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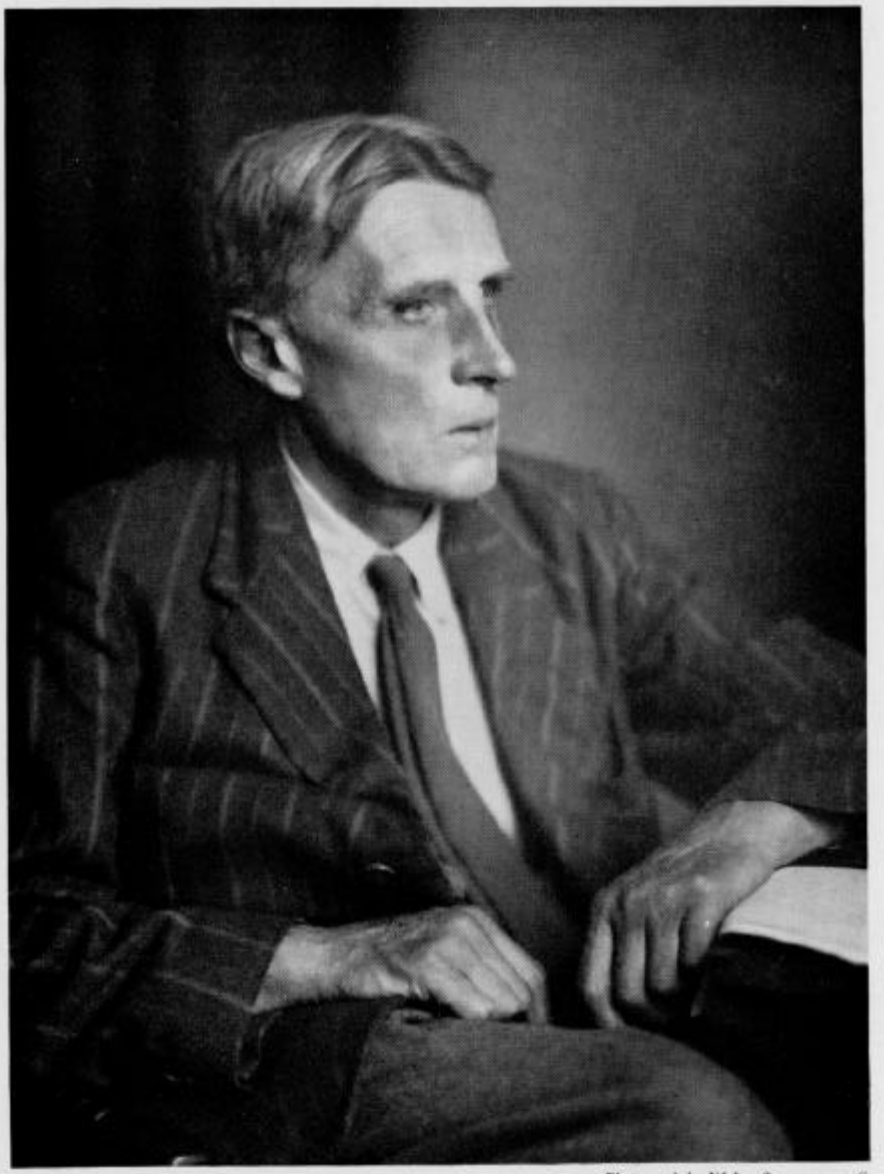

Photograph by Walter Stoneman, 1946

EDGAR FREDERICK CARRITT

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1876–1964

> The written word cannot by itself give much help in argument nor adequately express the truth. What is clearer and more satisfactory is first the argument about justice and goodness and beauty that goes on in a man's own mind and secondly the argument successfully planted as its offspring in the souls of others.
>
> Summary of PLATO's *Phaedrus*, 276–8.

