actual intuitive morality in such cases.
I.4. *The Final Reconstruction and Another Argument*

Hare does not say that AU agrees with received moral intuitions in all "normal" cases. He allows that there are some common cases in which AU conflicts with received moral intuitions, but contends that in those cases received moral intuitions are suspect or unreliable. The argument of pp. 130–135 should be reconstructed as follows:

1. Defensible (correct, "desirable") received moral intuitions agree with AU in all ordinary cases.
2. Incorrect or indefensible moral intuitions are unreliable and cannot be invoked to criticize moral theories.
3. Correct or defensible moral intuitions are reliable only in common or "normal" cases.

Therefore,

4. Conflicts between AU and received moral intuitions do not provide any compelling reasons for rejecting AU.

Hare offers a somewhat different argument on p. 137:

The general lines of the utilitarian answer to this objection should by now be clear. *In so far* as the intuitions are desirable ones, they can be defended on utilitarian grounds by critical thinking, as having a high acceptance-utility; if they can be so defended, the best bet, even for an act-utilitarian, will be to cultivate them and follow them in all normal cases; if he cultivates them seriously, or has had them cultivated for him by those who brought him up, all the associated moral feelings will be present, but will provide no argument whatever against utilitarianism (p. 137).

The argument on p. 137 can be reconstructed as follows:

1. If a moral intuition (intuitive moral principle) is correct or defensible, AU will endorse our having it (or raising our children so that they have it).
2. If our having (or teaching) a certain set of moral intuitions is recommended by a particular moral theory, then those intuitions cannot be used as an objection to the theory.
3. Incorrect or indefensible moral intuitions are unreliable and cannot be invoked to criticize moral theories.

Therefore,

4. Appealing to moral intuitions cannot provide reasons for rejecting AU.
The argument on pp. 130–135 is not consistent with Hare's arguments in Chapter 11. In Chapter 11 Hare defends the following claims: (a) ideal intuitive moral principles for most members of affluent societies do not demand that they make great sacrifices for victims of famine (p. 199–201), and (b) when directly applied AU requires that most members of affluent nations make very great sacrifices for the victims of famine. 5 Taken together (a) and (b) entail that there is a least one kind of common case in which AU conflicts sharply with correct or defensible intuitions (premise 1 denies that there are any such cases). Hare's argument in Chapter 11 follows the pattern of the second argument on p. 137. Most of his other arguments about specific cases (especially cases which concern the prohibitions of intuitive morality, e.g., rules against killing) follow the pattern of the first argument. The differences between the two arguments of Chapter 8 needn't concern us any further, since my criticisms which follow apply equally to both arguments.

1.5. A Problem with Hare's Arguments

In order to employ either version of the argument, Hare needs to impugn certain received moral intuitions and say that they are incorrect or indefensible. Hare judges the desirability or acceptability of moral intuitions in terms of their "acceptance utility" (pp. 50, 62, 113, 156, 203). Correct or "desirable" intuitions are those which AU would recommend teaching to our children. However, many critics of utilitarianism appeal to certain moral intuitions and contend that it is correct for us to have those intuitions, even if our having them does not maximize utility. It begs the question for Hare to impugn those intuitions on consequentialist grounds. Central to many disputes between utilitarians and non-utilitarians is a dispute over which intuitions are correct or defensible. To resolve that dispute by appeal to utilitarian criteria is to presuppose the truth of utilitarianism.

*Taken by themselves*, the arguments of Chapter 8 beg the question against intuitionist critics of AU. However, these arguments are not question-begging when taken in the larger context of the entire book. Hare offers an elaborate proof of his claim that AU is the correct principle for the critical level of moral thinking. One of the functions of the critical level is to choose principles for the intuitive level. If Hare's proof succeeds, then intuitive moral principles should be judged
and selected in accordance with AU. My point is simply that the argument of Chapter 8 rests on the proof. Contrary to what many critics believe, Hare's defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections is no stronger than his very complicated and problematic "proof". If the proof fails, then so do the arguments defending utilitarianism against intuitive objections. If the proof succeeds, then the other arguments seem to be superfluous. If we have a proven that a theory is true then we have ipso facto refuted all arguments which purport to show that the theory is false.

II. HARE ON UTILITARIANISM AND SUPEREROGATION

In Chapter 11 Hare takes up the objection that AU is too demanding. He focuses his discussion around the issue of famine relief. Hare argues that the ideal intuitive moral principles for the most members of affluent societies do not require that they make large sacrifices for people in poor countries. I will contend that Hare's argument fails. Given that AU is the correct principle for the critical level of moral thinking, the ideal intuitive moral principles for many members of affluent societies would require them to make very large sacrifices for people in poor countries.

II.1. When Directly Applied AU is Very Demanding

My later criticisms of Hare assume that when directly applied AU requires that many (most) members of affluent societies make great sacrifices for others. Hare himself concedes this, but I would like to sketch a brief defense of this assumption here. AU requires that one be willing to make large sacrifices for others if the benefits to others outweigh the harms to oneself and one's own connections. In principle, there is no limit to the sacrifices which AU may require. It is plausible to claim that, when directly applied, AU implies that the average member of a rich Western nation is obligated to give away at least 50% of her disposable income for the sake of those who suffer from starvation, hunger, and extreme want in impoverished countries. Those in higher income brackets would be obligated to give an even larger share of their wealth. If 6ne gives less, as almost all of us do, then there are other things that one could do with one's money that would result in
a better balance of good/bad and the utilitarian theory requires that one always do the very best thing that one can do.

