

As for the idea of an innate justice in the common order of things, Huxley could not see it. "If there is a generalization from the facts of human life which has the assent of thoughtful men in every age and country", he said, "it is that the violator of ethical rules constantly escapes the punishment which he deserves; that the wicked flourishes like a green bay tree, while the righteous begs his bread; that the sins of the father are visited upon the children; that in the realm of nature, ignorance is punished just as severely as willful wrong; and that thousands upon thousands of innocent beings suffer for the crime, or the unintentional trespass, of one." In an attempt to reconcile such facts with their own concepts of justice, the Greeks had peopled the universe with an assemblage of largely autonomous gods and goddesses. Similarly, the Hindus had developed the concept of Karma, passing from life to life in a series of transmigrations and by its successive modifications eventually producing a sort of cumulative justice. But, on the whole, he preferred the great Semitic trial of this issue, taking refuge in silence and submission. As for those who were currently propounding what they called "the ethics of evolution", their logic was fallacious: "Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about; but in itself is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before." And therefore, he urged, "Let us understand once and for all, that the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less on running away from it, but on combating it."

Scientist Extraordinary by Cyril Bibby, 1972, pg 137-8.