THE mottoes, rather than the style, of E. F. Carritt's books show the man, and this one, standing at the head of a work written in retirement, expresses aptly what Carritt sought and what he achieved. He was not a philosopher of the top flight (though nearer to it than is supposed by those who read without concentration his concentrated sentences), but he was an outstanding tutor. As a tutor of philosophy in the academic sense he can have had few superiors. He was also, unwittingly perhaps, certainly not of set purpose, a mentor in the things of which his philosophy treats—morals and politics, and the appreciation of beauty. Carritt aimed simply at teaching his pupils to think clearly, and he always maintained that philosophy 'does not and should not affect our conduct directly'; yet in fact most of his pupils caught from him not only an interest in ethical and aesthetic theory but also a keener awareness of morality, individual and social, and of beauty, especially in poetry and the visual arts. For Carritt himself was an exceptionally moral and sensitive as well as a scholarly man. Although he smiled ironically at the popular idea of a philosopher as one who sets an example of wisdom and virtue, his own character answered to it and had an influence on his long line of pupils.

Edgar Frederick Carritt was born on 27 February 1876. His father, Frederick Blasson Carritt, practised as a solicitor in London. His mother, Edith Price, was something of a puritan, perhaps because she suffered from prolonged ill health. At the time of E. F. C.'s birth, they lived in a fine house at Highgate, near Ken Wood, but some ten years later, their fortunes being affected by the financial difficulties of Frederick Carritt's partner, they were obliged to move to a smaller house in Islington, a change which the young Edgar Carritt found depressing.

For these and other details of Carritt's family background I

am indebted to Mr. Gabriel Carritt, his second son. A number of his later experiences were recorded, with much dry humour, by Carritt himself in articles for the *University College Record* and the *Oxford Magazine* during the years 1958–60. He reproduced and added to them in a book of memoirs, *Fifty Years a Don*, mimeographed in 1960.

Carritt was educated at Bradfield and at Hertford College, Oxford, where he was a classical Scholar. In the book of memoirs he says, with characteristic modesty, that he won his scholarship mainly on an answer to the question, 'Is it ever right to lie?' a topic to which he had been attracted by a recent reading of Book I of Plato's *Republic*. His tutor for Honour Moderations was W. R. Inge, who, Carritt writes, 'took so proper a gloomy view of my Greek and Latin accidence that we rarely sighted any other aspect of the classics'. The future Dean's gloom was, I suppose, justified by Carritt's Second in Moderations, but the dreary tutorials on accidence did not prevent Carritt from acquiring for himself an enviable knowledge of Greek and Latin poetry. For Greats he was more fortunate in being taught by H. A. Prichard, probably the most acute of the Oxford philosophers of that generation. Carritt took a First in Greats in 1898. He again modestly attributes his success to a 'bit of luck' with a question on Plato's aesthetics, on which he had read Bosanquet and Pater. His memory of the alleged luck of a single question in the College Scholarship examination and in Final Schools is significant rather as evidence of special interest, even at this early stage, in ethics and aesthetics, the two fields in which he made his reputation as a philosopher. 'Apart from Prichard's tutorials', Carritt writes, 'the main influence on my reading for Greats was Cook Wilson's lecture on Logic.' Carritt never published any work on logic or metaphysics proper, so far as I know, and I doubt if, in his own thinking on these subjects, he really moved outside the circle of Cook Wilson's and Prichard's ideas. In ethics it was different. Here he was much influenced by Prichard, but he developed his conception of Ethical Intuitionism in his own way, and he went much farther than either Prichard or Sir David Ross in applying their theory of obligation to the principles of politics. In aesthetics he stood entirely alone and indeed for a considerable time was the only Oxford or British philosopher to give any serious attention to this most slippery of philosophical subjects.

After completing Schools, Carritt entered for a Prize Fellowship at Merton, where he was beaten by Ernest Barker, and then

was awarded one at University College. In the New Year of 1899 he went off to Munich in order to learn German, and lived with Professor Furtwängler. He learned most of his German, he says, from the Professor's schoolboy son, Willie, later to become the famous conductor. The visit to Germany did not last long, however. Vernon Storr, the Tutor in Philosophy at University College, took ill, and Carritt was invited to replace him. Carritt remained Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at Univ. until after the Second World War, a period of almost fifty years, interrupted only by one session spent as Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan.

In 1900 Carritt was married to Winifred Etty, whose brother John had been his friend and fellow-student both at school and at College. Another close friend, an older man, who made an important difference to Carritt's life was Cecil Torr. The Torrs were the family lawyers, but Cecil Torr, although qualified as a barrister, was more interested in ancient history and archaeology (on which he wrote several books) and in fine art. Torr, who had a particular affection for Carritt, took him on tours of Italy and the Netherlands, and later enabled Carritt and his wife to visit Greece. These travels naturally sharpened Carritt's appreciation of the visual arts and must have contributed to the development of his interest in aesthetics.