This argument rests on three empirical assumptions. (1) The marginal benefit which affluent people derive from spending almost all of their income on themselves (instead of spending only half of it on themselves) does not outweigh the benefit which could be enjoyed by people in poor countries if the money were spent for their benefit. (2) There are organizations to which affluent people can give which effectively and efficiently provide aid to the people in poor countries. (3) Such aid need not contribute to long term overpopulation or economic dependence. I cannot undertake a thorough defense of these three assumptions here. (1) is clearly true. The benefits that my family and I derive from spending large sums of money on luxuries and comforts for ourselves do not compare in value to the very lives of those who could be saved if the money in question were spent for their benefit. The existence of such organizations as CARE and OXFAM provides a strong case for the truth of (2). (3) seems to me to be the most problematic of the three assumptions. (3) raises empirical questions of extraordinary complexity. The fact that these organizations devote a high percentage of their aid to highly successful capital and infrastructure investments provides (some) support for (3).¹¹ Suppose we grant that it is impossible to determine the truth of (3) at the present time. It would still be reasonable for a utilitarian to contribute generously to third-world development. It is reasonable to act so as to alleviate a known and very great evil, even if we thereby run an indeterminate risk of contributing to an even greater evil (famine and destitution on a greater scale in the future).¹²

Here, it might be objected that the only solution to the problems of the third world lies in the development of capitalist or free-market institutions. The extraordinary economic advances made by Taiwan, South Korea and other Asian countries (and the absence of comparable advances elsewhere in the third-world) lend support to this contention. Suppose we grant that the problems of the third world can only overcome by adoption of capitalism. This is consistent with its being the case that foreign aid does a great deal of good at the present time when many third world countries do not have institutions which effectively promote their own economic development. Further, even if all underdeveloped countries were pursuing optimal development policies (whatever those policies happen to be), certain forms of foreign aid would
still (for the foreseeable future) do a tremendous amount of good. There exists enormous physical want and suffering in the third world; approximately 15 million people starve each year. As long as some countries remain very poor (and hunger and starvation continue), I can still do far more good by giving half of my income to CARE than I could by spending that portion of income on myself or my family.

II.2. *Hare’s Argument*

Hare says that, when directly applied, AU has the consequence that members of affluent societies are obligated to make large and onerous sacrifices for the sake of people in third world countries (p. 199). He notes that this consequence is highly counter-intuitive and then questions the intuitions in question.

This is surely a case in which our intuitions would need defence, even if they were confident and unanimous, which they are not. It is a serious question whether we ought to give away our goods to feed the poor throughout the world – one which demands critical thought, not just an appeal to intuition. Our intuitions are suspect; they date from a time when it was not possible to do very much about poverty in remote parts of the world, and they may owe something to a natural desire to insulate our morality from these problems. (p. 199)

But then Hare backs away from the highly counter-intuitive consequences of his view. He says that practical questions about what individuals ought to do must be addressed by finding the correct or ideal intuitive moral principles for each person.

It may be that archangels give away all their goods; and obviously some saints do. But the question each person has to ask himself is what prima facie principles are appropriate for him; and this may depend on his capacities. (p. 199)

Hare then argues at length that the ideal intuitive moral principles for most members of affluent societies would not require that they make great material sacrifices for the less fortunate.

Hare argues that, from a utilitarian point of view, it would be a mistake to impart to people intuitive moral principles which require them to make large material sacrifices for others. He says that it would be a mistake to design an intuitive moral code with the aim of bringing up children to be saints. Such a code would be very damaging to the self-esteem of those who do not have the capacity to be saints (p. 201). It is most important, Hare claims, that intuitive moral principles not
require of people things which are beyond their capacities. He adds, however, that it is also important that those who have the capacity to become saints be encouraged to do so. Thus, the correct intuitive moral principles for us to impart to our children will not require that they make large sacrifices of wealth for others; however, those principles will recommend special praise and recognition for the saintly.

We may grant Hare that teaching a more onerous set of intuitive principles regarding our duties to assist others would have the bad effect of fostering a sense of guilt in those who fail to act in accordance with them. However, from the utilitarian point of view, these harms to the affluent need to be weighed against the benefits to those in need of aid. The teaching of a more demanding set of intuitive principles concerning the obligations of the affluent to the poor can be expected to result in a greater level of beneficence among the wealthy. Hare fails to take into account the countervailing benefits of teaching such a moral code. His argument is seriously flawed here. It is far from clear that the bad consequences of teaching a more demanding intuitive morality would outweigh the good consequences (the good consequences would, after all, include saving people from starvation).

