In the last chapter we found that when Hutcheson's theory of motivation is combined with his moral sense doctrine, the result is the appearance of paradoxes, puzzles, and, in general, an inadequate account of how moral judgments influence action. The examination of Hutcheson thus far has been directed mainly to three works, namely, the Inquiry, the Essay, and the Illustrations. Since these are the works which had most historical influence, it seems reasonable that they should be emphasized in any study of Hutcheson.

However, Hutcheson's later works are of considerable interest for our study because of the fact that they show evidence that he was aware of and made attempts to remedy some of the very deficiencies in his earlier position to which we have devoted attention. The later works with which we shall be mostly concerned are the Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy and the System of Moral Philosophy. Little of added interest is to be found in the Metaphysicae Synopsis Ontologiam et Pneumatologiam complectens, the only other work of any magnitude written after the Illustrations. Comments on Hutcheson's later doctrine will be restricted to those aspects of it which have to do with our main topic, the moral sense and how it relates to motivation.

The most noteworthy differences between Hutcheson's earlier and later positions have to do with alterations in his description of the nature and function of the moral sense. In his later works the moral sense is still described as the source of a peculiar kind of pleasure, but, in addition, it is now referred to by various other terms. In the Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy, the moral sense is often referred to by the term "conscience" and is described as serving to "regulate the highest powers of our nature." ¹ In the System, the moral sense is sometimes referred to

¹ Hutcheson, Short Introduction, p. 16.
as the "faculty of perceiving moral excellence" and in this work Hutcheson maintains the following:

This moral sense from its very nature appears to be designed for regulating and controlling all our powers. This dignity and commanding nature we are immediately conscious of, as we are conscious of the power itself.

In such passages as the above, the influence of Butler's doctrine of conscience and of his claim that conscience has a distinctive authority is clearly evident, although it should be remarked that Hutcheson, like Butler himself, was often preoccupied with the origin of this doctrine in the Stoics.

Looking more closely into these changes in Hutcheson's position we find that his references to a "faculty of perceiving moral excellence" are in a context which suggests that virtue is a quality. In some passages this is rendered explicit. For example, he maintains at one point the following:

... when we admire the virtue of another, the whole excellence, or that quality which by nature we are determined to approve, is conceived to be in that other; we are pleased in the contemplation because the object is excellent, and the object is not judged to be therefore excellent because it gives us pleasure.

In Chapter II we presented in detail arguments to the effect that this sort of passage simply cannot be rendered consistent with earlier views according to which to perceive moral excellence is simply to feel approval. Now we might hope that Hutcheson would follow up the above passage with a precise and sustained analysis which would clarify his position. But no such analysis is forthcoming. Hence we are left with indications of a naively realistic theory of the moral sense which, as we maintained earlier, is nevertheless entirely foreign to his general epistemological outlook.

Hutcheson's position is equally troublesome as regards the "Butlerian" characteristics now ascribed to the moral sense. In a letter following his reception of Hutcheson's *Short Introduction*, Hume addresses Hutcheson as follows:

You seem here to embrace Dr. Butler's opinion in his Sermons on Human Nature; that our moral sense has an authority distinct from its force and durableness, and that because we always think it ought to prevail. But this is nothing, but an instinct or principle, which approves of itself upon reflection; and that is common to all of them.

---

3 Ibid., I, 61.
4 Ibid., I, 54.