I do not know whether Carritt's winning entry for the Chancellor's Essay Prize in 1901 was in this field, but his first publication was an article on 'The Sublime', in *Mind* for 1910. He had begun lecturing on aesthetics in 1902. F. H. Bradley, Carritt writes, told him that, apart from lectures on Aristotle's *Poetics*, this was the first course of lectures in aesthetics that had been given at Oxford. They led to Carritt's first book, *The Theory of Beauty*, published in 1914. I learn from Professor Brand Blanshard that when the book appeared, Carritt 'received a warm note of congratulation about it from F. H. Bradley, which he greatly prized'.

Carritt then turned to the philosophy of history. He may have been attracted to it by the work of Croce, whom he acknowledged as his master in aesthetics. Or perhaps (I hazard a guess from comparing the treatment of Kant in *The Theory of Beauty* and in *Morals and Politics*) he was led to it by Kant's views of teleological judgement. Professor Blanshard, who has kindly sent me a long letter about his friendship with Carritt, tells me that he attended some of Carritt's lectures on the philosophy of history in 1915. They renewed their acquaintance in 1924, when

Carritt went to the University of Michigan as a Visiting Professor and spent the year as a guest in the house of the Blanshards, of whom he writes in his memoirs with great warmth. Professor Blanshard for his part came to regard Carritt as his 'best friend in England', who kept up a regular correspondence with him over the subsequent forty years. 'We never saw quite eye to eye philosophically,' Professor Blanshard writes (a masterpiece of understatement), 'but I felt I owed so much to our many discussions that I dedicated my book on *The Nature of Thought* jointly to him and my old tutor Harold Joachim.'

Carritt enjoyed his year in the United States and often recounted some of his experiences with American students. His colleagues at Ann Arbor must have appreciated equally what their University received from him, for before he left he was asked to give the annual Phi Beta Kappa address and was presented with a key of membership. The normal method of earning entry to Phi Beta Kappa is by distinguished work as an undergraduate, and it is rare for the award to be conferred, as it were *honoris causa*, on a visiting scholar. At the end of the session Carritt's wife joined him in America, and they travelled together to the west coast and then back across the continent to New York before returning to Oxford.

By this time Carritt had turned his attention to moral philosophy, and in 1928 he published *The Theory of Morals*. The general form of the book, like that of its title, recalls *The Theory of Beauty*. A critical account of the most important theories on the subject is arranged in a logical rather than a historical sequence, showing a gradual approach to what Carritt took to be the truth. The positive views that follow are presented modestly and as an adaptation of the lead given, in the one instance by Croce, in the other by Prichard. *The Theory of Morals* carries the motto, ἐγὼ δὲ τὰ μακρὰ ταῦτα ἀδύνατος. This betokens not just modesty but a dislike of the prolix. Carritt always believed in making points with the utmost economy, and he carried the practice furthest in this book, with the result that it has been underrated. A paragraph from Professor Blanshard's letter is apposite here:

> Considering what a perceptive critic Carritt was in all aesthetic matters, I have often felt puzzled by his own way of writing. In the effort to strip off every unnecessary word, I think he sometimes overdid it, and made his writing gnarled and difficult. I recall his complaining of the 'nimiety' of A. E. Taylor's style. But one always got more than one bargained for in getting a book by Carritt. I suspect that his *Theory of*

Morals says more about ethics than any other book in English of equal compass.

Carritt was in fact aware of his defects of style. When I visited him at the end of the war to say good-bye before taking up a post in New Zealand, he told me that he would like to give me one of his books. I thought I already had them all, but I had overlooked *What is Beauty?* Presenting me with a copy, Carritt added, a little shyly, that he was glad to make this one his gift because he liked it best of all his books. It had been written originally as a series of broadcast talks, he said, and in consequence the style was simpler than usual and flowed more easily. He was quite right. *What is Beauty?* is a most attractive little book, and I have found it by far the best to use and to recommend as an introduction to aesthetics. Unfortunately it has long been out of print and is not widely known.