II.3. Given the Correctness of AU as a Principle for the Critical Level, the Ideal Intuitive Moral Principles for Many of the Members of Affluent Societies Would be Very Demanding

According to Hare, the appropriateness or correctness of an intuitive moral code is relative to particular individuals. The ideal intuitive code to teach one person might not be the same as the ideal intuitive moral code to teach someone else. The ideal codes for those rare individuals who have the capacity to become “saints” would be far more demanding than the ideal codes for ordinary people (p. 199). We should grant Hare that some people are such that it would not be best to teach them a very demanding moral code. That is, there are some people such that the bad consequences of teaching them a very demanding moral code (any very demanding code), e.g., guilt, or alienation from morality, would outweigh the good consequences. What is at issue is Hare’s claim that the great majority of people are such that it would be best not to teach them a very demanding intuitive moral code.

Hare does not indicate how much a code would have to demand in order to be “too demanding” for most people, nor does he say how
much the average optimal moral code would demand of most people. Let us stipulate that any moral code which would require a typical American family to donate 20% or more of its total income to charity is very demanding. I will not quarrel with those who would set a lower figure here, since that would only strengthen my arguments which follow. The figure of 20% is sufficiently high to count as “very demanding”. The claim that an American family with an annual income of $40,000 would be obligated to donate at least $8,000 a year to charity would be regarded as patently absurd by most Americans.

Before trying to determine whether or not the ideal moral codes for most people are very demanding, let us first ask whether most people would be likely to comply with any very demanding moral code(s). Let us say that an intuitive moral code is the “best intuitive moral code of those that she would generally comply with” (BIMCGCW) for a particular person (S) provided that: (1) S would generally comply with most of the major provisions of the code (including its requirements for helping others) if she were taught the code, and (2) teaching the code to S would have better consequences than teaching her any alternative moral code which satisfies condition (1). I will ignore the possibility that two or more different codes might be “tied” for “best”. In order to determine the BIMCGCW for my son I must consider all the intuitive moral codes he would generally comply with (if he were taught them) and determine which of these it would be best to teach him. By definition, a person would be able to generally comply with his BIMCGCW. By teaching someone his BIMCGCW one does not risk causing him to suffer a great deal of guilt for falling far short of the standards set forth in the moral code that one has taught him.

What percentage of the population has very demanding BIMCGCWs? Do most people in the US have very demanding BIMCGCWs? The empirical evidence which bears on this question is very scanty. No sizable social group has ever adopted principles which they take to require of them onerous levels of sacrifice for the sake of people of different nationalities and religions in distant places. There are no actual cases in which large numbers of people have been taught such principles and either complied or failed to comply with them. There is no hard empirical evidence which supports the claim that any particular very demanding moral code (for distant people) would or would not be complied with by most people. (Claims about all very demanding moral codes, e.g., the claim that most people would not
conform to any such code, are even less well supported by hard evidence.)

It is at least plausible to suppose that, given the appropriate sort of moral training and motivational support from society, most human beings could follow some sort of very demanding intuitive moral code. The sort of moral training in question would likely involve the following features (among others):

1. A clear unambiguous explanation and justification of the heavy demands of morality. These principles and one’s subsequent attitudes about helping others would possess the special voice and authority of things taught to us by our parents.

2. A concerted effort to make children vividly aware of the suffering of people in the third world and thereby helping them to develop strong sympathy for victims of poverty in the third world.

3. Through example, stories, and the use of praise and criticism to attach paramount status, esteem, and “glory” to doing good, and attach little status to the display or use of personal wealth.15

(A comment on (2).) Moral philosophers have long noted that our “limited sympathy” for others is a very important feature of human conduct – a feature which largely accounts for our frequent failure to display sufficient regard for the interests of other people. Giving our children a vivid awareness of the sufferings of the world’s poor would, other things equal, cause them to do (considerably) more to help the poor. Shelly Kagan conjectures that making ourselves fully aware of the feelings of others might enable us to follow AU.16 I’m not sure that I would go this far, however, I have argued elsewhere that the motivational power of full empathy is quite considerable and that many moral philosophers greatly underestimate it.17

(A comment on (3).) Much of the motivational force of conventional moral codes stems from various kinds of “social pressures” to conform to them. Individuals are often motivated to adhere to conventional moral standards by the desire to gain the approval or esteem of others and the desire to avoid their disapproval.18 The simple desire to conform or be like others is also a very strong motivator for some people. Social pressures provide very strong motivations for most people and
often motivate people to do things that they would otherwise be strongly disinclined to do, e.g., resist sexual desires, desires for revenge, and desires for self-preservation. In battle, social pressures are capable of motivating most human beings to make far greater sacrifices (risking or loosing their lives) than they are ordinarily willing to make. Most psychological studies of soldiers in battle suggest that the desire for the esteem and acceptance of one's comrades is (apart from sheer physical compulsion) the single thing which most strongly motivates soldiers to face death and risk their lives rather than simply run away. If social pressures are capable of motivating people to sacrifice their lives for others, then it would seem to be possible for social pressures to motivate people to make the much smaller sacrifices that would be involved in giving away 20% or more of their total incomes.

Hare would probably object that these observations about social pressure are out of bounds in the present case. The kind of society and general beliefs which would be necessary to create such pressures simply do not exist. The proper question, Hare might urge, is not "would (could) my child conform to a very demanding moral code in a much different (and much better) world?", but rather, "would (could) my child conform to a very demanding moral code in the world as it is?" I concede this objection; we have no compelling evidence for the view that the most effective sort of moral training (unsupported by "social pressure") would be able to motivate most people to comply with a very demanding moral code.