This book was published in 1932. In the previous year there had appeared a very useful volume of selections, *Philosophies of Beauty from Socrates to Robert Bridges*. In 1933 Carritt edited for his friend Torr *Letters of Courtship, 1838–43*. These were letters between the father of Cecil Torr and his first wife, who died in childbirth three years after their marriage. Carritt's next book was *Morals and Politics*, published in 1935. This is really a book on political philosophy, but it lives up to its title by discussing theories of politics chiefly in relation to their presuppositions about duty and interest (the subject of Prichard's famous Inaugural Lecture of 1928).

Morals and Politics strikes me as less of a unity than Carritt's other books. The first two-thirds of it contain a critical discussion of theories, in strict historical order this time, and, as usual, unduly compressed, while the last part takes up some general issues without showing any clear thread of sequence from one to another. Nevertheless it is a rewarding book for the careful reader, especially on political rights and duties. There is a chapter on the philosophy of history, its section on Hegel being no doubt a distillation of Carritt's earlier lectures, and the section on Dialectical Materialism a distillation of lectures he had given more recently. Carritt's lectures on Dialectical Materialism, like those on aesthetics, were the first to be given on the subject in the University of Oxford. In his memoirs he writes: 'J. A. Smith . . . asked me why I invented such a fancy title which nobody had ever heard of. In fact it attracted my largest audience, overflowing the College hall, and I was asked if copies of the *Labour Monthly* might be sold in the quad.'

In 1937 Carritt was invited to deliver the Annual Philosophical Lecture at the British Academy under the Henriette Hertz Trust. He took as his subject 'An Ambiguity of the Word "Good" ', following up the work of Prichard and Ross on this topic with a meticulous criticism of G. E. Moore on the one side and H. W. B. Joseph on the other. Those of us who appreciated the careful thought of this lecture and of Carritt's other works were somewhat disappointed that his election as a Fellow of the British Academy did not come until 1945, when he was about to retire.

He was then in his seventieth year, having been asked to continue in his tutorial Fellowship at University College for the duration of the war. On retirement he was elected Emeritus Fellow and kept up a close association with his College, continuing to come into Hall quite frequently even in the later years when he had moved away from Oxford to a small house, neighbouring that of one of his sons, at Farnham Common. While he still remained at Boars Hill, however, Carritt kept up an active contribution to philosophy. He was no sooner free of his regular teaching responsibilities than he began putting into shape a new book on *Ethical and Political Thinking*, eventually published in 1947. Meanwhile he was invited to act as temporary Professor of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen owing to the illness of John Laird. He agreed to do so for the autumn term of 1946, and took the opportunity to use the draft of his book for his lectures, 'which', as he wrote to me, 'always discloses snags'. But he was not content with the then customary practice, in the Scottish Universities, of conducting the first-year class mainly by lectures. In a later letter to me he wrote:

I have a class of about 90 but insist on giving everybody a chance of coming once a week to a voluntary discussion class (maximum numbers 10) which means 3 or 4 hours every morning (no Sat. or evening work). They were shy at first but are brightening.

I think it worth quoting some more of this letter, its vein being typical of the man.

I have not elicited (by mild ribaldry) the fundamentalism I was warned to expect. I am told a recent highland preacher here said 'And for witches I would execute them all'. I find a good deal of difficulty in understanding some of them. [Your wife, coming from Scotland,] will be amused at my deception by the local idiom today. I was asked to a 'reception' in connection with the university commemoration of Robertson Smith & expected to chat with acquaintances, make some new ones, pick up some [tea] and by luck a chocolate éclair and smoke. I found

myself (½ hour late) in a lecture room with a parson *preaching*, after a long while another got up & preached. When a third started up I bolted and got tea in a shop. . . . I noticed Fyfe [the Principal] 'regretted being unable to attend'.

I am enjoying it very much except the climate, not that it is so very cold but such perpetual sea haze. But I have had some good trips up Deeside, where the sun sometimes shines.

In fairness to Aberdeen's weather, though not to its 'receptions', I should add that this was in November.