Suppose that we grant for the sake of argument that most people's BIMCGCWs (for this world) are not very demanding. This would not establish Hare's claim that ideal moral codes for most people are not very demanding. For it is possible that most people's ideal moral codes are more demanding than their BIMCGCWs. Consider the case of a fairly average American infant S. Her BIMCGCW is not very demanding, but it still might be best to teach her a very demanding intuitive moral code. Teaching her an intuitive moral code more demanding than her BIMCGCW would involve the following trade off: (1) it would cause her to render more assistance to people in dire need, and (2) it would make her liable to feel guilty for failing to fully satisfy the demands of the more demanding code. In this case, we are weighing the very lives and most basic material needs of the poor against the distress of the affluent. I believe, but cannot prove, that many (most?) US citizens are such that the ideal intuitive moral code
for them would be very demanding and require of them much greater
sacrifices than their BIMCGCWs. My view rests on the following as-
sumptions (these assumptions are sufficient for my purposes):

(1) Many Americans are such that teaching them a very de-
manding moral code, rather than a less demanding moral
code, would cause them to do appreciably more to help
others.

(2) The guilt and distress felt by people as a result of their
failure to act in accordance with very demanding moral codes
which they were taught is considerable, but, in most cases,
it is not sufficient to greatly detract from their happiness or
well-being.

(3) Given the extent of starvation and dire physical need in the
present world, the benefit that would result from relatively
modest increases in charitable contributions by one's chil-
dren outweighs the harm one would cause one's children by
teaching them very demanding moral codes.

I will now offer a few brief observations in support of (1)–(3). (I do
not purport to be offering a conclusive argument in their support.) I
accept (1), because I take the following sort of case to be typical of
many people. S is such that: (1) if she were taught that it was her duty
to give away 5% of her total income she would give away 2%, (2) if
she were taught that it was her duty to give away 20% of her income,
she would give 4%, and (3) if she were taught that it was her duty to
give 50%, she would give 8%.

Presumably, there is a point beyond
which teaching someone a more demanding moral code would not
result in their doing more for others. Let “S's maximum percentage
level” (S's MPL) stand for the percentage of S's income that she is
required to give to charity by a moral code (c) such that: (1) there is
no less demanding code (c') the teaching of which to S would result in
her giving as much or more than she would give if she were taught c,
and (2) there is no more demanding moral code (c") such that teaching
S c" would result in her giving as much or more than she would give if
she were taught c.

Question: “what percentage of people in the United States have
MPLs over 20%?” Perhaps most people would completely despair of
doing what they think they ought to if they came to believe that they ought to give away 20% (or more) of their income. (I'm not at all sure that I should grant this. I grant it here in order to show that the assumptions which I need to make for the purposes of my argument are very weak and very plausible.) It is reasonable to suppose that an appreciable number of US citizens (at least 1 in 20) have MPLs over 20%. (This is an extremely conservative estimate.) This assumption would be sufficient for the purposes of my argument. Together with assumptions (2) and (3) it would imply that there are millions of Americans whose ideal intuitive moral principles are very demanding. In assuming that at least 1 in 20 Americans have MPLs over 20%, I am assuming that the following is the case:

At least one in twenty Americans is such that there is a very demanding moral code (c) such that if she had been taught that code, then she would do appreciably more to help others than she would if she had been taught a less demanding moral code.

Premise (1) describes me and many people I know. We hold high ideals but fall very far short of living up to them. Our ideals still prod us to act in certain ways. We don't become completely alienated from morality as a result of our shortcomings. In order to defend premise (1), I only need to claim that a relatively small percentage of people are such that there is one possible way in which they could have been given moral training which would have resulted in their general or partial compliance with a very demanding moral code.

I would appeal to my own case in defense of (2). I am a utilitarian who falls very far short of doing as much to help others as I believe I ought to. I am at least as susceptible to guilt as the average person. But the guilt I feel about this does not dramatically detract from my personal happiness. It does not alter the fact that I am, on balance, a happy person at this time in my life. This guilt is by no means the greatest source of unhappiness in my life at present. It detracts less from my happiness than would the financial sacrifices which I believe I am obligated to make. (Much the same seems to be true of other utilitarians with whom I am acquainted.) If the world were very different and there were very strong social pressures for us to follow AU or some other very demanding moral code then the guilt, shame, and disapprobation from others, that I would feel if I continued to do so little for others would be very great indeed. Very likely, it would
destroy my own personal happiness. However, in that case, those very pressures would make it likely that I would give far more than I now do.23

Premise (3) seems to be clearly true, given the plausibility of (1) and (2). Suppose we grant that many Americans (at least 5%) are such that teaching them a very demanding moral code (as opposed to a considerably less demanding code) would result in their giving away an additional 1% or 2% of their total family income. (The figure of 1% or 2% is conservative.) For the average American family, this would represent about $400 to $800 each year. Such a sum is often enough to save several lives. These benefits far outweigh the harm (guilt) that one is likely to cause by teaching someone a very demanding moral code.

The foregoing arguments are highly speculative. If not sufficient to establish the claim that the ideal intuitive moral codes for many members of affluent societies are very demanding, they at least show that this claim is plausible. They also cast further doubt on Hare’s arguments to show that ideal intuitive moral codes for ordinary people are not very demanding.

III. TOWARDS A MORE PLAUSIBLE REPLY TO INTUITIVE OBJECTIONS TO AU

In spite of the foregoing criticisms, I believe that Hare’s defense of AU against intuitive objections is an extremely important contribution to moral philosophy. With modifications, it can constitute a plausible reply to intuitive objections to AU, independently of any commitment to Hare’s controversial proof and meta-ethical views. I will briefly sketch the modified version of Hare’s first argument in Chapter 8. This argument is (a) independent of Hare’s proof and does not presuppose the truth of AU, and (b) does not commit us to Hare’s view that the appeal to moral intuitions has “no [my emphasis] probative force” in moral arguments (MT, p. 12). The revised argument provides a plausible defense of AU against all of the standard intuitive objections and it constitutes an improvement on Hare’s treatment of problem of supererogation in Chapter 11. The argument which I outline below is a reply or answer to standard intuitive objections to AU. I am not trying to provide reasons for thinking that AU is true. I only claim that (alleged) conflicts between AU and received moral intuitions do not provide good reasons for thinking that AU is false or mistaken.
III.1. A General Strategy

Intuitive objections to AU presuppose that received or generally accepted intuitive moral principles carry some presumption of truth or correctness. Hare denies that received moral intuitions have any "probative force". However, I think that utilitarians can (and perhaps should) allow that moral judgments entailed by generally accepted intuitive moral principles carry some presumption of truth when they deal with common or ordinary cases. Given this presumption of truth, a utilitarian must do one of the following in cases in which it is alleged that AU conflicts with generally accepted intuitive moral principles:

1. Deny that AU really conflicts with generally accepted intuitive moral principles in the case in question.
2. Show that the case in which the conflict occurs is unusual.\textsuperscript{24}
3. Impugn the truth or correctness of the intuitive moral judgments or principles being appealed to, i.e., give reasons for thinking that the ordinary presumption of truth or correctness does not hold.

Hare devotes a great deal of attention to examining specific cases in which AU is alleged to conflict with the general negative prohibitions of intuitive morality, e.g., rules against lying and killing. He protests strongly against objections stated in abstract terms and insists on detailed concrete examples. When we fill out the details of such cases we are likely to either make it doubtful that AU really conflicts with the intuitive principles in question or else make the cases so unusual that they are unsuitable for consideration at the intuitive level. There are a number of possibilities. (a) The initial description of the case may have omitted some likely bad consequences of violating the intuitive prohibition. A more richly described case may include bad consequences of violating the prohibition and cast into doubt the claim that AU requires (or permits) the agent to violate the prohibition. For example, a superficial description of the consequences of lying might omit \textit{indirect bad consequences} such as undermining trust between people. (This is an instance of reply (1) from above.)\textsuperscript{25} (b) Alternatively, when we describe a situation in more detail we may no longer have confidence in our initial intuitive judgments that the prohibition should be observed. Suppose, for example, that we begin with an abstractly defined case in which lying is claimed to be wrong. The utilitarian will
insist on a more detailed account of the case before conceding that her theory permits lying in this case. In order to create a case in which AU clearly justifies lying we may have to introduce so many bad consequences of not lying (or good consequences of lying) that it no longer seems clear that conventional intuitive morality would prohibit lying in this case. (This is another instance of reply (1) from above.) (c) The anti-utilitarian who attempts to avoid the foregoing problems is likely to construct cases so unusual as to render our intuitions suspect (reply (2)). (d) There are undoubtedly some common cases in which AU conflicts with conventional intuitive moral principles. For example, AU is inconsistent with the intuitive moral principles forbidding marriages between blacks and whites which were once generally accepted in the United States. But in this case the intuitive moral principles were suspect because they were based on false beliefs about the "inferiority" of blacks (reply (3)).

I think that at least one of these lines of argument is plausible in the great majority of cases in which it is alleged that AU permits or requires actions which we intuitively know to be wrong. Of course, there is no a priori reason to think that one of these arguments will work in every case. The most that a utilitarian can hope to offer is a piecemeal defense in response to particular objections as they arise. For my part, I know of no objection to the effect that AU permits or requires wrong actions which I consider to be decisive.

The first and the third strategy are not circular in the way that Hare's reply to intuitive objections is circular, i.e., (1) and (3) do not presuppose the truth of AU. To show that AU does not have certain consequences which is is commonly alleged to have is not to presuppose the truth of AU. To make claims about what follows from a theory is not to assume that the theory is true. Similarly, it is possible for a utilitarian to attack certain moral intuitions without assuming that AU is true. See III.2 for an example of an argument of type (3) which does not presuppose the truth of AU. Strategy (2) raises special problems which will be addressed in below in III.3.

III.2. Famine Relief Again

As we saw in Part II, the case of famine relief raises special problems for Hare. The ideal intuitive moral codes for many people are far more demanding than Hare allows. AU and conventional morality are too
sharply opposed on this question for Hare's arguments to work. If received moral intuitions carry some presumption of being true, then act-utilitarians must give reasons for thinking that our received intuitions about our duties to help others are in error. I would suggest two general lines of argument.