In the following year, back at Oxford, Carritt wrote that he was to take a B.Litt. seminar on aesthetics and had been invited to write an *Introduction to Aesthetics* for the Hutchinson University Library series. That book was published in 1949. The same year saw also the appearance of two other books. One was Carritt's translation of some essays of Croce. Many of them were rather trivial pieces, and Carritt deplored the selection, for which he was not responsible. (He deplored equally the title, *My Philosophy*, and I notice that he avoided it in his *Who's Who* list of publications, using instead the description 'Selected Essays of Benedetto Croce'.) But he loved translating, especially from Italian, and felt that he could not refuse the editor's invitation to translate anything by Croce, for whom he continued to have the highest regard, although he had never accepted anything of Croce's general philosophy and (as I think) had come, even in aesthetics, to move away from Croce to some extent. Wordsworth rather than Croce strikes me as the dominant influence in *An Introduction to Aesthetics*. Yet Carritt was still able to say, in the 1960 memoirs: 'Apart from Oxford, I think the greatest man I knew in the philosophic field was Croce.'

The other book that was published in 1949 was *A Calendar of British Taste, 1600–1800*, a delightful storehouse of a lifetime's gathering of quotations and events to illustrate the manners and taste of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Carritt was enormously well read in the literature of the eighteenth century, in English especially but also in French and Italian (German comes in to a lesser extent). One sees ample evidence of this in his other books, but the *Calendar of Taste* gives one an entry to Carritt's mind in leisure hours, as well as an unusual perspective of the period. In the Introduction Carritt writes: 'My belief throughout has been that, if history can really make us understand our strange forefathers it is the most humane and pious activity of thought; and perhaps it thereby best fits us to provide for the strange future of our children, by deparochialising our

imagination and enlarging our tolerance. And to understand the life of a period we must look first at its art.' Then, after quoting Froude on 'faint conceptions' of an earlier past coming to us from gazing upon tombs in cathedrals, Carritt continues: 'To confine ourselves to such high sources is a counsel of perfection, which, for our more vocal period, would be the enemy of the good. If we look at a dismoded work of art—say a Roubillac in Westminster Abbey—with modern spectacles, we shall not see what moved contemporaries, gentle and simple, polite and rude, to tears.' And so he includes diarists with poets, newspaper notices with the reflections of philosophers, taking as the motto of the book a couple of lines from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, with the translation

> A choir of chattering swallows, smallest fry,
> Who make themselves at home in artistry.

This was the last of Carritt's books, but he continued to contribute occasional articles on aesthetics to philosophical journals. The last I have is a short piece on 'The Aesthetic Experience of Architecture', published in 1963 when Carritt was approaching his eighty-seventh birthday. Professor Blanshard tells me of another one, evidently unpublished but written at about the same time, on 'Proper Names', Carritt's interest in them being aroused by his failing memory. Professor Blanshard writes: 'He noted the steps in the disappearance of his memory with a kind of philosophical amusement, and when he reached the point of being unable to remember the name of the hero about whom he was telling an anecdote, concluded that it was time to retire from society.'

The longevity of Carritt's intellectual powers was matched by his physical vigour. He was a rowing man in his younger days, and acted as stroke for the Hertford College VIII. Canon Adam Fox (I quote from the *University College Record* for October 1964) recalls that, even as a don, Carritt and his older colleague Farquharson 'could both be seen from time to time on the river in a Dons' VIII which went by the name of the Ancient Mariners'. Carritt loved physical exercise and was pleased that all his sons were good at games. During his year at Michigan, Professor Blanshard tells me, 'he used to run round the block before breakfast, played energetic games of tennis and handball, loved long walks, and was particularly keen about stripping and taking a dive into any convenient river or stream'. His cold baths before breakfast were proverbial, and we all knew how fond he was of walking. When one visited Carritt for afternoon tea at

Boars Hill, one would find him, as likely as not, working in the garden. He would at once suggest a walk, and the tea which followed it was all the more enjoyable after the vigorous tramp and the good conversation which accompanied it. His pleasure in gardening remained with him to the end.

Edgar Carritt died in a hospital at Ascot on 19 June 1964, at the age of 88. His wife, Winifred, who shared his gift for warm friendship with so many of us who belonged to a younger generation, died in July 1965.

Carritt's strength as a philosopher lay in criticism rather than in positive theses. The emphasis of his method of criticism differed from Prichard's. Prichard relied more heavily on logical than on empirical argument, whereas Carritt was most impressive in citing or constructing counter instances. His examples could often be devastating, but many readers fail to notice it because he does not waste unnecessary words hammering a nail home. For him it was enough to tap it once in the right place. If he could do so with light irony, so much the better. Not that his work lacks logical argument. An article of 1938 (largely reproduced in *Ethical and Political Thinking*), one of the first criticisms of Professor Ayer's emotive theory of ethics, sinks the theory in a single paragraph by showing the inconsistency of Ayer's contrast between a statement and an expression of feeling by *conventional* means. A traditionalist who has thought about aesthetics can sometimes see more clearly into the uses of language than the modern philosopher who concentrates on words alone.

Of course Carritt was not content to be merely critical. His criticism was used to point the way to what he took to be the truth. But he was modest in his presentation of positive views and kept close to common sense. Original ideas that were imaginative but bizarre struck him as more worthy of criticism than of admiration. I have previously noted a similarity of method in *The Theory of Beauty* and *The Theory of Morals*, proceeding from a critical discussion of various theories, taken in logical rather than historical order, to a more positive thesis. There is, however, also a difference in his treatment of the two subjects, a difference that is more noticeable in his later books. In aesthetics, Carritt tended to look for signs of the truth in earlier theorists, and one is often surprised to find him suggesting that some remarks of Plato are reaching after a theory of beauty as expression. In ethics, on the other hand, he was more ready to shoot down a theory than to assimilate it to his own view. This is partly due to the influence

of Prichard, but partly also to Carritt's views about the relation of philosophy to practice. An aesthetic theory which distorts the truth has little effect on aesthetic enjoyment, but a false theory of ethics can make a real difference to practical life, especially if it is carried over into political theory, which has so often become a programme for social action. Although Carritt insisted that philosophy should not try to guide conduct, he was for that very reason particularly concerned to refute philosophies that claimed to provide such a guide. In a sense, therefore, his philosophy was practical, his aim being to preserve individual and social life from the harmful effects of false philosophy. Bad philosophy was endemic, he believed, and (as he says in *Ethical and Political Thinking*) 'for bad philosophy the only cure is better'. Carritt set out an interesting statement of his philosophical attitude in a letter written to Professor Blanshard in January 1933. It begins with some comments on Professor Price's recently published book, *Perception*, which Carritt describes as 'very ingenious and painstaking'. He then goes on:

> But I am impatient because I never could take a real interest in this problem. I'm afraid at bottom my philosophical interests are all *practical* (moral, aesthetic, political) in the sense that I want to justify (or repel theories which would tend to distort) beliefs connected with some kind of doing or making or behaving—I am very vague, can you put it better for me? And though I know metaphysics lies behind this justification or repelling, the connection is so indirect. I mean whatever it may be that is really 'given', if anything, in sense perception, it's not easy to see that the answer will make any difference to what anybody does or how he feels towards other people. Is this the grossest philistinism or is it humanism (not in the pragmatist sense!)? I suppose that is why I got so intrigued about Dialectical Materialism (as I have also been about Hegel's philosophy of history)—because it professed to be a metaphysical theory which should affect conduct, which I feel quite sure philosophy should never do. In a word all my philosophy is anti-philosophy, a criticism of theories which claim to distort practice!

There is an apparent inconsistency here. Carritt says he wants to *justify* practical beliefs as well as to repel theories that distort them; but he also says that philosophy should never affect conduct. Justification of practical beliefs is surely calculated to reinforce them and in that sense to affect conduct. I take it that 'justification' would also include rejection of practical beliefs which both cannot be positively justified and are inconsistent with those that can be; and if so, 'justification' here would affect conduct still further by influencing us to discard the unjustifiable

beliefs and in consequence to modify the practice that is governed by them. I should myself be quite ready to include these 'practical' tasks among the aims of moral and political philosophy. I believe that Carritt, however, if asked to resolve the inconsistency, would have stood by his latter statement that philosophy should not affect conduct, and would have said that by justifying beliefs he simply meant removing the obstacles to acceptance presented by theories which distort them.