First argument. The view that we are not obligated to make large sacrifices for the benefit of the poor and destitute of the world is a self-serving view. We should be suspicious of those who say that they are not required to do things which are contrary to their own self-interest. Perhaps their concern for their own welfare has blinded them to certain morally relevant considerations. More importantly, the judgment that we are not obligated to make large sacrifices for others is not impartial. Members of rich nations know that it would be contrary to their own self-interest for them to follow utilitarian principles with regard to questions of aiding others and they are, therefore, sorely tempted to say that doing so is not their duty. But the views of people in poor countries who might be more disposed to accept utilitarian principles would seem to be equally partial. How can one judge such matters impartially? Complete impartiality requires that one not be influenced by any beliefs about what would or would not promote one's own personal interests. Impartiality can be assured by ignorance of one's own particular situation or place in the world. (This, of course, is the idea behind Rawls' veil of ignorance.) It is possible that one could possess knowledge about what would promote one's own interests without this influencing one's moral judgments. But humans are notoriously prone to self-deception about such matters and it is hard see how one could ever know that one was being impartial in making judgments about cases in which one's own personal interests were involved and in which one knew how they were involved. In order to obtain a more impartial perspective on the question of our obligation to aid others, one should ask the question: "What system of foreign aid (if any) would I want people to follow, if I were ignorant of my own personal economic situation?" It might help to imagine that one will be reborn in a few minutes and that one will have an equal chance of being any one of the infants born in the world today. It is at least arguable that from such a standpoint most of us would prefer that utilitarian principles be used to determine the distribution of the world's wealth.

This reply leans heavily on the idea that the moral point of view is, or should be, an impartial point of view. Utilitarians cannot defend
their theory's demand of impartial benevolence, without invoking the 
idea that impartiality is constitutive of the moral point of view. I cannot 
undertake a defense of the claim that the moral point of view is or 
should be impartial. However, I should like to note that many important 
non-utilitarian theories such as those of Kant and Rawls also make 
impartiality constitutive of the moral point of view. To assume that 
moral judgments or the moral point of view should be impartial is not 
to assume that AU is true.

Second argument. In the case of questions concerning our obligations 
to members of impoverished nations, a utilitarian can argue that those 
who say that we are not obligated to make significant sacrifices for the 
world's poor are ignorant of the nature and extent of poverty in the 
world. Members of wealthy societies don't know what it feels like to 
starve or to be utterly destitute. Most of us are ignorant about such 
matters, this knowledge is relevant to (and essential for) thinking about 
the moral questions at issue. Our everyday intuitive moral judgments 
about these matters are called into question, since they are based upon 
an insufficient grasp of relevant facts. The crucial question here is 
whether or not our common sense beliefs are dependent on this kind 
of ignorance. It would seem that they are. We could not picture the 
misery and degradation of the world's poor in excruciating detail (know-
ning vividly what it would be like to starve to death, to see one's own 
children die from want of a few pennies worth of penicillin, to sleep in 
the rain and filth, etc.) and still persist in the view that we are obligated 
to do little, if anything, for them.

III.3. Unusual Cases: Strategy (2)

Strategies (1) and (3) are relatively non-controversial. To the extent 
that AU is consistent with generally accepted moral intuitions, those 
intuitions cannot constitute an objection to AU. Similarly, the fact a 
moral theory conflicts with intuitive principles is not a serious objection 
to the theory unless those principles are defensible. However, it is not 
obvious why the utilitarian can dismiss conflicts between AU and (well-
founded) intuitive moral principles in unusual cases. The second strat-
ey needs to be defended. Let me offer two brief observations in 
support of the view that moral intuitions are unreliable in unusual 
cases.

First, this view is quite plausible given Hare's general account of the
distinction between the critical and intuitive levels of moral thinking. Critical thinking constitutes the ultimate criterion for the truth or adequacy of moral judgments. According to Hare, the limitations of human nature make it impossible (or unwise) for humans to employ critical moral thinking to deal with everyday moral problems. The purpose of the intuitive level of moral thinking is to provide some kind of "working approximation" to the results of ideal critical thinking (p. 46). A good or adequate set of intuitive principles need not be consistent with the results of (ideal) critical thinking in unusual cases. The most that can be expected is that it reasonably approximate the results of critical thinking in ordinary cases. A poor or inadequate intuitive moral code cannot relied upon at all. [There is a need to distinguish between the critical and intuitive levels of moral thinking on almost any plausible ethical theory. There is no plausible theory of right and wrong which lends itself easily to direct application in all circumstances. To presuppose the need for different levels of moral thinking is not to presuppose the truth of utilitarianism.]

Second argument. [This is my argument not Hare's. Indeed, this argument is inconsistent with Hare's views about the status of received moral intuitions.] I want to use the assumption that conventional or generally accepted intuitive moral principles are not reliable when they are applied to unusual cases as part of defense of AU against intuitive objections. The objection to which I am replying presupposes that the judgments endorsed by conventional intuitive moral codes carry some presumption of truth (at least in ordinary cases). We need to ask why the judgments of conventional intuitive morality should carry any presumption of truth. Both Sidgwick and Ross defend this view by appealing to the idea that conventional moral codes embody the "collective wisdom and experience" of human societies.28 Suppose that a conventional moral code implies (and is generally known to imply) that a certain act x is wrong in (common) circumstances c. This feature of the code has remained unaltered for a long period of time. Everyone knows that the code implies this and hardly anyone has wanted to revise the code for this reason. This feature of the code can be said to have withstood the test of time. The society has shown itself to be willing to "live with" this feature of the code. Suppose that a conventional intuitive moral code implies that act y is wrong in (extremely rare) circumstances c2 and that hardly anyone has ever recognized this feature of the code. In this case it no longer seems plausible to say that
the collective wisdom of the society endorses this consequence of the moral code or that it has withstood the test of time. When the consequence is brought to light, the society may decide that it is unwilling to live with it and revise its intuitive moral code.