Since Carritt regarded his philosophy as mainly critical, there is less need to write at any length about such positive theses as he put forward. In aesthetics, his position differed from that of most modern theorists in making the inquiry one about beauty and not about art alone. He took aesthetic experience as his datum, and could find no distinction between the enjoyment of beauty in nature and the appreciation of a work of art. This is probably why he retained the Crocean theory of expression even though he saw the force, when applied to art, of theories which concentrate on form. Along with a subjective theory of beauty, however, Carritt held an objective theory of taste. A man's taste could be judged bad if he confused an enjoyable experience that was not purely aesthetic with one that was. Canon Adam Fox has suggested (in the memorial address printed in the *University College Record* for October 1964) that Carritt would have done better to be more independent of Croce in his aesthetics. I agree. Croce's theory of art is part of a comprehensive philosophy, treating of logic, metaphysics, and ethics, as well as aesthetics. Carritt never accepted Croce's views in the other branches of philosophy, and even in aesthetics he did not go along with Croce in identifying expression with intuition. The term 'expression' by itself is vague, and although Carritt distinguished it clearly enough from symptom and symbol, his later work especially suggests that he was really nearer to Wordsworth and Coleridge than to Croce. And although he accepted, right from his first article on 'The Sublime', Croce's denial of aesthetic 'kinds', he soon came to see that this would not do for the comic, an art form of which he had a masterly knowledge.

In ethics, Carritt stood with Prichard and Sir David Ross as an advocate of Ethical Intuitionism. There are different types of this theory, and Carritt's position in *The Theory of Morals* is not the same as in *Ethical and Political Thinking*. In the former book he is what Sidgwick called a Perceptional Intuitionist, holding that we have knowledge of duty in particular instances, and that we generalize from these by induction to so-called principles,

which in consequence are not matters of strict knowledge. Prichard, as I understand him, never took this view. Prichard, in Sidgwick's perhaps tendentious terminology, was a Dogmatic Intuitionist, holding that our knowledge of duty is a knowledge of self-evident principles, grasped in particular instances. (Ross's '*prima facie* duties' are of the same character.) In *Ethical and Political Thinking* Carritt also accepted the 'dogmatic' view, but under the influence less of Prichard than of the eighteenth-century moralist, Richard Price. Carritt's chief contribution to the Oxford brand of Intuitionism, however, was to extend the application of the theory to political philosophy. Prichard had little to say about political ideas proper, even in his discussion of T. H. Green's *Principles of Political Obligation.* Sir David Ross included a principle of justice in his list of '*prima facie* duties', but it was a principle of distribution according to merit only. Carritt treats of this principle, which he calls retributive justice (though not confined to punishment), but also deals at length with the idea of equality, which he, differing from Ross, calls the principle of distributive justice. Along with this Carritt discusses rights, especially so-called 'natural' rights, and in particular he explores with care the relation between equality and liberty.

Carritt's position on these matters is that of a Socialist. Although never in the public eye, like his colleague G. D. H. Cole, he was, I think, always an avowed Socialist, and it used to be said in my time at University College that Cole placed considerable trust in Carritt's opinions. The sincerity and the obviously moral character of Carritt's Socialism must have influenced many of his pupils. I recall being invited by Carritt, when I was a graduate student at a different college, to come as his guest to the 'pink lunch', a gathering of left-wing dons to hear visiting speakers over lunch. At the end of the talk on this occasion, a plate was passed round for contributions to the cause which the speaker had recommended to us. Everyone else put in pieces of silver, but I noticed that Carritt, sitting next to me, quietly placed a folded ten-shilling note on the plate. A small incident, but it impressed me at the time, because I knew that Carritt was no better off, and had greater family responsibilities, than most of those present.

I have confined my discussion of Carritt's philosophy to aesthetics and to moral and political theory. He would not have claimed any significant contribution to general philosophy. But I should like to quote one remark from his memoirs for the benefit of those philosophers of the present day who look with disdain

on Ethical Intuitionism and suppose that its advocates were unappreciative of the work of the Empiricists. Carritt writes: 'In general philosophy I have come to think that, after the founder Socrates, who started from scratch, the greatest sheer genius was Hume, often as I differ.' It is high praise indeed when one who is not an Empiricist puts Hume above Kant.

Carritt gives pride of place to Socrates as the founder of the subject but also, I think, because he admired the Socratic method. This leads me to speak of his relationship to his pupils. Carritt loved teaching and was completely happy in his chosen métier. In *Fifty Years a Don*, he writes: 'I can think of no calling so satisfying to my tastes as that of a student and teacher of philosophy at Oxford.' And a little later, after some interesting reflections on the relation between tutor and pupil, he adds: 'I was really shocked when I heard a young don, who prided himself as a researcher, reluctantly refuse a game of bridge: "Because I have to deal with my brats." I should not much value his researches.' It is worth noting that a pocket at the end of this book of memoirs contains, characteristically, a photograph not of Carritt himself but of Carritt taking a tutorial, the camera being focused on the pupils.