NOTES

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1 Unless otherwise indicated all page numbers refer to MT.


3 Cf. McMillican (1983, pp. 207–211) and Sher (1984, pp. 179–184). Given the general perception that the negative defense of utilitarianism against intuitive objections is more successful and more promising than the positive proof, it is very puzzling that the vast majority of work on MT focuses on the proof rather than the negative defense. I can only conjecture that more philosophers have written about the proof because a far greater number of philosophers think that they have formulated decisive criticisms or refutations of the positive proof than think that they have formulated decisive criticisms of the negative defense against intuitive objections.

4 Cf. Smart (1972, p. 43).

5 Cf. MT, (pp. 163–164) where Hare claims that in practice one could never be in a position to know that punishing an innocent person would have the best consequences. Here, Hare seems to be applying excessively rigorous standards of evidence for conjectures about the likely consequences of possible courses of action. If act-utilitarianism is to be at all workable for guiding action, we need to be able to do what we reasonably judge will have the best consequences, even though we don’t know for certain that it will have the best consequences.

6 Also see Hare (1985, pp. 11–12). Hare gives pointed criticisms of several intuitive moral principles which were once generally accepted.

7 Here, it might be objected that Hare’s examples of conflicts between AU and received moral intuitions all involve past intuitive moral codes. They do not count against the claim that Hare believes that our present intuitive moral code is consistent with AU in all ordinary cases. This objection can be answered by noting the following passage on p. 130:

I have heard this kind of objection based on premisses like ‘Surely any theory is absurd which makes cruelty to animals as wicked as the same degree of cruelty to humans’; and no doubt in earlier centuries ‘blacks’ and ‘whites’ would have done as well.

Hare implies that our present received moral intuitions about the rights of animals might
be greatly in error. He does not claim that his society has succeeded in perfecting an ideal intuitive moral code.

Hare writes, "... if utilitarianism is correct, we always have a duty to do what will maximize the furtherance of the interests or the satisfaction of the prudent preferences of our fellow men and ourselves considered impartially. ... And if this is translated into practical terms it seems to mean that I have a duty (not merely that it would be praiseworthy) to give away all my worldly goods until I have just enough to keep me on a level with the most poverty-stricken Bangladeshis" (p. 199).

9 See Carson (1968) and Feldman (1984) for criticisms of Hare's proof.

10 Most of those who claim that AU is true (or who call themselves 'act-utilitarians') mean by this roughly what Hare means when he claims that AU is the correct principle for the critical level of moral thinking. Almost all act-utilitarians grant the need for something like what Hare describes as the intuitive level of moral thought. Few, if any, act-utilitarians regard act-utilitarianism (alone) as the best principle for the intuitive level of moral thinking. Act-utilitarians take the principle of utility ('an act is right provided that no possible alternative act would result in a more favorable balance of good to bad'), to be the correct criterion of right and wrong. But, qua act-utilitarians, they are not committed to thinking that the principle of utility is a good decision procedure for moral agents to use to guide their everyday choices.


12 I am indebted to Peter Singer for this line of argument.

13 Hare (1988, pp. 225–226); also see MT (pp. 199–200).

14 One can make a good case for saying that Christian morality is "very demanding". But most Christians do not take it to be very demanding in our present sense.

15 I am convinced that the pursuit of status and the approval of others do far more to motivate the pursuit of wealth (and the consequent disinclination to share wealth) then any intrinsic desire to possess wealth or use the luxuries which it affords one.


18 Consider the following scenario. Suppose that all of my friends and associates gave 50% or more of their income to international development agencies and other charities. They know that my wife and I do not give nearly this much and strongly disapprove of us on this account. Those who know us can infer that my wife and I give very little to charity from the fact that (with our present jobs) we own a house and a new automobile, etc. It is likely that the shame, guilt and disapproval that we would feel in that case would motivate us to do considerably more than we do now.

19 See Dyer, (1985, Chap. 5) and Keegan (1978, pp. 70–72). Dyer and Keegan both discuss General S. L. A. Marshall's classic work, Men Against Fire (William Morrow, 1947), which is widely regarded as the most thorough and well-researched study of the psychology of soldiers in battle. On pp. 71–72 Keegan quotes the following passage from Marshall: "When a soldier is... known to the men who are around him, he... has reason to fear losing the one thing he is likely to value more highly than life — his reputation as a man among other men". Also see Fussell (1989, pp. 4, 274). Many war novels, Crane's Red Badge of Courage in particular, give a convincing depiction of the strength and paramount importance of 'peer pressure' for soldiers in combat.

20 In an eloquent and persuasive conclusion to The Limits of Morality Shelly Kagan
conjectures that, if fully marshalled in support of a demanding moral code, social pressures of various kinds, together with a fully vivid awareness of the needs and sufferings of people in need, would succeed in motivating most people to make much greater sacrifices than they presently make and that they might even motivate most people to make the sorts of sacrifices that would be required of them by AU.

21 Facts about what my child would do in a very different kind of world are irrelevant to answering the practical question "what kind of moral code should I teach my child (in this world)?" My observations about the role which social pressures could have in motivating people to follow very demanding moral codes are of considerable relevance given certain versions of rule utilitarianism. Consider ideal (acceptance) rule utilitarianism (IARU) defended by Richard Brandt in a number of important publications. According to IARU, an act is morally right provided that it would be permitted by the moral code whose general acceptance by the agent's society would have better consequences than the general acceptance of any alternative moral code. When assessing the consequences of the general acceptance of a set of moral principles one can assume the existence of considerable social pressures to conform with those principles. It is quite likely that a very demanding moral code would be generally complied with in a society in which the code was generally accepted and in which there was strong pressure on individuals to comply with the code. I think it likely that IARU would turn out to be a very demanding principle in practice. This is not ruled out by the sorts of considerations to which Hare appeals. For an interesting defense of the opposite view see Hooker (1990, pp. 67–77); also see my reply (Carson, 1991) and Hooker's rejoinder (Hooker, 1991).

22 Referring to specific percentages in this manner oversimplifies many issues. When I refer to "teaching someone that she should give away x%", I don't just mean teaching some very crude principle "everyone in this society should give away at least x%" or "every family with such and such income and such and such needs should give away x%". Teaching a person more abstract principles in such a way that the person will likely interpret them to mean that (in her current circumstances) she is required to give away x% also counts as a case of "teaching someone that she should give x%".

23 This thought experiment illustrates the importance of shame as a motivator. For most of us the thought that something would be wrong and that it would cause others to think ill of us (or cause them to think ill of us if they really knew what we were doing) moves us far more than the mere thought that something is wrong. This reminds us that morality is a social institution with strong social sanctions. Most of us are far less inner-directed than we would like to believe. Those relatively rare individuals who are moved to do difficult things by private conscience unsupported by the sanctions of conventional morality seem all the more admirable in this light.

24 In order for this line of argument to work as a defense of AU, we need to have reasons for thinking that received moral intuitions cannot be trusted in unusual cases. I will defend this claim below (III.3).

25 Hare stresses that his version of AU assesses the rightness or wrongness of actions in terms of their 'expected utility' (p. 113). This strengthens the first strategy. Cases in which violating the intuitive prohibitions of conventional morality has the greatest expected utility are even less common than those in which it has the greatest actual utility.

26 I have argued elsewhere that the implications of these theories for the issue of aiding others are essentially the same as those of utilitarianism. See, Carson (1981).
Here, it might be objected that throughout most of human history wealthy individuals have observed the suffering of the poor on a casual everyday basis. (This is still the case today in many poor countries.) But few of these rich people have come to think that they are obligated to make large sacrifices for others and many have not been particularly moved by the plight of the poor. This objection raises empirical issues which I cannot begin to settle here. My initial response is to observe that there is a difference between witnessing another person's suffering at close quarters and being vividly aware of what that suffering feels like. For the purposes of my argument, I need to claim that many people would alter their present views about how much they are obligated to help others if they became vividly aware of the suffering of the world's poor. (My argument is an attack on 'our' present received moral intuitions.) The fact that many wealthy people observe the suffering of the poor, but remain unmoved does not show that there are many wealthy people who vividly represent the suffering of the poor to themselves but remain unmoved [that would be a serious objection to my view]. This reply might prompt the further objection that if my conjecture (about how many people would react if they fully understood the suffering of the poor) were true, we should expect to see far more concern for the poor than we, in fact, observe. Or, to put the objection another way, if many of us would be deeply moved if we were to represent the suffering of the poor, why are so few of us moved? I think that the answer to this is that very few (if any) of us fully and adequately represent the suffering of the poor to ourselves. Reflection on what it would be to represent the feelings of others to oneself with perfect vividness shows that we typically fall far short of this ideal (Cf. Carson 1984, pp. 58–65, 98–100). Few of us adequately represent or understand the feelings of those near and dear to us. It is even more rare for someone to represent vividly to herself the feelings of people who are neither friends nor family members. Many people have little or no interest in understanding the feelings of strangers and casual acquaintances. Some people are positively averse to doing so – they harden their hearts to the sufferings of those who are not friends or family.

Cf. Ross (1939) writes:

The existing body of moral convictions of the best people is the cumulative product of the moral reflection of many generations, which has developed an extremely delicate power of appreciation of moral distinctions; and this the theorist cannot afford to treat with anything other than the greatest respect. (p. 41)

Cf. Ross (1939, pp. 174–175). Also see Sidgwick (1966):

The utilitarian must repudiate altogether that temper of rebellion against the established morality, as something purely external and conventional. . . . He will naturally contemplate it with reverence and wonder, as a marvelous product of nature, the result of long centuries of growth, showing in many parts the same fine adaptation of means to complex exigencies as the most elaborate structures of physical organisms exhibit: he will handle it with respectful delicacy . . . . (p. 475–476)
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