Carritt's success as a tutor of philosophy in the technical sense may be seen from listing some of his more notable pupils. They included A. D. Lindsay, A. S. Ferguson, Adam Fox, E. R. Dodds, R. G. Collingwood, C. S. Lewis, and A. C. Ewing. (I could add others if I wanted to go on to a younger generation.) Carritt would have been the very first to say that these men distinguished themselves by their own abilities. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable list, and I am sure that all the men I have named felt that they owed much to the stimulus of Carritt's tuition. Those who were not teachers of philosophy have given a philosophical cast to their work. Of the professional philosophers, two, Lindsay and Ewing, have followed Carritt in relating morals to politics, while a third, Collingwood, shows the brilliance of his genius best in *The Principles of Art*, a book which brings to fine fruition the seeds that Carritt gathered from Croce and Coleridge and patiently watered in his own books and in the minds of his pupils.

But intellectual stimulus was not the only thing that one received from Carritt. He gave us an example of conscientiousness and kindness that could not fail to leave its mark. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that a University teacher should be a moral as well as an intellectual guide to the young people who

come to him at their most impressionable age. I do not mean that the moral guidance should be direct, but certainly I myself feel that I learned at least as much from Carritt on moral matters themselves as on the philosophy of morals. He was a shy man, but with his pupils he gradually lowered the barriers of reserve and thereafter showed them a deep fund of friendship. Perhaps I may be allowed to recall another personal experience. I was very surprised when Carritt, at my last tutorial with him, quietly asked if I would like to spend the week-end before the Greats examination at his house in Boars Hill. He knew that I had had unusual difficulties with my sight, and that rest and fresh air were a help. He presumably also knew that it was less easy for me than for some of my contemporaries to go off for a few days in the country. That week-end at Boars Hill meant a lot to me, but more for the kindness and manner of the invitation than for the physical recreation it afforded.

Many of Carritt's pupils feel about him as I do. Notes from three of them are printed in the *University College Record* for October 1964. If I select from one of these, it is because the writer typifies for me the influence that Carritt had upon us. This man ('R. W. B.') says:

> As a tutor he was clear and incisive, with a dry humour and no patience for rhetoric or verbiage, but stimulating in the cogency and economy of his own style. As a moral and political philosopher he seems to me to have combined in a rare degree complete intellectual integrity with moral conviction. As a man he knew how to befriend and encourage his pupils from whatever background and demonstrated how rich and inspiring the tutorial relation can be.

Some years after 'R. W. B.' had gone down from Oxford, I met him by chance on the Berkshire Downs. He was spending a short leave from the Civil Service on a walking holiday, and he had a volume of Plato in his pocket. He is now, I think, a business executive, and on two or three occasions I have noticed a letter from him in the correspondence columns of *The Times*. Each of them has contributed to some current discussion of a practical problem, but illuminating it by lucid reference to underlying principles of moral philosophy.

Carritt's gift for friendship was of course extended to many of his contemporaries as well as to his pupils, and Carritt himself valued the affection which they reciprocated. I shall give just one example. In a letter written to Professor Blanshard in 1957, he refers to Gilbert Murray's final illness: 'I must tell you of the dearest compliment I ever got. In a Xmas letter from Gilbert

Murray's doctor (also formerly our own) she said she asked him, on one of his better days, if he would like any neighbour to come and see him. He replied "Only Edgar Carritt." Some compliments are only polite but this could not be.'

Carritt's qualities of character did not come from a comfortable life. He had to endure more than the common measure of personal sorrow. Three of his children died in tragic circumstances. I have recently been told that the death of his second daughter was brought on indirectly by sheer misery at family troubles, of which I think the friends of Carritt's later life knew nothing. His fourth son was killed while serving with an Ambulance Unit in the Spanish Civil War. His youngest son, gifted equally at scholarship and at games, died of tuberculosis contracted when serving in the Army during the Second World War. Edgar Carritt did not possess all the virtues, but the courage with which he and his wife faced the loss of their children (the greatest grief that can befall an individual) had a nobility that is rare. As professional philosophers judge a philosopher, Edgar Carritt can be surpassed. As the world judges a philosopher, I do not believe he can.

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